

## **From Paper, to Microform, to Digital?** **Serials at The ArQuives: Canada's LGBTQ2+ Archives**

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Article abstract

The ArQuives: Canada's LGBTQ2+ Library and Archives, founded in 1973, holds one of the largest collections of queer serials in the world. The more than 10,000 titles are mostly in paper, but formats have been evolving. Beginning in the 1980s, the ArQuives participated in small microfilming projects. Microfilming of the collection greatly increased in 2005, when Primary Source Microfilm (PSM) undertook a large project to film a portion of the collection, resulting in 211 reels devoted to international gay and lesbian periodicals and newsletters. The PSM project was later repurposed and expanded by Gale Cengage, beginning in 2015, and forms part of its Archives of Sexuality and Gender online product. This paper examines the evolution of the ArQuives' serials holdings from paper to microform to digital formats and explores recent in-house digitization efforts and future prospects for expanding access to these materials.



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From Paper, to Microform, to Digital?  
Serials at the ArQuives: Canada's LGBTQ2+ Archives

Donald W. McLeod

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**Abstract**

The ArQuives: Canada's LGBTQ2+ Archives, founded in 1973, holds one of the largest collections of queer serials in the world, with more than ten thousand titles. Most are on paper, but formats have been evolving. Beginning in the 1980s, the ArQuives participated in small-scale microfilming projects. Microfilming of the collection increased greatly in 2005, when Primary Source Microfilm (PSM) undertook a large project to film a portion of the collection, resulting in 211 reels devoted to international gay and lesbian periodicals and newsletters. The PSM project was later repurposed and expanded by Gale Cengage, beginning in 2015, and forms part of its *Archives of Sexuality and Gender* online product. This paper examines the evolution of the ArQuives' serial holdings from paper to microform to digital formats, and explores recent in-house digitization efforts and future prospects for expanding access to these materials.

**Résumé**

Les *ArQuives*: les archives LGBTQ2+ canadiennes, fondées en 1973, détiennent une des plus importantes collections de périodiques *queer* au monde, comprenant plus de dix mille titres. La majorité sont sur papier, mais les formats sont en évolution. Depuis les années 1980, les *ArQuives* participent à des projets de microfilmage de petite envergure. Le microfilmage a vu une augmentation importante en 2005, lorsque *Primary Source Microfilm* (PSM) a entrepris un grand projet consistant à microfilmer une portion de la collection, ayant pour résultat 211 bobines consacrées aux bulletins et périodiques gays et lesbiens internationaux. Par la suite, à partir de 2015, le projet PSM a été transformé et élargi par Gale Cengage, et fait maintenant partie de son produit en ligne *Archives of Sexuality and Gender*. Cet

article examine l'évolution des périodiques, allant du papier aux microfilms jusqu'aux formats numériques, et explore les récents efforts de numérisation internes ainsi que les perspectives d'avenir quant à l'élargissement de l'accès à ces matériels.

## Introduction

The year 2018 marked the forty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Canadian Gay Liberation Movement Archives, later known for many years as the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives (CLGA). At the CLGA's 2018 AGM, the membership supported a rebranding of the organization as The ArQuives: Canada's LGBTQ2+ Archives.

The growth and development of the ArQuives have been impressive for an organization that is almost entirely community-based and receives no core funding. From its origin as a single filing cabinet in the office of the newsmagazine *The Body Politic*, the ArQuives has grown into a dynamic organization with a volunteer board of nine members, a full-time paid executive director, dozens of volunteers (more than forty of whom are active regularly), and annual revenue of \$517,000.<sup>1</sup>

Since 2009, the ArQuives has been headquartered in a heritage house at 34 Isabella Street, in the heart of downtown Toronto's large LGBTQ2+ community. The building is owned by the ArQuives and has been renovated extensively. Although the house is at the heart of the ArQuives' activities, most of the archival accessions and collections are stored at a modern office building four blocks away, at 65 Wellesley Street East.

From its inception, the ArQuives was seen as a "total archive" and collected all manner of items related or of potential research interest to LGBTQ2+ people in Canada and internationally. It holds archival accessions of the papers of individuals and organizations, a library, vertical files for ready reference, photographs, artworks, posters, moving-image and audio collections, and artifacts such as banners, matchbooks, and buttons. If the ArQuives had been formed today, however, its focus would likely be different. It was easier, in 1973, to be inclusive. There wasn't as much to collect. Today, although the ArQuives still collects internationally in several areas, it can only hope to form representative holdings, even of Canada, because of the explosion of LGBTQ2+ material that has become available.

