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Book chapter

**Finding 'evidence of me' through 'evidence of us' : Transgender oral histories and personal archives speak**

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[CT]Finding “evidence of me” through “evidence of us”

[CST]Transgender oral histories and personal archives speak

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## **Abstract**

Since late 2017 the author has been investigating the history of transgender people in Australia. This has included conducting over seventy oral history interviews with past and present transgender activists, public figures, and “ordinary” people. The aim of the oral histories – like the wider project – is to document the changing lived experiences of transgender Australians. One striking finding early in this research was that many interview participants have collected personal archives that are invaluable sources. These archives include not only personal papers and photographs, but also extensive media clippings about transgender issues and gender non-conformity, correspondence with government bodies, and records of transgender and other LGBTIQ+ organisations. Some of these personal archives are so extensive that they fill entire rooms. This chapter explores the nexus between oral history interviews and personal archives, focusing on examples from transgender Australians. It explores the ways that oral history methodologies not only record stories, but also expose hitherto hidden records that together enrich the preservation of LGBTIQ+ history.

<txt>In February 2018, I had the pleasure of interviewing Dr Julie Peters as part of an Australian Research Council-funded project I was conducting on Australia’s transgender history. The project is examining the changing legal, medical, social, media, and, most importantly, living experiences of trans and gender diverse people in Australia since the early

twentieth century. The pre-1960s part of the project relies heavily on newspaper, legal and medical archives, whereas oral history has been a key methodology for the period since the 1970s. At the time of writing, I have conducted seventy life interviews with trans and gender diverse people from across Australia. Many of these people are activists, past and present, while others have lived quiet, “ordinary” lives (I use the term loosely). I have also interviewed eleven longstanding health professionals working with transgender people, and four allies who have been involved with transgender activism and advocacy.

Before Julie’s interview, all I knew was that in 1996 she was the first openly transgender person to run for the Australian parliament. From the oral history interview I learned that she was so much more: Julie had been a founding member of Melbourne’s first transgender support group, Seahorse Victoria, in 1975; she had transitioned while working at the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) in the 1980s; she had founded the Victorian Transgender Rights Lobby in 1997; she was the first openly transgender person to run for the Victorian parliament in the 1998 state election; in 2001 she was convenor of Transgender Victoria, which is still the state’s main political advocacy organisation for transgender rights; she was an artist, poet, writer, singer, and performer; in 2016 she completed a PhD which was an autoethnography grounded in gender studies; and for decades she had been a unifying figure amidst various factions within Victoria’s LGB, transgender, and intersex communities.<sup>1</sup>

Julie brought a folder of documents to our interview: copies of government inquiries in which she participated, newspaper articles about her, an election campaign poster, and copies of her writing from the 1990s. Julie said, “I’ve collected so much stuff, I would estimate I’ve got five or six filing cabinets of trans bits and pieces, some of them just articles out of

newspapers, some were my reactions to things, and some of it does include my writing.”<sup>2</sup> I was privileged that Julie subsequently invited me to spend one day a month for the rest of the year combing through those records. Julie’s treasure trove included: personal records going as far back as childhood report cards from the 1950s; letters corresponding with other transgender women dating back to the 1970s; newspaper and magazine clippings about anything related to transgender and gender non-conformity dating back to the 1960s; and records from various community groups and government committees. Julie even had documents from organisations for which there is little archival trail, such as the short-lived Victorian Transsexual Coalition and Victorian Transsexual Association (1979–c.1985).

Julie’s extensive personal archive complemented her oral history. As I will show below with other examples, personal archives like Julie’s have served at least two purposes for my research. The documents themselves are original – many not available in any institutional archives – and expose otherwise hidden aspects of Australia’s transgender history. But by reading the archives in conjunction with oral history interviews, I can also understand the meanings collectors like Julie attach to the records, why they were important for her. In turn that has opened new lines of inquiry for my broader research on Australian transgender history.

