

# The Iran Album (1974)

## Some Sleeve Notes<sup>1</sup>

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**ABSTRACT** In 1974, feminist writers Germaine Greer, Betty Friedan, and senior United Nations official Helvi Sipila spent six days in Iran. They were invited by Princess Ashraf Pahlavi, the twin sister of the Shah, and the Women's Association of Iran. The Germaine Greer Archive at the University of Melbourne Archives contains a photograph album that documents this trip. This article uses the Trip to Iran Photograph Album as a case study to demonstrate what Michelle Caswell and Marika Cifor describe as a feminist ethics approach to archival work. It looks at how the creation of detailed metadata can be an act of caregiving and empathy and an opportunity to build – or restore – relationships between objects and the people and places they depict. Original order, ambient knowledge, provenance, conservation, and the powers of social media have helped me give voice (or voices) to this extraordinary archival object.

<sup>1</sup> I want to thank the two anonymous peer reviewers for their thorough and thoughtful suggestions on the first version of this article; *Archivaria* General Editor Jennifer Douglas for her encouragement; and my colleagues at the University of Melbourne Archives, especially the archivists working with me on the Germaine Greer Archive, for their expertise, companionship, good humour, and support. My sincere thanks, also, to Hamid Schricker and Mina Atabai for their generosity and willingness to answer many questions.

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**RÉSUMÉ** En 1974, les écrivaines féministes Germaine Greer, Betty Friedan et une représentante haut-placée des Nations Unies, Helvi Sipilä, passèrent six jours en Iran. Elles avaient été invitées par la princesse Ashraf Pahlavi, la sœur jumelle du Shah, ainsi que par l'Association des femmes de l'Iran. Les archives de Germaine Greer, aux University of Melbourne Archives, contiennent un album de photographies qui documente ce voyage. Cet article se sert de cet album de photographies du voyage en Iran comme étude de cas pour illustrer ce que Michelle Caswell et Marika Cifor décrivent comme une approche éthique féministe envers le travail en archivistique. Il examine comment la création de métadonnées détaillées peut devenir un acte d'aide naturelle et d'empathie, ainsi qu'une occasion de bâtir – ou de rétablir – des liens entre les objets et les personnes et endroits qu'ils dépeignent. L'ordre original, la connaissance contextuelle, la provenance, la préservation et le pouvoir des médias sociaux m'ont aidé à donner une voix (ou des voix) à cet extraordinaire objet d'archives.

In 1973, Her Imperial Highness Princess Ashraf Pahlavi – the twin sister of the Shah of Iran – invited three distinguished foreign women to visit her country as guests of the Women’s Association of Iran. Feminist writers Germaine Greer and Betty Friedan, and Helvi Sipilä, an assistant secretary general of the United Nations, were the chosen three. Kate Millett, author of *Sexual Politics*, was also invited but did not accept. The visit was a precursor to the UN’s International Women’s Year 1975; the Princess Ashraf was in charge of the consultative committee that wrote the Draft World Plan of Action for the year.<sup>2</sup>

In May 1974, Greer, Friedan, and Sipilä spent a total of six days in Tehran, Isfahan, and Shiraz. They visited the Shahyad Monument, Golestan Palace, and Persepolis. They dined with university presidents and governors, lectured at universities, toured bazaars and coffee shops, and spoke with students at one of the association’s 75 Women’s Welfare Centers.

The Germaine Greer Archive, which is housed at the University of Melbourne Archives, includes a photographic album that was gifted to Greer as a souvenir of this incongruous journey.<sup>3</sup> I became aware of the album in late 2015, not long after I had started work as the curator of the Greer Archive. At that stage, the archive was controlled via a single box list, which had been created by University Archivist Katrina Dean when she packed up the archive at Greer’s home at The Mills, Stump Cross. The first unit on the list was described as “Correspondence, Aitken, Gillon” and the last one, unit 492, was “Wall Calenders.” The list was an intimidating document. I was now the person who had to control and interpret the Greer collection, and as I studied the list, looking for a way in, my eye kept stopping at unit 474, “Trip to Iran – Photograph Album.”

Eventually, I took it out for a look. The album comprises 36 black-and-white gelatin-silver prints (16.5 x 21.5 cm) mounted on black card and interleaved with embossed tissue paper. The front and back covers are painted with intricate, gleaming designs of gold and silver leaf and red leather, with central images of historic buildings. The album is bound with a red silk cord and tassel. I considered the object on its white viewing pillow. It was beautiful but opaque – a curiosity almost. The photographs had no captions. The album was housed in

2 University of Melbourne Archives [hereafter UMA], Germaine Greer Archive [hereafter GGA] 2014.0042.01052, Correspondence Women 1973, Mahnaz Afkhami, Secretary-General Women’s Organization of Iran, to Germaine Greer, 17 October 1973.

3 UMA, GGA, 2014.0054.00258 [Trip to Iran Photograph Album].



FIGURE 1 University of Melbourne Archives, Germaine Greer Archive, 2014.0054.00258 [Trip to Iran Photograph Album], first page and tissue. Germaine Greer arrives in Iran, May 1974. Preservation digitization: University Digitisation Services.

its own box. There were no letters or notes tucked inside it, no envelopes or packaging, no evidence of provenance at all.

I opened the cover and saw the first photograph through a screen of fine, patterned tissue. In the image, an Iran Air plane has touched down and deposited Greer in Tehran, the capital city. Soon she would be whisked off to the Hilton. Women are seen welcoming her. Although the image is veiled, none of the women are. That is what first struck me about these photographs: the thing that was missing – the hijab. The Iranian women are clad, as Greer would later write, in “head to toe Guy Laroche.”<sup>4</sup> The photographs in the album tell a story so at odds with current media representations of women in the Middle East that I was shocked. The album itself appeared out of place in the archive of this prominent

4 Germaine Greer, “Germaine Greer Remembers the Woman Who Founded Modern Feminism,” *The Guardian* (7 February 2006), in UMA, GGA, 2014.0046.01035.

feminist. What could the Middle East teach the West about feminism? Wasn't it supposed to be the other way around?

The orphaned object hummed, but I could not make out the tune. It demanded my attention, but I did not know why. This object wanted to speak. How could I help it find the words? I had to pay attention. In this article, I suggest that attention is a simple but powerful way that a curator or archivist can give care, and I explore some of the ways in which attention is given.

This article uses the Trip to Iran Photograph Album (hereafter referred to as the Iran Album) to argue that the creation of detailed, item-level description is a way of sharing, preserving, and transmitting the diffuse and ephemeral, but valuable, knowledge held by teams of archivists and the institutions in which they (we) work.<sup>5</sup> The Iran Album is a case study in how research and outreach conducted by archivists can restore or create new “webs of affective responsibility” for records and the communities they document.<sup>6</sup> Specifically, this essay tracks my work to shift the Iran Album from an object whose meaning was almost entirely defined by the writings and celebrity status of its first keeper, Germaine Greer, to one that also gives voice and name to the Iranian people and places in the photographs and the meanings these people ascribe to the events contained in the album's pages. Their perspectives are now securely embedded in the descriptive metadata, thereby providing a more ethical, just, accurate, and rich foundation for future research projects.<sup>7</sup>