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<sup>1</sup> The ArQuives is currently the largest independent, community-based LGBTQ2+ archive in the world. For more information, see: <http://www.arquives.ca>.



Figure 1 : The ArQuives, 34 Isabella Street, Toronto. Credit : Don McLeod.

### The LGBTQ2+ Serials Collection

The ArQuives has always collected LGBTQ2+ serials internationally and continues to do so. The collection has been curated since 1977 by Alan V. Miller. It grew rapidly, from 250 titles in 1977 to more than 600 titles, with 5,400 individual issues, by 1979. By 1981, the total had nearly doubled to 1,100 titles. It nearly doubled again, by 1986, to 1,850 titles.<sup>2</sup> As of August 2018, there were more than 10,504 LGBTQ2+ serials titles at the ArQuives, one of the largest accumulations in the world.<sup>3</sup> A title might be the most obscure, single-sheet, single-issue, mimeographed production—or a high-end, slickly produced, multi-issue work. Some titles, such as *The Advocate* (Los Angeles), or *Xtra!* (Toronto), run to hundreds of issues. The LGBTQ2+ serials

<sup>2</sup> Alan V. Miller, “The Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives,” in *International Periodicals and Newsletters from the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives. Filmed from the Holdings of the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives. Series II*, rev. ed. (Woodbridge, CT: Primary Source Media/Gale Cengage Learning, 2009), v.

<sup>3</sup> There is also an unsorted cataloguing backlog, which could add even more titles to the total. The only other collection of LGBTQ2+ serials that is comparable in size—and perhaps slightly larger—is housed at the ONE National Gay And Lesbian Archives in Los Angeles.



Figure 2 : The public reading room at the ArQuives. Credit : Don McLeod.

collection at the ArQuives takes up considerable space, approximately 250 linear metres of shelving, and is kept in archival boxes mostly at 65 Wellesley Street East.

The collection is exceptionally strong for its Canadian serial holdings, and, with 2,075 titles, is by far the largest collection of Canadian LGBTQ2+ serials in existence. But it also has titles from more than fifty other countries, and in multiple languages. The earliest title dates from the 1890s, and although the ArQuives has excellent representation of seminal LGBTQ2+ titles such as *Arcadie* (Paris), *Jahrbuch für sexuelle Zwischenstufen* (Berlin), *Der Kreis* (Zurich), *The Ladder* (San Francisco/Reno, NV), *ONE Magazine* (Los Angeles), *Der Weg* (Hamburg), and so on, the collection is heavily slanted to the period after 1969. Most titles in the collection are of local, as opposed to national or international, interest. Many represent the only surviving record of the activities of obscure local LGBTQ2+ groups or organizations. Erotic or frankly pornographic titles are collected as well.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> In accordance with Canadian and international law, the ArQuives does not collect LGBTQ2+ serials that depict minors engaged in sexual activity.

One remarkable fact about the LGBTQ2+ serials collection at the ArQuives is that it has been formed entirely through donations. There is no budget for serials acquisitions, and all of the holdings have been acquired either via direct donation from organizations and individuals, or through trades with publishers, other libraries and archives, and a few individuals. From its earliest days, the ArQuives obtained serials that arrived at the offices of *The Body Politic* as exchange subscriptions. This tradition continues, as Pink Triangle Press, publisher of *The Body Politic*'s online successor, *Daily Xtra*, donates LGBTQ2+ serials that it has received in the mail to the ArQuives. In 1985, the ArQuives sponsored the international conference "Sex and the State" in Toronto, after which it made a sustained effort to add to its serials holdings by targeting publishers. Many smaller publishers were pleased to donate copies, although larger ones were more reluctant to provide free subscriptions.<sup>5</sup> The ArQuives has received many additional serials over the years which have been donated together with the papers of individuals and organizations, or by individuals vacationing abroad. It registered as an Ontario corporation on 31 March 1980, and received registered charitable status from Revenue Canada in November 1981, one of the first LGBTQ2+ organizations in Canada to do so. This status has allowed the ArQuives to issue tax receipts for donations in kind by Canadian citizens and has been especially helpful in building the serials holdings.<sup>6</sup> Further, the ArQuives has traded duplicate titles directly with other libraries and archives, most notably the ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives (Los Angeles), the Human Sexuality Collection, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library (Ithaca, NY), and the Bibliothek, Schwules Museum (Berlin). Individual collectors, such as Jearld Moldenhauer of Fes, Morocco, and Hans Soetaert of Ghent, Belgium, have also been keen to donate or trade items.