Julie is not unique in keeping such a vast personal archive. Two weeks after I interviewed Julie, I interviewed transgender advocate Katherine Cummings, author of the award-winning *Katherine’s Diary*.<sup>3</sup> When I told Katherine about Julie’s seven filing cabinets, she very calmly replied: “I have nine.”<sup>4</sup> Several other interview participants from across Australia later shared their personal archives, which have ranged from old musical compositions, to

transgender organisations' foundational documents, through to highly organised and catalogued records like Julie's (it helps that two interview participants were librarians!).

In an earlier research project on LGBTI military service in Australia, I noticed an interconnected relationship between oral histories, personal archives, and institutional archives, which I called the interview-document nexus.<sup>5</sup> This project on transgender history has reinforced and expanded on the importance of the interview-document nexus. Oral history interviews have been an opportunity to build trust relationships and uncover narratives about transgender Australians' lives. These generous people have then shared personal archives, which have filled gaps in the oral histories as well as opened new lines of inquiry. The personal archives have also identified names of other potential interview participants; I have even emailed copies of old records as attachments when I have approached former activists or community leaders about participating in oral history interviews. This has proven an effective strategy both in exciting people about the project, as well as stimulating their memories about particular organisations or events.

In this chapter I discuss the interview-document nexus and how it enriches historians' engagement with oral histories and archival sources. I bring together literature on oral history theory, archival studies and examples from my project on transgender history to provide theoretical and methodological insights into the ways oral historians can incorporate personal archives with oral histories as part of the broader research journey. Indeed, there is much that oral historians can learn from the literature on personal archives, particularly Sue McKemmish's concept of "evidence of me", which she argues is what drives people to preserve personal archives.<sup>6</sup> "Evidence of me" is like an archival version of composure: just as interview participants compose their memories around the language, identities, discourses,

and dominant narratives available to them,<sup>7</sup> so, too, do personal archives reflect an ongoing dialogue between “evidence of me” and finding oneself within a collective “evidence of us”.<sup>8</sup>

The search for “evidence of me” similarly motivates people to share their archives *and* participate in oral history interviews. All sorts of people desire to preserve and/or find “evidence of me”, but what stands out from my work with transgender Australians is something distinct: collecting personal archives was often about finding evidence of me *through* finding evidence of others “like me”. Those same transgender elders now seek “evidence of me” in the historical record and want to share it with younger and future generations of trans and gender diverse people, which is why they have so generously offered to participate in oral history interviews and share personal archives to reconstruct Australia’s transgender history.

#### <A>Personal archives as “evidence of me”

<txt>Catherine Hobbs argues that personal archives reveal people’s day-to-day business and relationships and thus offer insights into their emotions and private thoughts.<sup>9</sup> Personal archives are reminders of the interactions between the individual, other people, organisations and the institutions that govern society.<sup>10</sup> The interview-document nexus gives voice to those relationships and breathes life into the written records. Just as oral historians regularly argue that interviews recover the stories of those marginalised from the written record,<sup>11</sup> so too do personal or community archives challenge the largely white, male, heterosexual, cisgender voices widely reflected in the repositories of state and other institutional collections.<sup>12</sup> As Paul Ashmore, Ruth Craggs, and Hannah Neate concisely explain: “Holders of private

collections and archives, then, can be seen, and, in some cases, see themselves, as guardians of a certain history neglected elsewhere.”<sup>13</sup>

It is well understood that institutional archives reflect the subjective values and criteria of the collecting institution, including the biases of individual archivists who assess archival value to materials.<sup>14</sup> In the same way, personal archives reflect the biases and interests of the creator.<sup>15</sup> Donald Ritchie argues that oral histories can interpret written records and make meaning out of decisions or events which otherwise would be obscure.<sup>16</sup> Yet, conceiving the relationship between written documents and oral histories as a nexus can do so much more than just provide context. Oral history represents an opportunity not only to expose and explain the biases behind the documents. It also allows a person to explain *why* they valued particular records for preservation, and the deeper meanings that they associated with those records.