- 5 See Michelle Caswell, “The Archive’ Is Not an Archives: Acknowledging the Intellectual Contributions of Archival Studies,” *Reconstruction: Studies in Contemporary Culture* 16, no. 1 (8 April 2016), accessed 27 August 2017, <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/7bn4v1fk>; see especially the section on representation and description. For a forensic account of the politics of collecting, arrangement, and description in relationship to photographs, see Joanna Sassoon, *Agents of Empire: How E.L. Mitchell's Photographs Shaped Australia* (Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2017).
- 6 The phrase “web of affective responsibility” is from Michelle Caswell and Marika Cifor, “From Human Rights to Feminist Ethics: Radical Empathy in the Archives,” *Archivaria* 81 (Spring 2016): 23–43. I have also been influenced by the web of relationships among creators, keepers, communities, and users traced in Verne Harris, *A Prisoner in the Garden: Opening Nelson Mandela's Prison Archive* (Johannesburg: Penguin, 2005).
- 7 For a general discussion of the ethics of historical research, including the ethics of archival research with photographs and songs, see Rachel Buchanan and Maria Tumarkin, “Bread and Breath: Two Reflections on the Ethics of (Doing) History,” *Australian Humanities Review* 52 (May 2012), accessed 28 August 2017, <http://www.australianhumanitiesreview.org/archive/Issue-May-2012/buchanan&tumarkin.html>. For a specific example of forming relationships alongside communities that are documented in archival photographic collections, see Judith Binney and Gillian Chaplin, “Taking the Photographs Home: The Recovery of a Māori History,” *Visual Anthropology* 4, no. 3–4 (1991): 431–42. My ideas about the ethics

Until I entered the Greer Archive, I had only met archives as a researcher, first as an undergraduate history student and then as a doctoral student, an author, an academic, and a professional and *whanau* (family) historian. I did not create metadata; I encountered it. What I found sometimes troubled me. My first book, *The Parihaka Album: Lest We Forget*, is named after an archival object – the Parihaka Album at the Alexander Turnbull Library in Wellington, New Zealand – and one of the submerged but insistent themes of the book is the problem of description in archives, galleries, museums, and online databases and the gap between what the metadata says or does not say and what others know. These others include curators, archivists, authors, and the people the records are about or the descendants of these people, including myself and my relatives in Taranaki Māori communities.<sup>8</sup> In New Zealand, pressure from Māori historians, lawyers, activists, and artists, as well as the communities we belong to and also document and serve, has meant that settlements for Treaty of Waitangi claims now contain clauses relating to control and care of archival collections, including collections created as a result of the treaty claims and settlement processes.<sup>9</sup> Likewise, in Australia and elsewhere, other marginalized communities, such as people who were placed in out-of-home care as children, are now claiming the right to direct participation in how records about them are accessed, controlled, processed, and interpreted. In short, they are seeking insider researcher status.<sup>10</sup>

of history-making are strongly influenced by the work of Māori scholars, including Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (London and New York: Zed Books, 1999); Aroha Harris, “Theorize This: We Are What We Write,” *Te Pouhere Kōrero* 3 (2009): 83–89; and Nephia Mahuika, “Korero Tuku Iho: Our Gift and Our Responsibility,” *Te Pouhere Kōrero* 4 (2010): 24–40.

- 8 Rachel Buchanan, *The Parihaka Album: Lest We Forget* (Wellington, NZ: Huia, 2009); see especially chap. 6, “Pictures,” 111–43, and chap. 10, “Pioneers,” 235–68. For example, in 2003, John Sullivan the curator of photography at the Alexander Turnbull, told me that a famous and widely reproduced 1882 photograph is a composite (e.g. faked) image but this knowledge is not included in the metadata: <http://mp.natlib.govt.nz/detail/?id=21244&l=en> (accessed 27 August 2017).
- 9 For example, the 2013 Tūhoe settlement included the establishment of Te Wharepuri, a library-archive that holds Māori Land Court Minute Books as well as the iwi’s Waitangi Tribunal claims research and reports; see Tūhoe, “Te Kura Whare: Te Wharepuri – Library/Archive,” <http://www.ngaituhoe.iwi.nz/library-archives>. For a Taranaki perspective on settlement archives, see Rachel Buchanan, “Decolonizing the Archives: The Work of New Zealand’s Waitangi Tribunal,” *Public History Review* 14 (2007), accessed 27 August 2017, <http://dx.doi.org/10.5130/phrj.v14i0.399>.
- 10 Jacqueline Z. Wilson and Frank Golding, “Latent Scrutiny: Personal Archives as Perpetual Mementos of the Official Gaze,” *Archival Science* 16, no. 1 (March 2016): 93–109.

People who have been the subjects of record-making are now insisting on being part of archival description processes and access management policies, and this activism is, in turn, shaping how archivists and archival scholars think about the care of records.<sup>11</sup> An essay by Michelle Caswell and Marika Cifor responds to the multiple questions being asked about the role of records, archivists, and archives by shifting the conversation from one defined by human rights and sometimes abstract legal and moral obligations to one defined by sensitivity to others, care, and hospitality – what the authors call a “feminist ethics of care” approach to archival work.<sup>12</sup> This approach suggests that “radical empathy” guides decision-making in four key archival relationships: between the archivist and record creator; between the archivist and the subject of the records; between the archivist and user; and between the archivist and wider community.<sup>13</sup>

## Ambient Knowledge

This article responds to Caswell and Cifor’s call for case studies on how an archival ethics of care might work in “real world environments,” but it begins by acknowledging another relationship that is drenched in affect: the relationship archivists have with each other.<sup>14</sup> These relationships produce a huge amount of valuable knowledge about collections, donors, patrons, and institutional politics, but this knowledge is diffuse, ephemeral, and easily lost (when an archivist leaves, for example). It is rarely captured in finding aids. I call this knowledge “ambient knowledge,” a phrase that draws on ideas about ambient intelligence and ambient intimacy, which are common to computer and social sciences and in social media and marketing research; I also draw on the dictionary definition of ambience as an atmosphere, mood, feel or flavour, something that encompasses, enfold, and surrounds.<sup>15</sup>

11 Caswell and Cifor, “From Human Rights to Feminist Ethics,” 36.

12 *Ibid.*, 24–30.

13 *Ibid.*, 33–41.

14 *Ibid.*, 42.

15 I heard the phrase “ambient Internet” while I was listening to ABC Radio National in early 2017. The ambient Internet is the net’s fourth phase, according to Tristan Louis, “Internet 4.0: The Ambient Internet Is Here,” *TLN.net* (blog), 11 February 2017, <http://www.tln.net/blog/2017/02/11/internet-4-0>. Louis writes that Internet 1.0 is 1968–1995, pre-Web; Internet 2.0 is 1995–2010; Internet 3.0 is the mobile Internet post-2008; and Internet 4.0, the ambient Internet, is “the final stage of the Internet

I became aware of the existence and extent of this type of knowledge in late 2015, when I started as the curator of the Greer Archive and so crossed the “archival boundary” to become an insider researcher (archivist) rather than an outsider one (historian).<sup>16</sup> The Greer Archive is a world-class collection of personal papers that currently occupies 82 metres of shelf space at the University of Melbourne Archives and is still in the process of being created.<sup>17</sup> From early 2016 onward, I led a team of four archivists (two full-time, two part-time) who were cataloguing and processing the Greer Archive to make it more accessible to researchers. We worked without interruption because the archive was closed to researchers during the completion of this project. Under the direction of then University Archivist Katrina Dean, we created detailed finding aids for the series that were deemed to be of highest research value. We applied a rigorous access management framework to guide our decisions about closure of selected records.<sup>18</sup> The university’s desire to manage the risks (third-party privacy, legal, copyright, and more) posed by the Greer Archive meant that we had the resources to do detailed granular-level arrangement and description

penetration that leads to the Internet disappearing into the background. Like electricity and running water, the Internet is rapidly becoming a core service....” Ambient intelligence (AmI) was a phrase first used in computer science in the late 1990s. It “refers to smart electronic environments that are sensitive and responsive to the presence of people”; see Bernt Schiele, Alejandro Buchmann, Anind K. Dey, Hans Gellersen, and Boris De Ruyter, eds., *Proceedings of the 2007 European Conference on Ambient Intelligence*, Darmstadt, Germany, 7–10 November 2007 (Berlin: Springer, 2007). For synonyms of “ambient,” see *The Penguin Dictionary of English Synonyms* (London: Bloomsbury, 1991), 26.