From its inception, a rapidly growing collection of this sort needs systems for bibliographic control and tracking. A manual, paper Kardex system was used at first, later replaced by an InMagic DB/TextWorks database, which is still in place. The Kardex records were used by Alan V. Miller to compile bibliographies of holdings such as *Lesbian Periodical Holdings in the Canadian Gay Archives* (1981), and, in particular, the major bibliography *Our Own Voices: A Directory of Lesbian and Gay Periodicals, 1890–1990, Including the Complete*

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<sup>5</sup> Miller, "The Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives," v.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.





Figure 3: Part of the LGBTQ2+ serials collection stored at 65 Wellesley Street East, Toronto. Credit: Don McLeod.



Figure 4: A sampling of international LGBTQ2+ serials, from Oslo to Tokyo. Credit: Don McLeod.

*Holdings of the Canadian Gay Archives* (1991).<sup>7</sup> The ArQuives has maintained a website since 1997 ([www.arquives.ca](http://www.arquives.ca)), which includes an abbreviated version of *Our Own Voices*.

### **From Paper to Microfilm: Microfilming Projects at the ArQuives**

On several occasions, the ArQuives has been able to arrange to microfilm some of its LGBTQ<sub>2+</sub> serials holdings. Microfilming was undertaken as a way to ensure the survival of fragile paper serials in a stable medium, and to allow for distribution and sale of the microfilmed serials, mostly to other libraries and archives. In the 1980s, for example, the ArQuives loaned copies of Canadian lesbian-feminist periodicals to the Canadian Women's Movement Archives to help complete a microfiche project.<sup>8</sup> Also, beginning in the 1980s, Duncan McLaren, of McLaren Micropublishing Limited, in Toronto, secured permission to microfilm several titles from the ArQuives' holdings and sell them through his company. These included Canada's first periodical devoted to gay liberation, the *ASK Newsletter* (Vancouver, 1964–68); *The Body Politic* (Toronto, 1971–87) and its successor publications *Xtra!* (Toronto, 1984–2015), *Capital Xtra!* (Ottawa, 1993–2015), and *Xtra! West* (Vancouver, 1993–2015); *Long Time Coming* (Montreal, 1973–76), Canada's first lesbian-feminist newspaper; and the *Gay Studies Newsletter* (GSN; Toronto and elsewhere, 1974–89). McLaren has been a long-time supporter of the ArQuives and is especially interested in the preservation of LGBTQ<sub>2+</sub> history. His microfilming was meticulous; he even ironed the newspapers prior to filming to ensure they would be absolutely flat in the image.<sup>9</sup>

In 2005, the ArQuives was approached by Primary Source Microfilm (PSM), of Woodbridge, Connecticut, to participate in its *Gay Rights Movement* series project.<sup>10</sup> PSM filmed and made

<sup>7</sup> Alan V. Miller, comp., *Lesbian Periodical Holdings in the Canadian Gay Archives*, Canadian Gay Archives publication no. 4 (Toronto: Canadian Gay Archives, 1981); Alan V. Miller, comp., *Our Own Voices: A Directory of Lesbian and Gay Periodicals, 1890–1990, Including the Complete Holdings of the Canadian Gay Archives*, Canadian Gay Archives publication no. 12 (Toronto: Canadian Gay Archives, 1991).

<sup>8</sup> "Feminist, Lesbian, and Gay Periodicals on Microfiche," *Gay Archivist: Newsletter of the Canadian Gay Archives* 10 (November 1992).

<sup>9</sup> For more on McLaren Micropublishing, see: <https://www.mclarenmicro.com/>.

