

Call for Proposals – ASA 2016 Biennial Conference: The Truth About Archives

DATE: MAY 5 – 7, 2016

LOCATION: CANMORE, ALBERTA

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: GREG BAK, MASTER'S PROGRAM IN ARCHIVAL STUDIES, DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY, UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

History, and by extension the archival endeavour, is rarely as straightforward as it is perceived. Deliberately or not, archivists construct a historical narrative when they build a collection, connect information, and provide access. While archivists often view their activities as routine, the decisions they make and the standards they use inadvertently shape how history is accessed, discussed, and presented. Archivists' decisions, practices, and even mandates are ethical issues as archivists shape how archival materials are perceived as well as the types of materials collected.

The activities of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, along with Thomas King's book, "The Truth About Stories," have inspired the 2016 ASA Conference. In particular, the conference wishes to explore the idea that past seemingly innocuous decisions can pose present-day challenges in the revealing of narratives that have been ignored, underrepresented or buried. The conference further hopes to examine how archives and archivists shape the historical narrative and how archivists affect the "truth," by protecting it, shaping it, or inadvertently revising it.

We welcome proposals that could include but are not limited to topics such as:

- Truth and Reconciliation in Canada
- Separating fact from fiction in the archival record
- Hidden histories and inherent bias
- Collection strategy as a tool to diversify archival holdings
- Public perception (and misperception) of archives
- Impact of archival theory on historical narratives
- The effect of public policy on archival collections
- The importance and impact of collaboration on archives
- Navigating the challenges of under-described collections
- Digitization and knowledge repatriation
- Digital services for specific communities
- Digital description and multiple provenances

We are interested in how archives, archivists, and other stakeholders in historical research approach the idea of "truth" in archival records, in how records are used, why they are used, how

they are organized, and how this can help to create, distort, or correct the historical narrative of society.

The deadline for submitting conference proposals is January 4, 2016.

Please send your abstracts, 250 words or less, to reneg@archivesalberta.org. Include the type of session you are proposing (ex. individual presentation, roundtable discussion, or panel discussion) as well as a short bio - 50 words or less.