- 16 I encountered the phrase “archival boundary” in Chris Hurley’s work, specifically “The Making and Keeping of Records (1): What Are Finding Aids For?,” *Archives and Manuscripts* 26, no. 1, (1998): 59. My transitional stage, between outsider and insider, was made possible by an *Australian Book Review’s* Sidney Myer Fund fellowship in 2011. The fellowship resulted in an essay on archives and personal papers. See Rachel Buchanan, “Sweeping Up the Ashes’: The Politics of Collecting Personal Papers,” *Australian Book Review* 337 (December 2011–January 2012): 40–52.
- 17 For more information, see UMA, the Germaine Greer Collection: <http://archives.unimelb.edu.au/germainegreer/home>. See also Katrina Dean, “Why Germaine Greer’s Life in Letters Is One for the Archive,” *The Conversation* (31 October 2013), <http://theconversation.com/why-germaine-greers-life-in-letters-is-one-for-the-archives-19625>; and Rachel Buchanan, “The Record Keeper,” *Australian Feminist Studies*, 31, no. 87 (May 2016): 22–27, accessed 30 September 2017, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/08164649.2016.1175042>.
- 18 University of Melbourne Archives, Access Management Framework for University of Melbourne Archives Collections, accessed 18 July 2017, [http://archives.unimelb.edu.au/information/for\\_researchers/access-management-framework](http://archives.unimelb.edu.au/information/for_researchers/access-management-framework). See also Rachel Buchanan, “Foreign Correspondence: Journalism in the Germaine Greer Archive,” *Archives and Manuscripts* 46, no.1 (2018), 18–39, DOI: 10.1080/01576895.2018.1434673.



at item level rather than box level: this was an old-fashioned, labour-intensive project that bucked the industry-wide trends toward minimal-level processing.<sup>19</sup>

The finding aids we have created for many series, such as for the Correspondence or Print Journalism series, run to hundreds of pages. I wrote 50,000 words when I listed the Print Journalism series (2014.0046). Former Greer archivist Millie Weber estimates that in total our finding aids comprise more than 1,000 pages of “rich and carefully considered information,” and we still have more series to list.<sup>20</sup> Even so, there is other contextual knowledge held by the Greer team and that exists outside the finding aids. This knowledge, which is not yet in the public domain – about the connections among records across disparate series, about pet names for lovers or, indeed, for actual pets, and about events or people who have been important to the creator of the archive – is ambient knowledge. Ambient knowledge is the information in our conversations over the big metal tables in the receipt and processing area, where we work together. It is the knowledge in our jokes, in the questions we ask each other, and in our memories of private conversations with Professor Greer, either face to face or via email, and in our memories of conversations with researchers, donors, and former colleagues. Ambient knowledge is the memory of our many debates about subject headings and historical language as we constructed an internal working document we called the Greer Thesaurus, a mix of Library of Congress subject headings and terms specific to Greer’s work (the titles of books, the names of family members). Ambient knowledge is present in the conversations that grow from knowledge of the contents of an acquisitions file.

Ambient knowledge is what initially led me to the Iran Album. In my first few weeks on the job, I was going through some Greer boxes with Katrina Dean and saw a loose black-and-white photograph of Greer and a woman who looked like Betty Friedan. Dean made a throw-away remark about how Greer had gone to Iran with Friedan. I was intrigued and stored this away as something to research further.

On 8 March 2017, International Women’s Day, the University of Melbourne hosted a public event to celebrate the reopening of the Greer Archive, and the carefully scripted archivist talks were my first attempt at exposing and sharing

19 Eira Tansey, “Archives without Archivists,” *Reconstruction: Studies in Contemporary Culture* 16, no. 1 (2016), accessed 29 August 2017, <http://reconstruction.eserver.org/Issues/161/Tansey.shtml>. I am referring to the minimum-level processing approach known as “more product, less process” (MPLP).

20 Millie Weber and Rachel Buchanan, “Data Digging in the Greer Archive” (lecture presented during Researcher at Library Week, University of Melbourne, 23 August 2017).

the team's significant ambient knowledge.<sup>21</sup> Before the public event, there was a small, private one in the Leigh Scott Room at the Baillieu Library. This event was in honour of Greer and the high-profile businesswomen who had raised the money for the university to acquire the archive. The Iran Album was one of the treasures I selected to display.

The following case study demonstrates a feminist ethics of archival caregiving toward the Iran Album and the people associated with it (the keeper-creator, the subjects, the users, the wider community). My understanding of the album grew over several encounters: the private VIP showing; the preparation of the album for digitization and the associated use of social media to find the subjects of the record; and an outreach project.<sup>22</sup> This article includes quotes from archival records and contemporary email exchanges with the creators of some of these records, exchanges spurred by work to create better metadata through thicker description.<sup>23</sup> Once I decided to write about the album for a wider audience, I asked all informants, including Germaine Greer, for their consent to be quoted in this article.<sup>24</sup>

## The Private Showing

In preparation for the private event on 8 March 2017, I reviewed what we archivists knew about the album. Tiny slivers of Iran had floated to the surface of the 500 boxes. In a series I had listed, Early Years Academic, Performance, Writing and Personal Papers 1957–2005 (2014.0044), I found a letter tucked into a 1974

- 21 University of Melbourne, "Germaine Greer Meets the Archivists," 9 March 2017, YouTube video, 1:34:17, featuring Rachel Buchanan, Lachlan Glanville, Kate Hodgetts, Sarah Brown, and Millie Weber, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L0cMazsj60Q>.
- 22 I was a guest speaker at the annual general meeting of VALA, a professional organization for Australian librarians who are working with information technology. The talk was recorded: Rachel Buchanan, "Inside the Seed Bank," VALA: Libraries, Technology and the Future, Annual General Meeting, audio recording, 28 June 2017, <https://www.vala.org.au/events/1180-vala-events-2017-inside-the-seed-bank>.
- 23 I am referring to anthropologist Clifford Geertz's use of the term "thick description"; see Clifford Geertz, "Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight," first published 1972, reprinted in *Daedalus* 134, no. 4 (Fall 2005): 56–86, accessed 29 August 2017, <http://www.sas.rochester.edu/psc/clarke/214/Geertz72.pdf>.
- 24 As will become clear, I initially wrote to people to gather information about the Iran Album, specifically to improve the metadata. Once I realized this exercise was, itself, worthy of analysis, I wrote back to my informants to request permission to quote portions of their emails in an article being prepared for submission to *Archivaria*. I provided for approval the text I wanted to quote. Permission was sought and received from Mina Atabai, Hamid Schricker, Germaine Greer, and Mozhdeh Dehghani.

diary. It had a distinctive blue letterhead – a woman’s face inside a blue sun. I was surprised that Iran had a women’s organization. This letter, signed Mina, said, “I herewith enclose some photographs taken in Iran.” It mentioned a lamp and a book, in Persian, of “her memories of him.”<sup>25</sup>

In conversation, Lachlan Glanville, who had catalogued the 120-box General Correspondence series (2014.0042), mentioned a letter about Iran, and his list allowed me to retrieve the document. This letter had no letterhead. It was signed by “Hamid” and also described photographs: “Here I am sending you some of your pictures which I think they came out very well,” Hamid wrote.<sup>26</sup>

The Correspondence series also contained letters between Greer and Mahnaz L. Afkhami, who was the secretary general of the Women’s Organization of Iran and also the Minister of State for Women and Family Affairs. I pulled out the collection of pink, yellow, and white “flimsies.”<sup>27</sup> The records included a program for Greer’s visit to Iran from 21 to 26 May 1974 and the initial invitation to attend, sent from New York by Mahnaz Afkhami on behalf of the Women’s Organization of Iran, Permanent Mission of Iran to the United Nations.<sup>28</sup>

Afkhami had asked Betty Friedan, Helvi Sipila, and Greer to nominate a topic to discuss. Sipila would speak about women and employment, and Friedan would discuss “the situation of women in the industrialized nations and the lessons women in developing countries can learn from them.” But Greer wanted to speak about female Arabic poets.<sup>29</sup> She adored the 14th-century Persian poet Hafiz. For her, visiting Persia would be like “the coming true of a dream.” Greer

25 UMA, GGA, 2014.0044.00219, Langham Diary 1974, Letter from Mina [Atabai], Women’s Organization of Iran, to Germaine Greer, 25 June 1974.