<sup>10</sup> Primary Source Microfilm has since been renamed Primary Source Media (PSM) and moved to Meriden, Connecticut. It is a subsidiary of Gale Cengage Learning.



available twelve series from a variety of important collections.<sup>11</sup> These ranged from the papers of pioneering gay-rights groups, including the Mattachine Society of New York (series 1), the Gay Activists Alliance (series 2), ACT UP (series 3), the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (series 4), the Albany Trust (series 5), the Atlanta Lesbian Feminist Alliance Archives (series 6); to collections of subject files and serials collected by archives such as the Lesbian Herstory Archives (series 7, 10, and 12) and the GLBT Historical Society (series 8 and 9). The ArQuives' contribution, *International Gay and Lesbian Periodicals and Newsletters*, was series 11.



Figure 5: PSM's microfilm series 11, *International Gay and Lesbian Periodicals and Newsletters*.  
Credit: Don McLeod.

<sup>11</sup> Source collections included the ArQuives (Toronto); Duke University Library (Durham, NC); the GLBT Historical Society (San Francisco); the Lesbian Herstory Archives (New York); the National Library of Medicine (Bethesda, MD); and the New York Public Library.

Series II was a massive undertaking and was supervised, at the ArQuives' end, by Alan V. Miller. In exchange for allowing PSM to digitally scan hundreds of titles from the ArQuives' collection, the ArQuives in turn received a royalty on sales, two versions (one positive and one negative) of the finished microfilm set, and considerable publicity. Miller provided lists from which PSM selected titles for inclusion. PSM also hired Morley Joe, a volunteer at the ArQuives, on a part-time basis to pull the serials issues to be filmed, prepare them for shipping to a third-party site in Toronto (where the actual filming was done), and refile them upon return. The project took months to complete. *International Gay and Lesbian Periodicals and Newsletters* was released in 2006—a set of 211 microfilm reels, containing 253,200 pages—and was accompanied by a printed (and later online) reel guide titled *International Periodicals and Newsletters from the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives*.

An editorial note in the reel guide outlined the scope of the microfilm collection, as well as criteria for inclusion.<sup>12</sup> Series II included a selection of materials from the ArQuives' collection published outside the United States, representing forty-five countries, a variety of languages, and dating from the 1950s to the early 2000s. The reels were divided geographically:

- Part 1: The Americas
  - Section 1: Canada: Reels 1–87
  - Section 2: Latin America and the Caribbean:  
Reels 87–91
- Part 2: Europe: Reels 92–178
- Part 3: Australia and New Zealand: Reels 179–207
- Part 4: Asia, Africa, and the Middle East: Reels 208–11

According to the editorial note in the reel guide, selection for inclusion was based on four main criteria: relevance (“relevance of the material to the history of gay and lesbian political and social activism around the globe”); rarity (publications were excluded if they were commonly available in libraries, appeared in other PSM series, or were available free of charge on organizational websites); research need (some materials were excluded if deemed to be of low research value, such as newsletters devoted mostly to commercial advertisements); and privacy (serials including confidential or personal

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<sup>12</sup> “Editorial Note,” in *International Periodicals*, xv–xvii.

material, such as newsletters from contact clubs, were excluded). Miller was consulted on selection matters, although final decisions on inclusion were made by PSM.

The matter of consultation and final decisions on inclusion or exclusion of titles is an interesting one. Marc Stein has argued that private corporations—in his example, EBSCO Publishing and their *LGBT Life with Full Text* digital product—were influencing the direction of historical scholarship “by favoring more respectable periodicals in digitized databases.”<sup>13</sup> That may have some impact, but I would argue that the question of inclusivity is also sometimes influenced by more technical matters. The final “wish list” of possible titles for inclusion must be vetted in several ways. For example, have issues of the title actually survived so that they can be included? Has it already been microfilmed or digitized by a competing company? Who holds the copyright, and are they willing to sign a licence to include the material? If the title is located in an archive or library, ideally in a complete set and in good condition, will the institution sign a license to allow for digitization? If yes, what are the technical logistics of digitizing those particular copies? Sometimes these or other challenges are not met, and the title is excluded.

### **From Paper, to Microform, to Digital?**

The ArQuives has a large and growing collection of LGBTQ2+ serials in paper formats, and since 2006, with the addition of PSM’s series 11, has had a large collection of microfilm holdings as well. But what about the question of access to digital formats?