The human drive to create records is at the heart of any archive, be it institutional, community, personal, or oral. Michael Piggott credits the “impulse to save” to three main reasons: for legal purposes; in case records are needed in the future; and to preserve and trigger memories.<sup>17</sup> Catherine Hobbs explains that personal archives function <ext>as the site of multiple constructs – of a person upholding and struggling with ideas, of self and of others, while simultaneously contradicting, convincing, and contriving. Within the context of this fluidity of personality, we are not quite finding “evidence of me” but rather of the essential moving target of human life being enacted.<sup>18</sup>

<txt>Barbara Craig argues that personal archives are more than just tools for memory: they also help us make sense of our identities and place in the world.<sup>19</sup> The drive to find and preserve “evidence of me” is inevitably about situating the individual within and against

broader events, discourses, organisations, and histories. It is the historian's role to collate the oral and written evidence of numerous "evidence of me's" to produce a collective history of "us".

<A>Transgender searches for "evidence of me"

<txt>For many of my transgender informants, the *types* of records they preserved were very much about finding "evidence of me" in eras when discussions about (trans)gender identity were few and far between. Several interview participants spoke about television, radio, magazine, and newspaper stories from the 1970s–80s which were about transgender issues or gender non-conformity. At first glance most of the media from the 1970s–80s is derisive of transgender people, with headlines designed to shock and mock. Oral histories tell a different story, though; several transgender Australians talk about how they received/internalised media reports as "evidence of me".<sup>20</sup> As "Bronwyn" put it,

<ext>My mind was ready to receive some word that could attach itself to what was already going on in mind, and the moment I saw that word [transsexualism], that was it. I just knew straight away, before even opening the magazine [*Cleo*], I thought, my God, that's got to be something about me.<sup>21</sup>

<txt>Some transgender people actively collected newspaper and magazine articles and preserved them as "evidence of me". Julie Peters is perhaps the best example: from the late 1960s through to even the present day, whenever she comes across an article about transgender issues or gender non-conformity, she cuts it out and files it. In the early years, as she explained, this was "the way I was sort of trying to understand it [gender identity]".<sup>22</sup>

Julie was not alone in preserving "evidence of me" from the media. The Australian Queer



Archives (AQuA) houses a collection of transgender news clippings from the 1950s–60s donated by G.R., showing the significance of such sources for older gender diverse people looking for “evidence of me”. Indeed, Joanne Meyerowitz has similarly found examples of people from across the United States who saved clippings about transgender pioneer Christine Jorgensen.<sup>23</sup>

John Hewson’s collection is another significant source on Australian transgender history: a series of forty-one scrapbooks containing clippings from the mainstream and LGBTI press about gender non-conformity, drag, and transgender dating from 1965 to 1994. John initially donated the scrapbooks to the Queensland AIDS Council, and a transgender member of my project advisory group informed me about their existence. I accessed these remarkable scrapbooks in 2018 before I met John Hewson, so my original encounter was simply with the personal archive without any context: why John made these scrapbooks; why John had an interest in trans, gender diversity and gender non-conformity; and John’s own gender identity. Heck, I didn’t even know John’s name or pronouns.

In 2019, on my suggestion, a Queensland AIDS Council employee contacted John and convinced him to transfer the scrapbooks and other material to AQuA. I then reached out to John, who agreed to do a short oral history interview over Zoom in early 2021. The oral history interview was enlightening and not what I anticipated. John explained that from the early 1970s until 1993 he had a female persona and he sometimes expressed himself as John and other times as female. The scrapbooks were not about exploring or even searching for an understanding of his gender. Rather, John just had a keen interest in scrapbooking about several hobbies and personal interests, and gender diversity was just one of them. For

instance, he kept scrapbooks about aviation and fashion, and he also collects art and ephemera relating to leather and fetish subcultures.<sup>24</sup>

Twice when I asked John to elaborate about why he took such an interest in gender diversity that he made these scrapbooks, he veered the conversation to talk about his other interests.

The interview thus revealed that the gender scrapbooks were not an exclusive or even necessarily primary interest for Hewson. Rather, gender diversity was only one part of his broader identity construction – and even that was in the past, almost twenty years ago.