26 UMA, GGA, 2014.0042.00805, Correspondence SHEN, Letter from Hamid [Schricke], 17 June 1974.

27 “Flimsies” is Germaine Greer’s wonderful word for carbon copies of typescripts. The Greer archive contains white, pink, green, and pumpkin-coloured flimsies. Greer uses the word “flimsies” in the inventory she made of the archive in 1997. See Germaine Greer, “Catalogue of Works of Germaine Greer by the Author, Including Selected Correspondence,” 1957–1997, <http://gallery.its.unimelb.edu.au/imu/imu.php?request=multimedia&irn=2503>. See also archivist Sarah Brown’s list for the Major Works series (2014.0045). Brown elegantly incorporates Greer’s own very particular language (“holograph,” “flimsies,” “typescript”) into her list.

28 UMA, GGA, 2014.0042.01052, Women 1973; all quotes taken from correspondence between Mahnaz Afkhami and Germaine Greer are contained in this file, 1973–74. Greer, or an assistant, filed a thank-you note from Mahnaz Afkhami, a white card embossed with the logo of the Women’s Organization of Iran, in unit 1 of the Correspondence series (Correspondence AE, 2014.0042.00006).

29 UMA, GGA, 2014.0042.01052, Women 1973, Letter from Afkhami to Greer, 26 November 1973.

wrote to Afkhami: “I even went through a phase where I struggled to learn Persian so that I could read Hafiz, but I was too busy with my regular studies and after looking at the Persian alphabet on the back of the loo door for a whole year, I still couldn’t read Hafiz.”<sup>30</sup>

A paper on women poets would also allow Greer to study the “the positon of women in Islamic culture because it strikes me as particularly paradoxical,” but Afkhami said there was little information available on Muslim women writers and it was suggested that Greer update Iranian people on the women’s liberation movement in her own country. In the final exchange, Greer said she was not qualified to talk about the state of the movement in England but would, instead, talk about women’s “struggle for control of our bodies” and how women had tried to grasp control in various countries.

The letters were sent to Greer’s agent, Diana Crawford, in London and forwarded to Greer at her home in Italy – she had just bought a stone house at Pianelli in Cortona, Tuscany. Between 1971 and late 1973, Greer had travelled widely in the West but also in India, Bangladesh, and Vietnam. She was developing ideas that were strongly counter to popular ones of the time, such as those espoused in Paul Erhlich’s book *Population Bomb*, a work that blamed “third world” women for overpopulation.<sup>31</sup>

Greer visited Iran in May 1974. In mid-August 1974, she went to Romania, for the Third World Population Conference being held in Bucharest. There, she gave a paper on the Politics of Population Control. A rare audio record from late 1974 gives an idea of the themes Greer would have been developing before she went to Iran.<sup>32</sup> “Population Control as the New Fascism,” a speech Greer gave at the University of California, includes observations on access to abortion and birth control in various countries around the world, including Muslim ones. “The women who tilled the soil in Muslim countries knew perfectly well how many healthy children they could bring up on what they could produce,” Greer said. She urged policy makers to be sensitive to the needs of women in different

30 UMA, GGA, 2014.0042.01052, Women 1973, Letter from Greer to Afkhami, 2 November 1973.

31 Paul Ehrlich, *The Population Bomb: Population Control or Race to Oblivion?* (San Francisco, CA: Sierra Club Books, 1968).

32 UMA, GGA, 2014.0040.00018, “Population Control as the New Fascism” (lecture delivered at University of California, Los Angeles, November 1974). This speech was delivered as part of Greer’s first American Program Lecture Bureau tour.

cultures rather than try to shape the fertility of a culture from the outside.<sup>33</sup> I listened to this audio record and looked at the photographs of Greer delivering lectures in Iran and imagined these words coming out of her mouth.

In addition to these letters and audio records, there are three feature articles that Greer had written about her trip to Iran, which are included in the Print Journalism series. The first one was a lacerating piece on the United Nation's World Conference on Women in Mexico in 1975.<sup>34</sup> Greer had travelled to the conference as an observer for Canada's *Chatelaine* magazine, and she considered the event to be a debacle, "where women who had come to prominence through their relationships with men were employed by those men to further their policies at the expense of the women of the world." Princess Pahlavi was there, as were Betty Friedan and Helvi Sipilä. Imelda Marcos spoke and so did Elizabeth Reid, the leader of Australia's delegation to the World Conference. I used some of the choicest quotes from this article in my floor talk for the VIPs, including Greer's remark that "only 1 per cent of the women of the world even knew it was women's year."

At the VIP event, I told Greer and the small group of donors that I was initially excited by the way the photos in the Iran Album challenged current and historical stereotypes of Middle Eastern womanhood. Subsequently, however, other parts of the archive provided evidence that my first view was incomplete. In the Shah's Iran in 1974, it was forbidden to wear the veil, after all. In articles for *Vanity Fair* (1988) and *The Guardian* (2006), Greer related how, during the visit to Iran, she broke away from the junket itinerary, set by "the Shah's tame women's association" and spent a morning at Shiraz University, speaking with Islamic Marxist students. These young women all wore heavy wool chador. They told Greer that "no truth could come from the mouth of a western doll."<sup>35</sup> Four years later, those women were part of the crowd that surrounded the American embassy in Tehran at the start of the Islamic Revolution. The chador was a handy way of avoiding detection in a revolution. In 1980, it once again became obligatory to wear the veil, and so the pendulum swung.

33 UMA, GGA, 2014.0040.00018, "Population Control as the New Fascism," 1975, side b, 9.04–9.45.

34 Germaine Greer, "Germaine Greer on Women's Year," *Chatelaine* (September 1975): 4, 101–103 in UMA, GGA, 2014.0046.00087, GG on Women's Year. "The second speaker was Her Imperial Highness Princess Ashraf Pahlavi of Iran, twin sister of the man who repudiated a wife because she did not bear him a son.... Princess Ashraf had headed the Consultative Committee which had worked on the Draft World Plan of Action for IWY. Besides, she paid a million dollars for the privilege," Greer wrote.