Today, researchers commonly use and expect to have access to digital resources, as opposed to only print or microfilm formats, and ideally for free or at a low price. This presents a dilemma. Information is generally not free or inexpensive. PSM spent considerable resources to film all of the materials in its *Gay Rights Movement* series.

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<sup>13</sup> Marc Stein, “Canonizing Homophile Sexual Respectability: Archives, History, and Memory,” *Radical History Review* 120 (fall 2014): 55. PSM filmed, but refused to include in ser. 11, the titles *Gai Pied Hebdo* (Paris) and *Du & Ich* (Hanover, Germany) due to legal concerns over the “youthfulness” of some of the male models presented therein. Olga Virakhovskaya, PSM acquisitions editor, email message to Alan V. Miller, 15 November 2006. This decision was overruled in the digital version of the *Archives of Sexuality and Gender*, Part II, which included *Gai Pied Hebdo* but not *Du & Ich*, as well as the soft-core porn title *Numbers* (New York).

This, combined with the size of the series, meant that the price of purchasing the microform set was high. The list price for series 11 alone, in August 2018, was US\$42,200, or US\$200 per reel. The price is a set rate per reel, and there is no price difference based on the size or budget of the institutional purchaser. PSM does offer substantial discounts, occasionally, as well as discounts for bulk purchases.<sup>14</sup> These are not unusual prices for microfilm, but as a result only a few large academic and public libraries, archives, or similar institutions can afford to obtain such large collections. I have been unable to determine how many microfilm copies of series 11 have been sold, although Brian K. Smith, account executive at Gale Digital Archives, reported that at least twelve complete or partial copies had been sold in North America to 2012.<sup>15</sup>

As of 2 August 2018, OCLC's WorldCat listed copies of series 11 at thirteen locations in North America, three of them in Canada (UBC Library; University of Saskatchewan Library; and University of Toronto Library); the other locations are Cornell University Library; Emory University Library; Harvard University Library; the Library of Congress; Northern Illinois University Library; Princeton University Library; Syracuse University Library; University of Washington Library; University of Wisconsin Library; and Yale University Library.

When PSM undertook the *Gay Rights Movement* series project, it did not simply photograph the materials, but also scanned them and saved the files as 300 dpi JPEGs. This was the standard for scanning microfilm back then; today, PSM scans at 400 dpi.<sup>16</sup> PSM thus had many thousands of these digital images, and yet was reluctant to offer them for access. According to Brian K. Smith at Gale Digital Services, PSM had discussed digital products for its *Gay Rights Movement* series at length, but as late as May 2012 he would state, "but nothing is even close to near ... Something like this is years and years away (if ever)."<sup>17</sup>

The problem, of course, was similar to that of the microfilm product: obtaining permission from the copyright holders to reproduce content in a new (digital) format. Almost all of the publications in series 11, for example, are still protected under

<sup>14</sup> Philip J. Virta, senior acquisitions editor, Cengage Learning, email to the author, 6 August 2018.

<sup>15</sup> Brian K. Smith, email to the author, 15 May 2012.

<sup>16</sup> Brian K. Smith, email to the author, 8 May 2012. This information was confirmed by Smith with Robert Lester, project manager, Gale Digital Archives.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

international copyright law, and will be for some time. PSM included the following note on copyright in an “Editorial Note” in its series II reel guide: “Many of the organizations included are defunct. Every attempt was made to contact copyright holders. If you have any information about one of these publications, please contact the publisher.”<sup>18</sup> This statement suggests that although PSM made an honest effort to contact the publishers, likely by writing to their last known address, not all of them were contacted successfully or actually gave permission to have their publications microfilmed. Just because a publisher or organization is defunct or cannot be located does not mean that its publications are in the public domain. Someone owns this intellectual property. But, particularly for early LGBTQ2+ publications, it may be difficult to ascertain who actually owns the copyright, especially if the publication was run as a collective, if the articles were not attributed, or if the contributors used pseudonyms. PSM could argue—rightly, in my opinion—that by microfilming these publications it provided a valuable archival service and ensured that this content would survive in a stable format. And, due to their high price, these microform series are not widely distributed and the profit margin, for PSM, is low. Any copyright holders located after the fact could simply agree to the microfilming, or perhaps negotiate a license. However, at least as late as 2012, PSM decided to err on the side of caution and delay releasing a digital product using the files from the *Gay Rights Movement* series.