Thinking through John’s oral history and personal archive through the prism of the interview-document nexus reveals multiple analytical layers. The scrapbooks and the articles and images within them are remarkable historical records in their own right. But the interview revealed that they were only one piece of “evidence of me”; other scrapbooks and collections which John has kept, donated to museums, or given to friends represent other “evidences of me”. The interview thus completely reshaped my interpretation of the significance of the scrapbooks – at least in relation to their creator, John. His interview was an important reminder about the multiple identities we all have which constantly change over time.

<A>“Evidence of us” to build communities

<txt>Oral histories reveal that media was not the only site where transgender Australians searched for “evidence of me”. Jonathan Paré, one of Victoria’s first trans men activists, was studying for an Associate Diploma in Community Development at Victoria University from 1993–95. He enthusiastically explained how one assignment changed his life:

<ext>I had been stealth, I was in an environment where we were being encouraged to advocate and empower and all of those words from the '90s, and I ended up [doing] this first round of research which was the experiences of being transgender: personal, community and societal perspectives. It was an action research project. That was one of our assessment requirements .... Did the research, and from there of course, we're learning about support groups and setting up groups and supporting groups and advocating on behalf of groups. From a community development perspective, you should be part of the community that you're actually working in, and so from this, Transgender Liberation and Care got set up.<sup>25</sup>

<txt>Jonathan completed the assignment in November 1994. In May 1995 he co-founded Transgender Liberation and Care (TLC) – Victoria's first peer support group which was inclusive of all gender diverse people.<sup>26</sup> Interestingly, Julie Peters' personal archive contained an invitation to the first meeting of TLC and several other records of its early years – highlighting the value of bringing together multiple sets of personal archives and oral histories to reconstruct collective “evidence of us”. Jonathan discussed the early years of TLC, the dynamics of how the group operated and what it achieved to support transgender Victorians. His involvement with TLC ended around 1998; Julie Peters' personal archive includes TLC newsletters which show that the group continued until c.2002.

Jonathan's research and writing process for that 1994 assignment brought him into contact with a critical reference group of ten other trans men and women in Melbourne.<sup>27</sup> He found “evidence of me” through the shared “evidence of us”, which he wrote up in the report “The Experiences of Being Transgender: Personal, Community & Social Consequences”. Jonathan

gave me a copy of that document, which is a remarkable artefact about the challenges confronting transgender Australians c.1994. With his permission, a colleague even assigned it as a History class reading so that students could understand conceptions of gender identity and the lived experiences of transgender Australians in the mid-1990s. Jonathan was excited at this prospect because it validated his experience. Indeed, Jonathan's entire participation in my project was part of his ongoing quest for validating "evidence of me" in history. At the end of our interview, he explained:

<ext>I think it's really important for the [trans and gender diverse] community to know its history and to have something documented. I think it's also really important for the individuals that will get mentioned because a lot of us have bled for this and I think a lot of us feel that we've just been abandoned and disregarded and that a lot of younger people coming through are taking it all for granted and they're not interested.<sup>28</sup>

<txt>Other interview participants similarly expressed a desire for younger generations to understand the trials that older transgender Australians endured.

McKemmish notes that personal archives are most effective as sources when used in conjunction with "evidence from other kinds of documents" and how "the different documentary genres communicate different aspects of a life, speaking to us in different voices".<sup>29</sup> Oral histories are one such way to bring voice to personal archives, and for this project the interview-document nexus was vital because it revealed a real personal, psychological drive behind how and why transgender people searched for and found meaning in eras of transgender invisibility. As standalone items, Julie Peters' personal archive, John

Hewson's scrapbooks, G.R.'s collection, and Jonathan Paré's old papers are rich primary sources about transgender life and media.<sup>30</sup> Oral histories gave new analytical uses to these documents, and the interview-document nexus represented a method to transform these individuals' "evidence of me" into collective "evidence of us".