35 Germaine Greer, "Women's Glib," *Vanity Fair* (June 1998): 32–33, 36–40, in UMA, GGA, 2014.0046.00183.

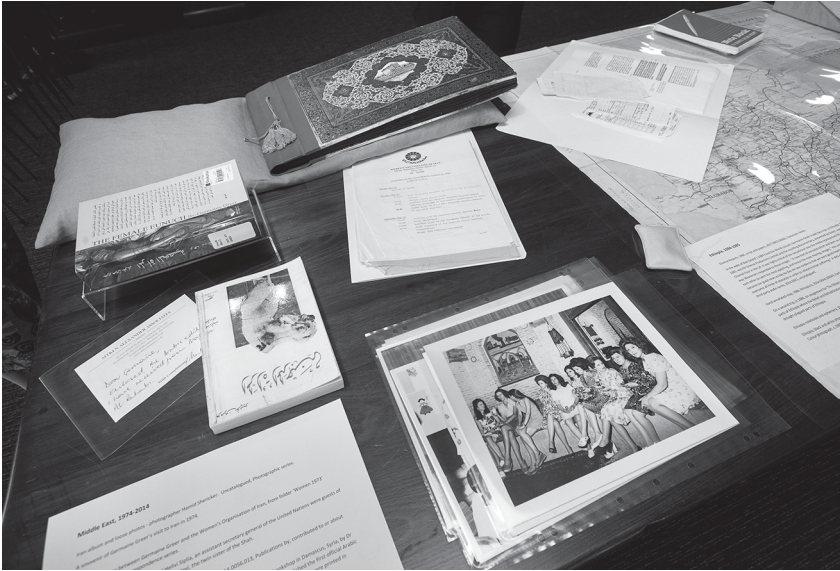


FIGURE 2 Records relating to Germaine Greer's work in and with the Middle East (1974–2014) and Ethiopia (1984–85) on display at Leigh Scott Room, Baillieu Library, University of Melbourne, International Women's Day, 8 March 2017. Photo: Peter Casamento.

What was the Iran album evidence of, exactly? Was it evidence of a PR stunt staged by a struggling, “corrupt” regime?<sup>36</sup> Or was it evidence of the desire of wealthy, educated Iranian women to contribute to the women's liberation movement?<sup>37</sup> At a more pragmatic level, the album was certainly evidence of the complexity of photographic preservation. It appeared that the photographs needed to be removed from the album to protect them from further degradation, and after the Greer event, we arranged for a conservator to come to the repository and examine the album.

36 Ibid. Greer wrote, “Partly because American feminism had no consistent ethical or political theory behind it, it often found itself involved in unsavoury alliances, with media magnates, with Mafiosi, and now with the corrupt ruling dynasty of the Pahlevi,” 33.

37 Ibid. Greer notes that, unlike American or British housewives, the women hosting her and Friedan did not need to be liberated from housework. They all had servants.

## Conservation

Kate Hodgetts, who was cataloguing the Greer Archive Photographic series, advised that the Iran Album was too fragile to go into the supervised reading room. The first problem was the two small bundles of material that had been slipped into its back cover, causing the album to buckle. The first bundle consisted of 14 loose black-and-white photographs of Greer and other unidentified people in Iran: Greer speaking with children; watching women make carpets; sitting at a desk with an immensely bored-looking Betty Friedan; lounging on the grass with a group of young women.<sup>38</sup> The other four black-and-white photographs slipped into the back of the album were more mysterious. These were grainy portraits of Greer, quite different from the official shots; one in particular was raw, intimate, and personal.<sup>39</sup> Had these pictures got there by mistake?

Original order is a key concept in archival theory. The Greer team often discussed Greer's system of arrangement and how it shaped meaning. A filing system can tell you a great deal about how a person's mind works. The labels we give to files, where we put books on a shelf, how we place photos in an album, the letters and cards we keep in a top drawer, the bills and postcards hanging by magnets on a fridge – all of these systems are potentially rich with meaning.<sup>40</sup> Greer had planted the few letters connected with the trip to Iran across the archive, but these two sets of photographs she had housed together in the back of the album. Why? “Perhaps Germaine Greer had a fling with the photographer!” we joked.

The conservator arrived and we showed her the album and the two sets of loose records. The photo album had survived for 43 years. It had been created in Iran, sent to Greer in London, and stored in a variety of repositories, which may have included Greer's house at 54 Cambridge Gardens (1973–78), a flat at 20 Westbourne Terrace (1979–1985), and the places she lived in Tulsa, Oklahoma (1979–1983), when she was the inaugural director of the Center for the Study of Women's Literature. Greer returned to the UK in 1983, moved back into West-

38 UMA, GGA, 2014.0054.00259 [Iran Album loose 1], 1974.

39 UMA, GGA, 2014.0054.00260 [Iran Album loose 2], 1974.

40 See Jennifer Douglas, “What We Talk about When We Talk about Original Order in Writers' Archives,” *Archivaria* 76 (Fall 2013): 7–25; and Jennifer Douglas, “The Archiving ‘I’”: A Closer Look in the Archives of Writers,” *Archivaria* 79 (Spring 2015): 53–89.

bourne Terrace, and then, in 1985, bought her farmhouse at The Mills, Stump Cross, Essex. For years, the album was stored in Greer's climate-controlled office in Essex, and in 2014 it was shipped to Australia with the rest of her records.

It was middle-aged and well travelled. It was no surprise to see some damage. The pages were buckled. Had the roof leaked in one of Greer's homes? Many of the photos were faded. They had been mounted crooked. The processing was uneven. We could not fix that now. The composition of the tissue, which created a romantic, mysterious effect, could be causing further damage. What to do? Three of us pored over the album. The conservator could gently remove the photographs in a humidifier and repair them, but if they were remounted straight, the authenticity of the object would be damaged. Round and round we went. I watched the hands of the conservator and the hands of my colleague, Kate, as they handled the album on the big metal table in the centre of the receipt and processing area. Their movements were quick and light. Their fingers were encased in blue plastic gloves – crime scene gear.

After more than an hour, the recommendation was to do nothing – simply digitize the item and rehouse it. Every record that is digitized needs its own metadata. As part of the digitization project, I decided to try to find out more about the album and the two sets of loose photographs. Who were the other people in the pictures? Greer's journalism revealed her views on the trip to Iran, but what did the Iranians think about what was happening? Who took the photos? Would the copyright holder let us publish the digital surrogates in our catalogue and in the University of Melbourne's Digitised Collections repository on the university library catalogue, so researchers around the world could see them?

## Lifting the Veil

I returned to the two letters, the one from Mina and the one from Hamid. Neither person had signed their surname, but both mentioned sending photographs. The only clue was two surnames that Greer had written at the top of the letter from Hamid – “Schrieker” and “Shericker?”<sup>41</sup> I typed a few variations into Google and found a Hamid Schrieker, “a San Francisco-based photographer

41 UMA, GGA, 2014.0042.00805, Correspondence SHEN, Letter from Hamid to Germaine, 17 June 1974. Greer later wrote two surnames on the top of the letters: “Schrieker” and “Shericker?”



who enjoys exploring the Middle East and the world.”<sup>42</sup> After a bit more investigating, I found a Twitter user name and reached out with “a question.” My direct message (DM) folder contains the trail. I explained that I was trying to track down the photographer who took the pictures in the Iran Album (1974) at the Greer Archive. “The only clue we have to his identity is a letter signed ‘Hamid’ with the surname Schricker written at the top,” I wrote. “A relative of yours?”

Within 24 hours, I was emailing this Hamid some additional information and several digital copies of photographs in the album (which had been digitized by colleagues at University Digitisation Services). Within another 24 hours, I was speaking with his uncle, Hamid, the author of the 1974 letter, via email.

I felt excitement and joy. It was like the archive – or even a younger Germaine Greer – was speaking with me directly. Earlier, when I had emailed Greer to ask about the album and the unusual surnames written at the top of the letter, she had replied that the name “Hamid Schricker” meant nothing to her.<sup>43</sup> But the name meant something to the archive; the archive remembered.

Schrieker? Shericker? Schricker? The nephew in San Francisco had forwarded my emails to his uncle in Toronto, and now Hamid Schricker was writing to me:

The letter in question is mine with my handwriting. I do not recall the content of the letter. Only with that letter I sent some personal photos of Miss Greer taken by myself in Tehran in 1974 while she was visiting.... She had been invited by the Women’s Organisation of Iran together with some of her colleagues.