### **The Archives of Sexuality and Gender (ASG) and the ArQuives**

By 2015, there had been a change of heart. Primary Source Media was then a subsidiary of Gale Research, which was in turn owned by Gale Cengage. Gale Cengage decided that the digital files from the twelve parts of the *Gay Rights Movement* series should be combined into a new digital product, the *Archives of Human Sexuality and Identity* (AHSI), “Part I: LGBTQ History and Culture since 1940.” The new product could later be expanded into several more parts through digitization of additional materials.

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<sup>18</sup> “Editorial Note,” in *International Periodicals*, xviii.



Figure 6 : Some members of the ASG advisory board during the first meeting in New York, March 2016. Julio Capo, Jr., Jason Bauman, and Jen Manion. Credit : Don McLeod.

Planning for AHSI took place during 2015, with a six-member advisory board established in October 2015.<sup>19</sup> The board was a mixture of librarians and scholars familiar with LGBTQ2+ history and culture, and was established to offer advice on content and, particularly, to suggest serial titles, collections, or archives that should

<sup>19</sup> Members of the board appointed by 6 January 2016 were Jason Bauman, Coordinator of Collection Assessment, Humanities, and LGBT Collections, New York Public Library; Julio Capo Jr., Assistant Professor, Department of History and Commonwealth Honors College, University of Massachusetts, Amherst; Richard Godbeer, Professor of History and Director, Humanities Research Center, Virginia Commonwealth University; Jen Manion, Associate Professor of History Program in American Studies, and Director, LGBTQ Center, Connecticut College; the author; and Laure Murat, Professor, Department of French and Francophone Studies, and Director, Center for European and Russian Studies, UCLA. Board members appointed by March 2016 were Jonathan Ned Katz, independent scholar, New York; Shawn(ta) Smith-Cruz, Instruction Coordinator, Mina Rees Library, Graduate Center, CUNY, and Coordinator, Lesbian Herstory Archives, New York; and Daniel C. Tsang, Distinguished Librarian, University of California, Irvine. The project was coordinated by Ray Abruzzi (2015–16), Jessica Bomarito (2016–17), and Philip J. Vitta (2017–).



be digitized. I was approached because of my long-time association with the ArQuives; my position at the University of Toronto Library as a professional librarian, head of acquisitions, and gender studies selector; and my many years of experience in both book and serials publishing. The first in-person meeting of the board took place in New York, 11–13 March 2016, and it was at this time that Gale Cengage took the opportunity to launch AHSI Part I at a party held on 12 March at the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Community Center. Discussions at the board meeting also led to a name change for the project, to the *Archives of Sexuality and Gender* (ASG).<sup>20</sup>

Development of ASG Part II commenced in 2016 and continued through 2017. Part II, also titled LGBTQ History and Culture since 1940, complemented Part I and broadened the depth of content of the series. It contained more than 1.4 million pages of content from a wider range of sources, including newsletters, periodicals, photographs, posters, personal papers, manuscripts, pamphlets, and other materials.<sup>21</sup> Many of the same source collections were involved again, but with new additions including the Hall-Carpenter Archive, London School of Economics; the Human Sexuality Collection, Cornell University Library (Ithaca, NY); the Lambda Archives of San Diego; and the ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives (Los Angeles).

The ArQuives played a prominent role in providing material for Part II, as it had for Part I. More than fifty LGBTQ2+ serials titles were scanned, including full sets of the important Canadian publications of Pink Triangle Press: *The Body Politic*, *fab* magazine, *Xtra!*, *Capital Xtra!*, and *Xtra! West*. Other serials scanned included titles of LGBTQ2+ interest, such as *After Dark* (New York) and the beefcake titles *Adonis* (Union City, NJ), *Grecian Guild Pictorial* (Washington, DC), *Strength and Health* (York, PA), and *Tomorrow's Man* (New York). The ArQuives serials included in Part II were virtually all from Britain, Canada, and the United States, as compared

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<sup>20</sup> The majority of customers for ASG are academic institutions, though large public libraries, national libraries, state libraries, and even a few high schools have purchased it. Pricing is based on a five-tier model linked to annual spending ability, with institutions with small budgets at Tier 5 and those with large budgets at Tier 1. ASG Part I has sold more than 260 units from the launch date until August 2018. Virta, email.