<A>Interview-document nexus, community organisation histories and composure

<txt>Activism and advocacy for transgender rights in Australia have traditionally been state-based. Since the 1970s, several organisations have come and gone (for example, Victorian Transsexual Coalition, 1979–c.1985; Australian Transsexual Association c.1980–87) while others have endured (for example, Seahorse NSW 1971–; Transgender Victoria 1999–). For the older organisations, it is often difficult to find what Andrew Flinn calls a "surviving trace" in institutional archives – fragmented records of groups who have been marginalised from dominant historical narratives.<sup>31</sup> Surviving traces of these organisations exist within state records offices, state libraries, the National Archives of Australia, and especially in AQuA. The surviving traces tend to be submissions that the organisations made to inquiries, and copies of magazines or newsletters. Yet, rarely did these associations maintain a coherent record of their work and deposit it in a publicly accessible repository. As Melanie Oppenheimer explains, in institutional archives it is the records "of the smaller voluntary organisations that are often missing. It is not necessarily because they need to be convinced of the importance of their records, the problem is more to do with organisational focus and lack of funds".<sup>32</sup> For this reason, we often turn to oral histories to recover and reconstruct the life of community groups.

Several transgender people I interviewed were leaders of community and activist organisations. Jenny Scott is one interview participant who is a meticulous collector. Jenny worked as a librarian at the State Library of South Australia, so it is not surprising that she values collecting and organising documents for posterity. Jenny's collection is an example of "the accumulation of materials gathered together in other spaces, where accumulations occur with and without intent, and whose broader value might be considered archival".<sup>33</sup> Jenny's interview and personal archive – some held at her house and some deposited in the State Library of South Australia – were particularly important because there have not been as many transgender organisations in South Australia as in more populous states like Victoria and New South Wales, and even similar sized states like Queensland and Western Australia. I accessed Jenny's collection at the State Library before our interview. This aligns with James Fogerty's argument about best practice being to access personal papers in advance of any oral history interviews.<sup>34</sup> It proved a fruitful exercise because I learned that Jenny had participated in many community groups during the 1990s–2000s: South Australia Transsexual Support (SATS), Feast Festival, Gay and Lesbian Counselling Service of South Australia, AIDS Council of South Australia (ACSA), the Gay and Lesbian Health Ministerial Advisory Committee, and the South Australia Police Equal Opportunity Committee Gay and Lesbian Focus Group.

Learning about these various associations enabled me to devise a series of prompts that I used with Jenny during our interview and also prompted specific questions about controversies noted in the documents. In the interview, Jenny often blurred the distinctions between ACSA, SATS, and the Gay and Lesbian Counselling Service of South Australia. For instance, when explaining how she founded SATS, Jenny said:

<ext>I also set up a thing called South Australian Transsexual Support – SATS – so we set SATS up and that ran out of Darling House as well. People could come along to that, and the Gay and Lesbian Counselling Services was one of the contact numbers for that. Probably in the archives too, there was a pamphlet – there’s probably a SATS pamphlet; I should have a PDF copy of it from that file. So certainly people rang about that but people would ring up about venues and “Where can I go to meet men, women, whatever?”<sup>35</sup>

<txt>Jenny narrated her involvement with these organisations almost interchangeably. This suggests a few points: first, the histories of these community groups are intertwined because they often shared volunteers, agendas, facilities, resources, and clients. Second, it shows that Jenny has composed her memory around the support work provided to struggling LGBT people. What group facilitated that support is not so significant in her memory.

<A>Community records and oral histories speak

<txt>Other interview participants retained organisational records for the same reasons that they kept personal records: to capture transactions, record activities, for legal purposes and as memory triggers.<sup>36</sup> Kayleen White was one of the founding co-convenors of Transgender Victoria (TGV) in 1999 and was instrumental in lobbying for amendments to Victoria’s anti-discrimination law in 2000. Kayleen’s oral history interview (along with co-convenor Sally Goldner’s interview) explained the process of founding TGV and its relationship to other organisations of the same era. From Julie Peters’ interview I learned that she founded the Victorian Transgender Rights Lobby (VTRL) in 1997 when the Victorian Gay and Lesbian