The 3 pictures in the album you have sent, as far as my memory permits, were not taken by myself and I presume they were done by the organisation’s or some news outlet photographers. In the first photo the woman on the left of Miss Greer is my sister Mina Schricker (residing in NYC) as she was being received by the then head of the organisation’s Miss Mahnaz

42 Hamid Schricker, photographer (website), accessed 17 July 2017, <http://www.hamidschricker.com/#mi=1&pt=0&pi=4&p=-1&a=0&at=0>.

43 Germaine Greer, email message to author, 2 May 2017. In an email sent on 11 May 2017, Greer recalled Hamid Schricker as a friend from Cambridge and not as a member of the official press corps during the Iran visit. Greer said that the most important member of the organizing committee was Mahnaz Afkhami, Minister of State for Women and Family Affairs in the pre-revolutionary government of Iran.

Afkhami (residing in Washington DC) and the woman on the left of the picture is Mrs Diba (mother of ex-queen Farah, of Iran).<sup>44</sup>

My head was spinning. I could now write a proper caption for the veiled image. The photograph was revealing itself. A connection forged via social media meant that the photo was truly being processed.

I wrote back to Hamid and sent him a scan of the more intimate photograph. He confirmed that this was his image and gave me technical specifications as well. I asked if there was anything else he wanted to tell me about the photographs. I thought about the ecstatic look on Greer's face in the photo. Such a beautiful photo – Hodgetts, the archivist who catalogued the Photographic series, thinks it is the best portrait of Greer in the archive, better than the ones taken by Dianne Arbus, Lord Snowdon, and the *Life* magazine stars Harry Benson and Terry Spencer. It is a private moment, a snapshot of tranquillity and surrender. You can see Greer's chipped front tooth, her eyebrows plucked 1970s thin, the soft blurred curls of her shoulder-length hair, the long white arch of her throat. What was she thinking about at that moment?

Every object in every archive has at least two stories connected with it.<sup>45</sup> There is the story of the object and the story of how the object got there. Later, there is the story of the work an archivist does with the object, a conservator's work, a digitization team's work, and then the work other researchers do. All this is provenance.<sup>46</sup>

Objects are surrounded by fragile hidden webs, like spider webs between trees. These webs are easily broken, but if you look for them, and follow them, those webs glitter, animate, teach, and speak to the past and to the future. Remember me. Hear me. I was here. We were in love. I dreamed of speaking Persian poetry. You wrote to me about Marlon Brando.<sup>47</sup> Here is the evidence. Listen.

44 Hamid Schricker, email message to author, 10 May 2017. In one of many subsequent emails, Schricker told me that his surname is Austrian. His grandfather was an expert in agriculture from Austria, and he cofounded the Agriculture University in Karaj, a satellite city near Tehran (Schricker, email message to author, 18 July 2017). Quoted with permission.

45 For an example of narrating "the story embedded in the object and the story of how the object got there (the archive), see Rachel Buchanan, "Remembering a Forgotten Survivor," *Griffith Review* 18 (Summer 2007/8): 124–33, accessed 23 August 2017, <https://griffithreview.com/articles/remembering-a-forgotten-survivor>.

46 See Caswell, "The Archive' Is Not an Archives," esp. the section on provenance.

47 The text refers to comments made in letters from Fereydoon Rais to Germaine Greer, 1965–66; see UMA, GGA, 2014.0042.00713, Correspondence Ferrydoon, Ray [Fereydoon Rais].



FIGURE 3 University of Melbourne Archives, Germaine Greer Archive, 2014.0054.00260 [Trip to Iran Photograph Album, loose 2; one of four photographs], Germaine Greer photographed by Hamid Schricker, Tehran, May 1974. "We spent a day or two together and I took those grainy, out-of-focus photographs of her. They were taken in extreme dim light with Kodak Tri X B&W film pushed to 800 ASA sensitivity speed." Copyright Hamid Schricker; reproduced with permission.

Schricker wrote me a longer email. He told me that he had first met Greer when they were both at Cambridge University in 1965. He was studying English, and she had just begun her doctorate on love and marriage in Shakespeare's early comedies. Their paths did not cross for long as Schricker left Cambridge for London later that year to study engineering at King's College.

But he was there long enough to recognize Greer when he saw her again in Tehran in 1974, at a reception that his cousin had organized for Greer, Friedan, and Sipila. "She immediately recognised me," Schricker wrote. "And did I then recognise the young skinny tall girl in Cambridge was the famous would-be Germaine Greer. We spent a day or two together and I took those grainy, out-of-focus photographs of her. They were taken in extreme dim light with Kodak Tri X B&W film pushed to 800 ASA sensitivity speed."<sup>48</sup>

In Tehran, Greer told Schricker that she had been in love with an Iranian student. Schricker knew the man also.

I remember I used to see them together all the time. His name was Fereydoon Rais. Unfortunately, he was killed around the same time in his own car, perhaps between London and Cambridge. She also told me she had plans to meet his mother in Tehran. I presume that was one of the incentives that attracted her to come to Tehran. I would imagine I reminded her of that time in Cambridge and the memory of her affair with her beloved.<sup>49</sup>

The web was sparkling brightly now, and I could follow the path easily.

The Iran Album contains the evidence of public lives: the Australian-British celebrity feminist's journey to the Middle East with the American celebrity feminist and the Finnish international bureaucrat; the Middle Eastern feminist politician who hosted them and the Princess who invited them; and the bold young Iranian women who met Greer, heard her speak, and posed for photographs with her. But the archive weaves a web that reveals the private lives behind the journey, the passion and the grief. The world-famous feminist also went to Iran to pay her respects to the family of a man she had loved.

<sup>48</sup> Schricker, email message to author, 18 May 2017.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

The Greer Archive does not contain any of the letters Greer wrote to Ferry (as she called Fereydoon Rais). In the early 1960s, Greer was not burdened by fame, and the things she kept had personal significance rather than an anticipated historical one. For example, Greer did not keep any copies of the letters she wrote until 1971, when *The Female Eunuch* was published in the United States and she became an international celebrity. After that point, she began getting hundreds of letters a year from readers, realized the value in them, and kept the lot. She also made carbon copies of her replies and kept those too.<sup>50</sup>

The archive does, however, contain letters and notes that Ferry wrote to Greer, and after receiving Schricker's email I retrieved them. The file, "Correspondence with Ferrydoon, Ray [Fereydoon Rais]," contains three undated letters, two notes, and pages from the inside cover of *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare* with a note that reads "Germaine 1966 given me by Ferry." The letters are soft with age and handling. They conjure a man who was charming, urbane, acerbic, and sophisticated – a worldly, playful person who was more than a match for the young Germaine.

An undated typed note, on Trinity College paper (room 3) was delivered to Miss Germaine Greer, 12, Marlowe Road, Cambridge:

If only because of the trouble I went through to find out your name and address, I think I should be allowed to inflict a few drinks on you. Can you make it to the above address, on, say, Thursday after lunch or else at 6:00 o'clock?

Fereydoon Rais

(And don't pretend you don't remember the name: last time I saw you, you had it clutched to your bosom. Anyway its [sic] far more outré than a blond Anglo-Saxon effort like Charles Evans ...).<sup>51</sup>

50 See Lachlan Glanville's scope and content note for General Correspondence 2014.0042 for more information on the arrangement of this series of records (type 2014.0042 into the search catalogue box at <http://archives.unimelb.edu.au>). See also Lachlan Glanville, "Friday Essay: Reading Germaine Greer's Mail," *The Conversation*, last updated 15 August 2017, <http://theconversation.com/friday-essay-reading-germaine-greers-mail-74693>.