<sup>21</sup> "Gale Launches Second Installment of Archives of Sexuality & Gender Series," *College & Research Libraries News*, September 2017, 413.

to the massive collection of international serials that were scanned for Part I. Although far fewer of the ArQuives' serials titles were included in Part II, they did total 223,543 pages of images. Pink Triangle Press's Canadian publications alone accounted for 151,291 pages. Other important materials from the ArQuives' holdings were also scanned, including the entire poster collection (3,028 images); the international vertical files (4,381 files), containing many thousands of images of clippings and flyers on individuals and organizations outside of Canada and the United States; and the papers of Douglas Sanders and the Association for Social Knowledge (thirty-three folders, with hundreds of pages of images). As with Part I, the ArQuives provided a list of serials titles for scanning. Gale Cengage also engaged external consultants to look at the lists and to suggest additional titles. In the end, the decision on what to include in Part II was made by Gale Cengage.

Preparation for scanning of the materials at the ArQuives began in earnest in May 2016 and intensified with a visit to the ArQuives, on 9 June 2016, by Jessica Bomarito, the coordinator of the project for Gale Cengage. It was decided that the scanning should be done on site at the ArQuives, which would make access to the materials much easier. Gale Cengage signed an agreement with the ArQuives for use of the collection, and engaged Ristech Company Inc., of Burlington, Ontario, to do the scanning, which began on 22 August 2016. Coordination of the project for the ArQuives was done by myself, with the assistance of Stephen Shurgold, a library student hired to help with retrieval, filing, and staging. Ristech sent two Book2Net Kiosk Profi A2 scanners, with two operators, which were installed in a top-floor meeting area. Lists of targeted materials were finalized and then used to retrieve items from other areas in the house or from storage at 65 Wellesley Street East. Weekly teleconference meetings were held to track progress, and there was additional email correspondence. A third scanner, with operator, was installed late in 2016 to speed up the project. The completed scans were sent on drives via courier to Primary Source Media in Meriden, Connecticut. Gale Cengage's management team oversaw quality control of the images, and all metadata captured from the original source was compiled and edited by a vendor in India, and then reviewed by Gale.<sup>22</sup> The final scanning and retakes were completed on 7 April 2017, and the scanners were removed on 18 April. Part II was officially released in

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<sup>22</sup> Virta, email.

August 2017.<sup>23</sup> For its effort in the endeavour, the ArQuives receives a yearly fee, based on sales, as well as a digital copy of all the scans taken of materials accessed there. These scans are available for internal use by researchers at the ArQuives.

Gale Cengage launched Part III in 2019, which contains materials from an earlier era, to 1940, and greatly expands access to previously obscure corners of LGBTQ2+ history and culture. Part III includes the entire contents of the “Private Case,” the famous collection of Victorian erotica housed at the British Library (London), as well as content from the Kinsey Institute (Bloomington, IN) and the New York Academy of Medicine. Additional parts are in preparation.

### Internal Digitization Projects at the ArQuives

The ArQuives has never had the funding or staff resources to undertake large-scale digitization projects independently. There have been two limited, in-house initiatives recently, though. In April 2014, Professor Elspeth Brown of the Department of History, University of Toronto, and also a volunteer at the ArQuives, received funding from the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) Insight Grant program to establish the LGBTQ Oral History Digital Collaboratory, based at the ArQuives. The project will run through 2019 and is the largest LGBTQ oral history project in North America, “connecting over 200 life stories with new methodologies in digital history, collaborative research, and archival practice.”<sup>24</sup> There is considerable trans\* material in this project and, coincidentally, large donations of materials, particularly from trans\* activists Rupert Raj and Mirha-Soleil Ross, were received by the ArQuives in recent years. These donations included not only personal papers and photographs, but serials that were later digitized through the Collaboratory and made available, with Dublin Core metadata,

<sup>23</sup> ASG Part II has sold more than 120 units from the launch date until August 2018. Virta, e-mail.

