

LGBTIQ e-books comes from populations that have poor access to LGBTIQ print books owing to lack of local library resources or safety and privacy concerns (p. 218).

As Wexelbaum acknowledges in her introduction and conclusion, a volume like *Queers Online* can only provide “a mere snapshot of existing projects, and a hint of what could come in the future” (p. 2). Despite the difficulties of addressing a subject that propagates such sprawling and divergent concerns, *Queers Online* offers professionals and scholars in archives and libraries an accessible and engaging look at the challenges and opportunities faced by LGBTIQ information seekers and providers in the digital age. The book delivers a lucid assessment of the situation as it stands, a detailed look at the work currently being done, and recommendations for best practices that are broadly applicable and, in many cases, urgently needed.

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**Unarrested Archives: Case Studies in Twentieth-Century Canadian Women’s Authorship.** LINDA M. MORRA. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014. ix, 244 pp. ISBN 978-1-4426-2642-3.

In her introduction, Linda M. Morra states that “*Unarrested Archives* is in part about archives, specifically Canadian women authors’ literary records housed both in and beyond official institutions” (p. 3). The book is divided into five case studies, sandwiched between an introduction and an excellent but all too short conclusion. By arranging the text in an interesting crescendo of chronology and experience, beginning with well-known performer and author E. Pauline Johnson and ending with the internationally recognized author and activist M. NourbeSe Philip, Morra provides us with a thorough and fascinating history of Canadian women authors’ lives, the experience of women authors in Canada, and their varied yet similar experiences in relation to their archives.

Morra describes arrested archives as being held in-house and privately, such as those of M. NourbeSe Philip, while unarrested archives, such as those of Jane Rule, have been turned over or surrendered to a public institution. Morra uses this lens of “arrested” and “unarrested” archives to examine each writer’s case study. While Morra’s interesting premise of “arrested” and “unarrested” archives piqued this reader’s interest, it ultimately left many stones unturned: the reader would benefit from a more fulsome explanation of the concepts of “arrested” and “unarrested” archives as most are not likely familiar with them. This ambitious work perhaps attempted too many topics at once, at least for an archivally focused reader. Many in the archival profession are starved for

an in-depth discussion of a number of the topics touched on here, and in the end, the archivist is not the target audience. To be fair, Morra is not an archivist. Currently a visiting professor at the University of California, Berkeley, Morra is a full professor of English at Bishop's University in Lennoxville, Quebec, where she teaches Canadian literature, Canadian and cultural studies, Indigenous literatures, women's writing, feminist theory, theories of globalization, and American literature. She also serves as the president of the Quebec Writers' Federation.

Her academic credentials are readily apparent in the extensive and thorough research presented in the case studies of these five extraordinary Canadian women: E. Pauline Johnson, Emily Carr, Sheila Watson, Jane Rule, and M. NourbeSe Philip. We learn a great deal about the trials, tribulations, and tenacity of these important artists through anecdotes of their personal and professional challenges. Morra expertly guides us through an exploration of the authors' awareness of crafting an image of themselves, both through their writing and through the assemblage and very deliberate placement of their archives – whether held privately, within their own control, as in the case of Philip, or deposited with a confidante, which in the case of Carr eventually led to the donation of her records to a public institution. The importance to Sheila Watson that her papers be held on their own, in their own right – and not as an adjunct to those of her husband – is clearly related.

Themes of voice, silence, appropriation, and oppression are common throughout the five case studies. For example, in the lengthy chapter on Emily Carr, Morra provides us with a thorough discussion of the issues of cultural appropriation on the part of Carr, including the “artistic license” she took in representing an indigenous culture as “dying” or “endangered” while concurrently presenting her work as an authoritative or true source for research. “Carr was also involved in a series of ‘appropriative acts,’ including building an Indigenous archive, which implicated her in the colonizing process” (p. 51), potentially running the risk of silencing or distorting the voices in the archive. Carr clearly felt that she was a type of cultural saviour as “the terms in which she justified her painting came to revolve around preservation of indigenous artefacts rather than her own artistic accomplishment” (p. 49). Morra places these observations alongside the complication that Carr's voice was arguably also appropriated at times by male advocates, such as Lawren Harris and Ira Dilworth, who assisted in assembling, preserving, and placing her archives. In the case of Jane Rule, editors, publishers, and government officials were those attempting to silence her voice. Rule's archive documents “how she consistently struggled to safeguard her freedom of expression and her literary integrity over the span of her career and to expand the space for the articulating of queer concerns” (p. 112). Rule's archive could be considered literally “arrested” at points as Canadian border officials seized her work, which amply illustrates realities occurring despite her efforts to safeguard her archives.

Through these case studies, Morra does a good job of documenting how women writers were “regulated and contained” by various forces and sources. All five women existed in often antagonistic personal and professional relationships that were “further vexed by questions of class, race and sexual orientation affecting women’s productive disruptions” (p. 7). The case of Philip is a fascinating one and clearly demonstrates repeated institutional and organizational failures, which led to her decision to create and personally retain a private archive, to ensure the survival and security of her experience, rather than subject herself to further potential systemic institutional discrimination and abuse. As Morra explains, “Unlike Rule, who found a means of agency by protecting the legacy of her life and work through formal repositories, Philip located a sense of agency outside such repositories” (pp. 150–51). Furthermore, Philip’s arrested, counter archive “is positioned to bypass the claims of a national identity that had previously excluded her from representation because of her race and gender” (p. 52). It was surprising to this reader that the most recent temporal example of Philip actually represents a more vitriolic and difficult experience than perhaps some of the earlier studies of Johnson and Carr. The study of Philip’s experience provides an excellent if disturbing example of the importance and necessity of merely keeping archival evidence, whether it be arrested or unarrested. The relatively brief treatment concerning this private “minor” arrested or “counter” archive would benefit from a lengthier examination of this more unusual practice.

*Unarrested Archives* successfully raises many important questions while laying a solid foundation for women’s literary history in Canada. Overall, Morra’s presentation of these five unique archives provides a thought-provoking and broad history of the experience of Canadian women writers, their struggles to survive and overcome adversity and oppression of various kinds, and their participation in the creation and preservation of their lasting legacies through their archives. It is Morra’s limited discussion of things archival that can leave the reader with a mostly unsatisfied appetite for a lengthier examination and explanation of her multiple topics that would relate them back to the stated archival home base mentioned in the introduction. *Unarrested Archives* is an invigorating read likely to spark discussion and perhaps a renewed sense of purpose for archivists. Linda Morra, we want more!

**Jennifer Toews**

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