51 UMA, GGA, Correspondence Ferrydoon, Ray [Fereydoon Rais] 2014.0042.00713, Note from Fereydoon Rais, "Dear Germaine," [n.d.].

Greer even kept the green envelope in which the note was delivered. The archive contains very few personal letters Greer received in the early 1960s, and the fact that she retained not only the note but also the small envelope suggests that this was a precious object worth preserving in its entirety. “Germaine mio,” one letter begins. Greer was in Europe at the time, and in the letter Ferry chides her for doing obvious touristy things like visiting the Louvre, the Bibliothèque Nationale, the Champs Élysées. “You must be joking,” Ferry writes. “I might never have started on your education. The first two are meant for the serious, committed and responsible elements of society, and for American tourists trying to absorb some instant culture.” He signs off, “Till we next meet, Guinevere, Allah be with you, Ferry.”<sup>52</sup>

He called her Gemmy. He advised her on the tone for her *Varsity* column. He told her to watch the *Batman* series on TV (“Honestly Germaine, you must watch ‘em. They’re priceless, worth at least five Footlights each”) and gossiped about meeting Marlon Brando and his wife at a party in London. Ferry drove a rented green Mini. He had only had the car a couple of weeks and had already picked up a dozen parking tickets and been towed twice. He was chased by an angry driver and shook the man off.<sup>53</sup>

These letters were housed with two Heffers diaries from 1966 and 1967 – little spiral-bound notebooks printed by W. Heffers & Sons, Cambridge. The front cover of each notebook has a map of Cambridge with red arrows pointing to all the major landmarks: Heffers Paperback Shop, Heffers Stationery and Art Shop, Heffers Bookshop, Heffers Penguin Bookshop, and Heffers Printing Works. In mid-2016, the notebooks were relocated to the Early Years series, where they are housed with a Heffers diary from 1964 to 1965, but we now know that the original order in which Greer kept the diaries illuminated vital connections.<sup>54</sup> Sparse notes in the 1966 diary contain traces of Greer’s relationship with Ferry and the only evidence, in the archive, about his death:

25 April lunch with Ferry.

7 May party with Ferry.

10 May Cinema with Ferry.

52 Ibid., “Germaine mio, The sun sets golden ...,” undated.

53 Ibid., “Gemmy girl, I got your letter today ...” undated.

54 See UMA, GGA, 2014.0044.00135, 1964 [journal and diaries].

25 October Ferry's party.

4 November On this night Ferry died.<sup>55</sup>

The Iran Album refers back to the 1960s and the love affair between “Gemmy” and “Ferry,” a relationship that helped Germaine say yes to the junket to Iran.

## Aftermath

Five years after the visit commemorated by the Iran Album, the Islamic revolution resulted in the overthrow of the Pahlavi dynasty. The Shah and his twin sister fled. Princess Pahlavi, who had invited Greer and the others and who had been a strong advocate for women's rights in Iran – including raising the legal age of marriage from 13 to 18, ending the practice of extrajudicial divorce, and introducing the right to vote – lived in exile in France and New York. She died in 2016 and was buried in Monaco.

The other Iranian women in the photographs left as well. They now live in the United States. Hamid Schricker lives in Toronto but visits Iran regularly. His sister, Mina Atabai, lives in New York. She told me: “Meeting with Germaine Greer and Betty Friedan and spending time with them was one of the highlights of my career in Iran. Anyways, thanks to social media, I can help you with the pictures. If you can send high resolution, I can identify all of them, I think.”<sup>56</sup>

Once the Iran Album was digitized, I was able to return it, digitally, to at least one of the subjects. Mina Atabai identified all the places in the photographs and many of the people. While Greer had described the Women's Organization of Iran (WOI) as “tame,” Atabai had a different view. The three foreign women had been invited to Iran for an “exchange of views and experiences” with a cross-section of women.

Through its provincial branches and its Women's Welfare Centers in major Iranian cities, the WOI had provided considerable numbers of women with legal education on women's rights and vocational training to make women economically independent. Each of its centers also

55 UMA, GGA, 2014.0044.00135, 1964 [journal and diaries], 1966 Heffers diary. This note is written in red ink.

56 Mina Atabai, email message to author, 12 May 2017. I sent Atabai a digital version of the album and the loose photographs, and she printed them out, annotated each one, scanned them, and sent them back.

provided day-care facilities for children while women were at the centres or took classes there. Special literacy classes were also set up for women of all ages. During the visits they [Greer, Friedan, and Siplia] had a chance to interact with the women who used the facilities at these centres.<sup>57</sup>

In the meantime, the ambient knowledge about the life of Iran within the Greer Archive continues to expand. Greer was in Iran only for a few days, but the experience stayed with her. Iran rippled through the years that followed. The country and its people touched her, and she kept returning to it. She has planted evidence of Iran through the records, the seeds of possibility. In the Ephemeral Publications series, for example, there are copies of the first three issues of the *Medusa Journal of the Centre for Women and Socialism* (1998–99). The back cover and contents page are in English, but the rest is in Farsi (Persian). The journal was edited by Azar Majedi and published in Germany. Issue 3 advertised Medusa’s “first conference on the social, political and cultural issues of women’s liberation in Iran.”<sup>58</sup> In a small series of records about Greer’s cars and gardens is Greer’s design for a show garden in which the centrepiece is a “long, shallow rectangular pool, like the kind of tank one finds in Persian gardens.”<sup>59</sup>

## Conclusion

This article has examined the Iran Album as a case study to demonstrate a feminist ethics of care in archival work, specifically my efforts to be a caregiver rather than a caretaker. I have cared for the album in the following ways: physical care via digitization; intellectual care via innovative research that has allowed me to write detailed metadata for the album and associated loose images; and emotional (or affective) care via an approach to research that draws on ambient knowledge held by a team of archivists and which uses this knowledge to tease out subtle connections among records housed across a very large archive.

57 Atabai, email message to author, 29 June 2017.

58 UMA, GGA, Ephemeral Publications series, 2017.0010.00061–00063, *Medusa Journal of the Centre for Women and Socialism* (1998–1999).

59 UMA, GGA, 2017.0026.00014, “The Anglian Flower Garden Design 27–29/6/97,” one-page typed note headed “Design for a Garden.”





FIGURE 4 UMA, GGA, 2014.0054.00258 [Trip to Iran Photograph Album], back cover. The image depicts Si-o-Seh Pol Bridge, Isfahan. The name refers to the bridge's 33 arches. The bridge was built by Allahverdi Khan, a favourite general of Shah Abbas I, between 1599 and 1602. Digitization: University Digitization Services. Informant: Mina Atabai.

Following Caswell and Cifor's schema, my first affective responsibility was to the record creator. In the case of the Iran Album, this relationship includes the first keeper of the album, Germaine Greer, the woman who is also the creator of the archive. Greer and I have discussed the album in person and via email, and several emails about the trip are quoted here with permission. I have not yet found the person or persons who took the official photographs mounted in the album, but I used social media to locate Hamid Schricker, the creator of the four black-and-white portraits that Greer housed in the back of the album, and a sample of our email conversations are published here, with permission. Schricker also gave me permission to reproduce his stunning portrait of Greer.

My second affective responsibility is to the subjects of the album. I have been able to name some of these people and the places they are visiting. Via emails with Atabai, I have unearthed some of the perspectives of the Iranian Women's Organization in 1974. Atabai and her brother, Hamid Schricker, who both fled

post-revolutionary Iran, have co-created the metadata about the Iran photographs. Greer, Friedan, and Sipila are also subjects of the album, and Greer's perspectives are well captured in the three feature articles she has written about the trip; this information also informs the metadata.