<sup>24</sup> See: <http://lgbtqdigitalcollaboratory.org>. K. J. Rawson’s Digital Transgender Archive has also partnered with the Collaboratory, and some of the ArQuives’ trans\* materials are displayed on their site as well. See: [https://www.digitaltransgenderarchive.net/catalog?f%5Binstitution\\_name\\_ssim%5D%5B%5D=Transgender+Archives%2C+University+of+Victoria](https://www.digitaltransgenderarchive.net/catalog?f%5Binstitution_name_ssim%5D%5B%5D=Transgender+Archives%2C+University+of+Victoria).

via the ArQuives' website.<sup>25</sup> These include two pioneering serials published by Raj: *Gender Review: The FACTual Journal* (the journal of the Foundation for the Advancement of Canadian Transsexuals; later the Federation of American and Canadian Transsexuals, or FACT, Calgary/Hamilton/Toronto, 1978–85) and *Metamorphosis: The International Magazine of Transsexualism* (Toronto, 1982–88); as well as the four issues of Ross's magazine *gendertrash* (Toronto, 1993–95).



Figure 7: Ristech Company scanning serials at the ArQuives, 34 Isabella Street, Toronto, December 2016. Credit: Don McLeod.

Another initiative, “LGBTQ+ Tabloid Newspapers,” was created in 2015 by Kevin Manuel and Ewan Matthews, with funding from a Teaching About Diversity Grant, from Ryerson University’s Learning and Teaching Office, and from the Ryerson University Library and Archives. The ArQuives has a large collection of clippings relating to LGBTQ2+ people taken from the tabloid scandal sheets of Toronto, particularly from the 1940s through the 1970s. Examples from *Flash*, *Hush*, *Justice Weekly*, *TAB*, and *T.N.T.: True News Times* are included. Many of these clippings are in deteriorating condition. A selection

<sup>25</sup> Permission to digitize these titles were obtained from Raj and Ross in advance of the project.

of these were digitized and placed as a collection on the ArQuives' website, complete with Dublin Core metadata.<sup>26</sup>



Figure 8 : Ristech Company scanning serials at the ArQuives, 34 Isabella Street, Toronto, December 2016. Credit : Don McLeod.

## Conclusion

Similar to many other libraries and archives in the early twenty-first century, the LGBTQ2+ serials collection at the ArQuives survives, and grows, in multiple formats. The legacy paper collection is huge, and still growing. Although there are still many paper-based publications being produced, an increasing number of titles have not survived or have gone entirely digital (including those published by Pink Triangle Press). Online sites have killed the market for pornography in paper formats, and many erotica titles have been discontinued. The ArQuives intends to continue collecting as many paper LGBTQ+ serials as possible, and to fill in missing titles or gaps in holdings. At this point, it is certainly not unrealistic to aim for a collection

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<sup>26</sup> See: <http://digitalcollections.clga.ca/exhibits/show/tabloids>. See also: Kevin Manuel and Ewan Matthews, "Getting the Word OUT! Digitizing the LGBTQ+ Past of Ryerson and Beyond," *Open Shelf* (Ontario Library Association), 1 November 2017, <http://open-shelf.ca/171101-ocula-getting-the-word-out/>.

of fifteen thousand or more titles in paper. The ArQuives accepts gifts of LGBTQ2+ serials that it does not already have, and is keen to hear from organizations or individuals that may be interested in trading duplicate items.

Where does this leave the ArQuives and its digital aspirations? At this time, the ArQuives certainly does not have the resources to undertake additional large-scale digitization projects on its own. Harvesting and archiving of online periodicals is also beyond the capability of the ArQuives, and perhaps should be left to services such as the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine.<sup>27</sup> Perhaps small-scale digital projects carried out in-house, or larger ones, in collaboration, are possible.

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### **Author Biography**

Donald W. McLeod is the head of book and serials acquisitions at the University of Toronto Libraries, and has been a volunteer at the ArQuives for more than thirty-five years. His most recent book is *Lesbian and Gay Liberation in Canada: A Selected Annotated Chronology, 1976–1981* (Toronto: Homewood Books, 2017).

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<sup>27</sup> The content of Pink Triangle Press's online *Daily Xtra*, for example, has been captured on a regular schedule by the Wayback Machine since the magazine began publishing online—as *Xtra!*—in 2013. See: <https://web.archive.org/details/www.dailyxtra.com>.