

The field of Transgender Studies is rapidly coming to fruition—conferences are becoming more frequent, publications such as *The Transgender Studies Reader* (Stryker and Whittle) are being produced, graduate students working in this area are now common, and promises of a new transgender academic journal can be frequently heard. I have watched and participated in these developments with great excitement. During this emergent time for Transgender Studies, I often find myself reflecting on the keen observation that Susan Stryker makes in *Transgender History*; she notes, “it is often the most privileged elements of a population affected by a particular civil injustice or social oppression who have the opportunity to organize first” (55). When the experiences of white, middle-class, and otherwise privileged populations are the basis for social organizing (and academic inquiry for that matter), the result is often that transgender is taken uncritically as an isolated identity. As a transgender person who is admittedly among the “most privileged elements” of the transgender population, I am deeply committed to an intersectional approach to Transgender Studies. Such an approach destabilizes hierarchies of privilege within transgender populations and within Transgender Studies itself.

My own scholarship on transgender archiving contributes an intersectional approach to Transgender Studies by interrogating the ways that the complex intersections of transgender and multiple other identities are accounted for in archival settings. While my dissertation does consider racialized and classed transgender identity in the three archives that I focused on, I hope to expand that consideration by studying more archives and archival contexts to gain a broader understanding of practices of transgender archiving. When I designed my dissertation proposal in 2007, I was unable to find either digital archives containing transgender material or archives that had been built specifically for transgender materials. Since that time, I have become aware of digital archives such as The Transgender Graphics and Fiction Archive (<http://www.tgfa.org/>) and transgender-specific archives such as The Transgender Historical Archive in Houston, Texas (<http://tgctr.org/archive.shtml>).

My focus on three specific archives was a strategic, case-study approach that was well-suited to a dissertation project. After I complete my Ph.D. in the spring of 2010, I will begin revising this project for publication by first expanding the number and type of archives that I research. I hope to visit The Transgender Historical Archive (Houston, Texas), the Schomburg Center (New York, NY), the Kinsey Institute Collections (Bloomington, Indiana), and The ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives (Los Angeles, California). I will also be simultaneously researching digital archiving and archival environments, such as The Transgender Graphics and Fiction Archive, alongside these traditional archives. By supplementing my dissertation research with attention to these new sites, I expect to gain a more intricate and comprehensive understanding of the ways that transgender archiving in the United States navigates (or fails to navigate) intersectional identities.

While I will expand the number and type of archives that I research, I will narrow my focus to more specific elements of these archives. As I conducted my dissertation research, two thematics emerged that have become particularly useful pathways for analyzing the complex identities and politics at work in transgender archiving: archival logics and affects. Archival logics is phrase that I use to capture the rationale undergirding all aspects of an archives, including accessibility, cataloguing, classification, preservation, and environment. By considering the ways that archival logics privilege particular researchers and uses of archival materials, I argue that archives radically recontextualize historical materials and can replicate social hierarchies through classification and access systems. The second thematic, affect, takes seriously the feelings that researchers have throughout an archival research process. I have found that affective encounters with historical materials may not only be influential in shaping interpretations of those materials, but they may also be intentionally evoked through archival logics and environment.

I plan to use these two thematics—archival logics and affect—to structure and concentrate my future research. I anticipate that by attending to these thematics across a large spectrum of archival settings, I will be well-positioned to contribute scholarship that is carefully attuned to the impact of privilege and social hierarchies to the growing field of Transgender Studies.