The final two affective responsibilities are to users of the records and to the larger community. My research was part of the preparation for listing the Photographic series, of which the Iran Album and associated loose images are a part. To date the only people to use these records are the people who are documented in them and librarians who attended a lecture I gave at the University of Melbourne's Baillieu Library in June 2017.<sup>60</sup> At the end of the talk, two people approached me. "We are librarians from Tehran," they said. "We want to translate your talk into Farsi." I have since met with Mozhdeh Dehghani, a postgraduate student in the Faculty of Information Technology at Monash University, and we are discussing collaboration on a Farsi scholarly article that would focus on how social media and the ambient knowledge held by the Greer Archive team has allowed me to create very rich metadata about the Iran Album.

Dehghani was born after the revolution of 1979. For her, the photographs in the album capture a moment of modernity and possibility for Iran. The album is proof of how things were, how those Iranian women looked, how they moved, where they went, and with whom they spoke – their power.<sup>61</sup> It was extremely affecting to listen to Dehghani's responses to the photographs, especially her pride in the modernity they capture. Iran, as a nation, is also the subject of the album, and my affective responsibility as a caregiver includes a responsibility to ensure that Iranian people know about this album and have access to it, if they wish. We will be able to provide access to the digital surrogate via a secure, stand-alone computer in the supervised reading room at the Baillieu Library.

The fifth affective responsibility is my obligation to you, my fellow archivists. I have fulfilled this responsibility, in part, by writing this article. I have used the Iran Album as a case study to demonstrate the importance of the relationships

60 Buchanan, "Inside the Seed Bank."

61 Mozhdeh Dehghani, email message to author, 17 July 2017. Dehghani's article has since been published, in Farsi, in *National Studies on Librarianship and Information Organization (NASTINFO)*, the journal of the National Library and Archives of Iran, vol. 28, no. 4 (Winter 2018). Dehghani's English translation of the Farsi title is "An Attempt to Preserve Cultural Diversity in the University of Melbourne Archives: Reviving the Iranian Album from the Germaine Greer Archive"; see the table of contents for the issue, <http://nastinfo.nlai.ir>.

among archivists and to sketch out how thick description – detailed, item-level metadata – is a way of capturing, sharing, preserving, and transmitting the ambient knowledge present in teams of archivists and the institutions in which we work. Our metadata also alerts researchers, including archivists, to connections among records in different series.

The Iran Album metadata is the evidence of our caregiving work for creators, subjects, users, and the community. It is my hope that the publication of this article may elicit further information about the album and thereby thicken the descriptions even further.



FIGURE 5 *Trip to Iran Photograph Album being prepared for 3D photogrammetry at University Digitisation Centre, University of Melbourne, April 2017. Photograph: Ben Kreunen.*

## Epilogue

*Metadata for 2014.0054.00259:*

Contains: one photographic album [26 x 46 x 4 cm] containing 36 black-and-white gelatin silver photographs [each 16.5 x 21.5 cm].

Photographs are mounted on black card and interleaved with embossed tissue paper. The album is made from either cardboard or stacked leather, and the front and back covers are painted with intricate designs of gold and silver leaf and red leather and feature central images of the Palace of Ali Quapu, Isfahan (front cover) and Si-o-Seh Pol Bridge, Isfahan (back cover). It is bound with a red silk tassel. The album is a souvenir of Germaine Greer's trip to Iran in 1974. She visited Tehran, Shiraz, and Isfahan. Greer, Betty Friedan, and Helvi Sipilä, an assistant secretary general of the United Nations, were invited to Iran as guests of Her Imperial Highness Princess Ashraf Pahlavi and the Women's Organization of Iran (WOI). The trip was a precursor to the UN's International Women's Year (1975). Princess Ashraf, the twin sister of the Shah, was in charge of the consultative committee that wrote the "Draft World Plan of Action" for the year. Mina Atabai (née Schrickler), who hosted Greer in 1974, says the album is about Isfahan. The first photographs show Greer arriving at Isfahan airport and being greeted by Mrs. Mohi, director of the Women's Organization of Iran (WOI), Isfahan branch (dark dress with patterns), Mrs. Parvin Moyed-Sabett (white dress with patterns), member of the WOI board, Mina Atabai (sunglasses, pale skirt and shirt), and other Iranian people. The modernist brick building with women on the steps is a WOI centre in Isfahan. The next few images show a dinner with Mr. Motamedi, president of Isfahan University. Soraya Gangi is pictured here too. The remaining photos show Greer visiting Chehel Sotoun Palace and Shah Masque (Mosque), Isfahan, with Mina Atabai (in geometric-pattern dress) and Mrs. Moyed Sabeti (pale dress), and an unidentified man. The photos at the palace depict spectacular tapestries and renovation work. An exterior shot shows the women underneath a series of pillars. The mosque photographs show the women in front of exquisite tiled interiors and exteriors; Atabai and Sabeti often wear black sunglasses. Photographer unknown. Greer has written several essays about this trip, and they can be found in the Print series: 2014.0046.00085; 2014.0046.00087; 2014.0046.00183; 2014.0046.01035. Subjects: Women's

Organization of Iran; Betty Friedan; United Nations; International Women's Year; Princess Ashraf Pahlavi; Mina Atabai; Photograph albums.

*Metadata for 2014.0054.00259:*

Contains: 14 black-and-white gelatin silver photographs, 20 x 25.5 cm. Photographs were originally loose in the back of the "[Trip to Iran Photograph Album]" 2014.0054.00258.

These images were all taken in Shiraz, one of the cities Greer visited in her trip to Iran in 1974. They show Greer and Mina Atabai (née Schricker) meeting children at a Women's Organization of Iran day-care centre in Shiraz and at Bahman-Begi Tribal School, Shiraz; Greer lecturing at Pahlavi University, Shiraz; Greer, Friedan, Helvi Sipila, and Mahnaz Afkhami (Secretary General of the Women's Organization of Iran and Minister of State for Women and Family Affairs) on a panel at Pahlavi University; Greer with women who were students at the Family Welfare Centre, Shiraz; and Greer and Iranian women in a Shiraz coffee shop. A photograph at Shiraz airport depicts children placing flowers around Greer's neck. The woman to next to Greer is Mrs. Mahnaz Akkhami. Informant: Mina Atabai (née Schricker). Photographer unknown. Subjects: Mina Atabai (née Schricker); Mahnaz Afkhami; Helvi Sipila; Women's Organization of Iran; Betty Friedan; United Nations; International Women's Year; Princess Ashraf Pahlavi; Photograph albums.

*Metadata for 2014.0054.00260:*

[Iran Album loose 2].

Originally housed in 2014.0038, Unit 475. Contains: 4 black-and-white silver gelatin photographs, 24 x 16 cm. Images are portraits of Germaine Greer taken by Hamid Schricker in Tehran, Iran. Schricker took the photographs “in extreme dim light with Kodak Tri X B&W film pushed to 800 ASA sensitivity speed.” Schricker and Greer first met in 1965 when they were both students at Cambridge University. Photographs were originally loose in the back of the “[Trip to Iran Photograph Album]” 2014.0054.00258. Subjects: Germaine Greer; Portrait photography; Lighting; Hamid Schricker; Iran.

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**BIOGRAPHY** Rachel Buchanan (Taranaki, Te Ati Awa) received her PhD in history from Monash University in 2006. Between October 2015 and March 2018, she was the curator of the Germaine Greer Archive at the University of Melbourne Archives. She is the author of *Stop Press: The Last Days of Newspapers* (Melbourne: Scribe, 2013) and *The Parihaka Album: Lest We Forget* (Wellington, NZ: Huia, 2010). Her work on the politics and poetics of archives has been published in *Te Pouhere Kōrero* and other scholarly journals, as well as in anthologies, literary magazines, and websites, most recently Vice NZ.