

Conference planners deliberately excluded the themes of urban society and reform because of the paucity of sources in archives relating to the city. A rich regional flavour was imparted by nine papers devoted to urbanization in the West and an almost equal number to Central Canada. Ronald Rudin of Concordia examined the dependence of Quebec towns on branch banks to lure industry and capital; David Knight's study of the seat of government question in the Canadas revealed a fierce inter-city rivalry fuelled by city support regions. Perhaps the highlight of the conference was the session devoted to an evaluation of Michael Katz's *The People of Hamilton, Canada West*, a work which has provoked sharp criticism from some scholarly quarters. Nevertheless, the session clearly demonstrated that archivists cannot ignore Katz and his cohorts who have helped open new frontiers in research methodology through the systematic examination of public records.

Archivists properly regard historical research trends from a standpoint not so much of historical discovery as of types and importance of sources used. The historian attempts to recreate the past, but archivists are tempted to examine a book back to front — sources before narrative. Urban history, if this conference is a reliable yardstick, relies heavily on the public record: assessment rolls, census records, town plans and land records. Papers on urban development in the West, for instance, cried out for embellishment and clarification which only the records of that formidable realtor, the Canadian Pacific Railway, could provide. The conference also considered the bureaucratic intransigence of Statistics Canada, census taker and custodian, which appears to have no intention of making the post-1871 census records public on a regular basis. In fact, it was clear that this federal department considers the disclosure of the 1871 census in the 1940s a mistake. Without some acceptable provision for public accessibility, quantitative researchers face the prospect of having their studies seriously circumscribed and limited permanently to the period 1851 to 1871.

In Canadian historical writing, approaches once considered frivolous and trendy have taken on elements of respectability. The Guelph event was a clear indication that in Canada, urban history now shares some measure of that respectability.

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## Canadian Gay Archives

The Canadian Gay Archives constitutes the archives of the Gay Liberation Movement in Canada. In less than fifteen years this movement has grown to include more than ninety organizations stretching from Victoria to St. John's. They range from social, religious, and political groups to periodical publications such as *The Body Politic* (Toronto), *After Stonewall* (Winnipeg), *Long Time Coming* (Montreal), and *Gay Tide* (Vancouver). These organizations produce a considerable amount of material, both interesting and valuable, which is now being systematically collected and preserved by the Archives.

In 1973 Jearld Moldenhauer of The Body Politic Collective proposed that an archives be formed to house and arrange the wide variety of material arriving at the office of the newspaper. It was at that time an unorganized but clearly important collection of documents. During the first year of operation contact was made with gay and lesbian groups advising them of the formation of the Archives and soliciting material from them.

One of the first acquisitions of the Canadian Gay Liberation Movement Archives, as it was then called, was the papers of the University of Toronto Homophile Association (UTHA). Upon arrival, these files were dispersed throughout the main file with its

many subject headings. Meanwhile, records of *The Body Politic* continued to be transferred to the Archives in a somewhat haphazard way. Also, through the combined effort of the newspaper's exchange programme and the Archives itself, an important collection of gay periodicals from around the world was brought together.

By 1975 it had become apparent that the success of the Archives would only be assured by the formation of a sound organizational structure independent of the newspaper. In December of that year, the operation of the archives was taken over by an Archives Collective consisting of six people. This Collective was and continues to be an autonomous body operating within Pink Triangle Press. Under the umbrella of this corporation, which provides office space and financial support, the Collective has full control over the operation of the Archives.

At this same time a statement of purpose was drawn up, priorities set, and decisions made regarding the organization of the collection along archival lines. The UTHA and *The Body Politic* files were reconstituted. All subject headings with the exception of organizations, individuals and events were removed from the main file. A catalogue of the more than 250 periodicals was prepared, four thousand clippings from 125 Canadian newspapers were collected and arranged chronologically and a separate index for them was begun. New contacts were made with various gay and lesbian groups, encouraging them to keep good records and indicating that the Archives was prepared to house these.

The Archives itself is a part of the movement whose story it attempts to preserve. This is reflected in the membership of the Collective and in the general organization and stated purpose of the Archives, which owes its existence to the interest shown by movement people. In addition to the preservation of the records of the various gay and lesbian groups the Archives acts as a resource centre for the movement. It actively seeks to trace the history of gay people in Canada in pre-movement times. Because the Archives receives almost all of its material from a still active movement, it is essential for several reasons that the Archives remain in the hands of the gay people. The relatively young age of the movement gives the Archives a unique opportunity of being able to preserve a very complete picture of gay activities. Attention is being paid to providing for future documentation likely to be acquired by the Archives.

The Canadian Gay Archives expects to take its proper place in the archives community. At present a member of the Toronto Area Archivists Group, it sees itself as a public institution dedicated to the preservation of a part of Canada's history. Its resources are available to researchers at 24 Duncan Street (Box 639, Station A, Toronto, Canada M5W 1G2).

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## **SAA Conference — 1977**

Salt Lake City, Utah, played host most hospitably to the forty-first annual conference of the Society of American Archivists (SAA) in October 1977. The Program Committee's objective was to expand Association President Robert M. Warner's theme "The Continuing Quest: Archival Professionalism and Education." Despite initial appearances, the programme proved to be far from repetitive. Instead, it was tightly organized, balancing variety with thematic unity as some of the programme titles suggest: "Archival Literature: The State of the Art," "The Organized Profession," "Art, Craft, or Science: Archival Education in Graduate Schools," "Appraisal of Machine-Readable Records," "Disaster Prevention and Control," "Should the Archival Profession Require Certification?" "American Indian Archives," "Reference Service to