Rights Lobby declined to include transgender people in its remit. From Julie's personal archive I learned that the VTRL disbanded in February 1999 and re-formed in May as Transgender Victoria. Kayleen explained why this happened; the VTRL operated as a sub-group within TLC, and this proved impractical:

<ext>There was one sticking point for the format of having Victorian Trans Right Lobby, VTRL, as a sub-group of TLC, which was that if we were asked for a comment by the media, TLC wanted us to go back to them, get an approved comment, and then go back to the media. But the news cycle moves too quickly, even back then .... So TLC were saying, well yeah, what you're recommending is great, except that we want oversight of the media stuff. And the sub-committee, at one of our meetings, we literally stood up, walked around the table, well, resigned, walked around the table, sat down and then started the group that were to form TGV.<sup>37</sup>

<txt>Through bringing the personal archive into dialogue with the oral history interviews, a clear narrative and timeline emerged about the relationships between VTRL, TLC, and TGV.

Paul Dagleish explains, "Once a person acts in an official capacity in an organisation it becomes an issue of drawing the boundaries between the personal records and the records of the organisation."<sup>38</sup> That was certainly the case for Kayleen, who retained several documents from TGV's formative years, 1999–2000. Kayleen discussed TGV's lobbying around anti-discrimination law in 2000. She and Sally Goldner met with politicians of all stripes and were regularly sending out media releases and emails. Kayleen mentioned some particularly effective documents that she drafted:



<ext>I used my Word skills, Microsoft Word, and came up with these brochures which any decent person with computer skills would probably laugh at for the next six months if they saw them. But we had a few of us on the committee. We volunteered to give information about ourselves, a little photo and so forth, so that we could humanise it. Then we sent it to everybody in, I think we sent it to everybody in Parliament and quite a few other people as well.<sup>39</sup>

<txt>After our interview, Kayleen found electronic copies of education sheets for employers, media, and politicians. As Kayleen suggested, they included personal stories of discrimination facing transgender Victorians, but they were so much more: they discussed terminology, the transition process, statistics around transgender disadvantage, and myths around what it meant to be transgender. Further archival research revealed how effective these sheets were: several politicians from both major parties quoted directly from the statistics and personal stories in these information sheets during the parliamentary debates. Thus, the interview-document nexus exposed the methods used by transgender activists and could link that work with tangible outcomes.

## <A>Conclusion

<txt>Conducting any historical research project is a journey, and my work with transgender Australians has taken me to places I never envisioned. Every oral history interview has been an invited tour through a person's life. Their stories have led me to other interview participants, hitherto hidden historical events and personal archives that have in turn sent me

on other journeys. These research voyages have rarely been straight lines; they are constantly veering in different directions, and circle back on each other as they continuously intersect and, on occasion, clash (although usually some thoughtful historical analysis can reconcile the disagreements). The interview-document nexus is central to this journey, as it regularly sends signals and directions of where to go next: key figures to approach for interviews; questions to ask interview participants; answers to unresolved points raised in interviews; and historical contexts surrounding particular moments, documents, organisations, or significances.

The interview-document nexus can enrich historians' work in numerous ways, bringing together personal archives, institutional archives, and oral histories to tell microhistories or to build grand narratives. For transgender Australian history, the interview-document nexus was fruitful in at least two ways: first, to explore how elders searched for (and found) "evidence of me" and preserved those records for decades. Second, transgender activists' oral histories and personal archives together reconstructed the origins and operations of transgender community organisations, providing much more than the surviving traces available in institutional archives and AQuA. Oral histories are not, as Richard Cox suggests, just another source to include in the personal archive.<sup>40</sup> Rather, conceptualising oral histories and personal archives as a nexus treats them as an interrelated data set, rather than two complementary sources. From the archives studies perspective, Sue McKemmish and Michael Piggott argue:

<ext>[T]here is great potential for research on the plurality of personal recordkeeping behaviours and cultures in the context of their complex interrelationship with corporate recordkeeping in the continuum, and in the online cultures and shared spaces of our digital worlds. There are rich

possibilities for further research on personal recordkeeping in these contexts, which could contribute to a transformed practice.<sup>41</sup>

<txt>To this I would add oral histories as part of a continuum of records which together have the potential to reconstruct and connect transgender and other marginalised histories. The more LGBTIQ+ and other historians can bring personal archives and oral histories into dialogue with each other, then the more “evidences of me” we can collate into “evidence of us”.

## <A>Notes

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<sup>1</sup> Julie Peters interviewed by Noah Riseman (Melbourne, 23 February 2018). See also Julie Peters, *A Feminist Post-Transsexual Autoethnography: Challenging Normative Gender Coercion* (Abingdon, UK and New York: Routledge, 2019).

<sup>2</sup> Julie Peters interviewed by Noah Riseman (Melbourne, 23 February 2018).

<sup>3</sup> Katherine Cummings, *Katherine's Diary: The Story of a Transsexual*, rev. ed. (Tascott, New South Wales: Beaujon Press, 2007).

<sup>4</sup> Katherine Cummings, post-interview discussion with Noah Riseman (Central Coast, New South Wales, 4 March 2018).

<sup>5</sup> Noah Riseman, “The Interview-Document Nexus: Recovering Histories of LGBTI Military Service in Australia”, *Archivaria* 87 (Spring 2019): 6–33.

<sup>6</sup> Sue McKemmish, “Evidence of Me”, *Archives and Manuscripts* 24, no. 1 (1996): 28–45.

<sup>7</sup> See Penny Summerfield, “Culture and Composure: Creating Narratives of the Gendered Self in Oral History Interviews”, *Cultural and Social History* 1, no. 1 (2004): 65–93; Alistair Thomson, “Anzac Memories: Putting Popular Memory Theory into Practice in Australia”, in *The Oral History Reader*, eds. Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 244–254; Nan Alamilla Boyd, “Who Is the Subject? Queer Theory Meets Oral History”, *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 17, no. 2 (2008): 177–189 (p. 188); Alistair Thomson, “Anzac Memories Revisited: Trauma, Memory and Oral History”, *The Oral History Review* 42 no. 1 (2015): 1–29; Popular Memory Group, “Popular Memory: Theory, Politics, Methods”, in *The Oral History Reader*, ed. Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 43–53; Anna Green, “Individual Remembering and ‘Collective Memory’: Theoretical Presuppositions and Contemporary Debates”, *Oral History* 32, no. 2 (2004): 35–44.

<sup>8</sup> McKemmish, “Evidence of Me”, 38.

<sup>9</sup> Catherine Hobbs, “Personal Archives: The Character of Personal Archives”, *Archivaria* 52 (2001): 127–128.

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- <sup>10</sup> Richard Cox, *Personal Archives and a New Archival Calling: Readings, Reflections and Ruminations* (Duluth, MN: Litwin Books, LLC, 2008), 150.
- <sup>11</sup> In the LGBTIQ+ context, see Nan Alamilla Boyd and Horacio N. Roque Ramírez, eds., *Bodies of Evidence: The Practice of Queer Oral History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).
- <sup>12</sup> Melanie Oppenheimer, "The Historian Activist and the Gift to the Nation Project: Preserving the Records of the Australian Red Cross", *Archives and Manuscripts* 48, no. 2 (2020), 171–185 (p. 174).
- <sup>13</sup> Paul Ashmore, Ruth Craggs, and Hannah Neate, "Working-With: Talking and Sorting in Personal Archives", *Journal of Historical Geography* 38, no. 1 (2012): 81–89 (p. 83).
- <sup>14</sup> Andrew Flinn, "The Impact of Independent and Community Archives on Professional Archive Thinking and Practice", in *The Future of Archives and Recordkeeping: A Reader*, ed. Jennie Hill (London: Facet Publishing, 2011), 149–174 (p. 160).
- <sup>15</sup> Deryck Schreuder, "The Heroic Study of Records: Problematising Archive and Textual Sources of Historical Writing", *Oral History Association of Australia Journal* 16 (1994): 67–69 (p. 69). See also James E. Fogerty, "Filling the Gap: Oral History in the Archives", *The American Archivist* 46, no. 2 (1983): 148–157 (p. 150).
- <sup>16</sup> Donald A. Ritchie, *Doing Oral History: A Practical Guide*, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014) 112.
- <sup>17</sup> Michael Piggott, "Human Behaviour and the Making of Records and Archives", *Archives & Social Studies: A Journal of Interdisciplinary Research* 1 (2007): 237–258 (p. 243).
- <sup>18</sup> Hobbs, "Personal Archives: The Character of Personal Archives", 132.
- <sup>19</sup> Barbara Craig, *Archival Appraisal: Theory and Practice* (Munich: K.G. Saur – De Gruyter, 2004), 7–12.
- <sup>20</sup> Noah Riseman, "Representing Transgender in the 1970s Australian Media", *Gender and History* 33, no. 1 (2021): 227–248.
- <sup>21</sup> "Bronwyn", interviewed by Noah Riseman (Melbourne, 6 April 2018).
- <sup>22</sup> Julie Peters interviewed by Noah Riseman (Melbourne, 23 February 2018).
- <sup>23</sup> Joanne Meyerowitz, "Sex Change and the Popular Press: Historical Notes on Transsexuality in the United States, 1930–1955", *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 4, no. 2 (1998): 159–187 (p. 175).
- <sup>24</sup> John Hewson interviewed by Noah Riseman (Zoom, 13 January 2021).
- <sup>25</sup> Jonathan Paré interviewed by Noah Riseman (Brisbane, 10 December 2018).
- <sup>26</sup> At the time there were two other support groups in existence: Seahorse Victoria and the Elaine Barrie Project. These groups only catered to dressers, rather than all people under the trans umbrella.
- <sup>27</sup> Jonathan Paré interviewed by Noah Riseman (Brisbane, 10 December 2018).
- <sup>28</sup> Jonathan Paré interviewed by Noah Riseman (Brisbane, 10 December 2018).
- <sup>29</sup> McKemmish, "Evidence of Me", 34.
- <sup>30</sup> The National Library of Australia's digitised newspaper database in Trove goes up to 1954 for most newspapers, and other databases like Factiva contain Australian newspapers back to the late 1980s. For the period 1954–c.1988, only a handful of digital resources are available.
- <sup>31</sup> Flinn, "The Impact of Independent and Community Archives", 158.
- <sup>32</sup> Oppenheimer, "The Historian Activist and the Gift to the Nation Project", 174.
- <sup>33</sup> Ashmore, Craggs, and Neate, "Working-With: Talking and Sorting in Personal Archives", 82.
- <sup>34</sup> Fogerty, "Filling the Gap: Oral History in the Archives", 154.
- <sup>35</sup> Jenny Scott interviewed by Noah Riseman (Adelaide, 8 August 2018).
- <sup>36</sup> Richard Cox, "The Record in the Manuscript Collection", *Archives and Manuscripts* 24:1 (1996), 46–61, 52. See also Cox, *Personal Archives and a New Archival Calling: Readings, Reflections and Ruminations*, 4–5.
- <sup>37</sup> Kayleen White interviewed by Noah Riseman (Melbourne, 28 January 2019).
- <sup>38</sup> Paul Dalgleish, "The Appraisal of Personal Records of Members of Parliament in Theory and Practice", *Archives and Manuscripts*, 24:1 (1996), 86–101 (p. 88).
- <sup>39</sup> Kayleen White interviewed by Noah Riseman (Melbourne, 28 January 2019).
- <sup>40</sup> Cox, *Personal Archives and a New Archival Calling*, 50–55.
- <sup>41</sup> Sue McKemmish and Michael Piggott, "Toward the Archival Multiverse: Challenging the Binary Opposition of the Personal and Corporate Archive in Modern Archival Theory and Practice", *Archivaria* 76 (2013): 111–144, (p. 141).