



Call for Proposals, ASA Conference 2026

Date: May 21-23, 2026

Location: Canmore, Alberta

Theme Title: Archival Silence

As archival users sift through records held at our worksites, they may discover that the information they need is missing. In these situations of providing reference, we may feel like we have failed our users. We try to refer the users to other archives hoping another archival institution may have the information. These moments may make us remember the appraisal theories of Helen Samuels or Hans Booms and question whether or not the holdings at our institutions appropriately represent the society our archives are mandated to serve. Then, we may feel overwhelmed by not having the time to address the fact that information which should be in the holdings is not there.

For our 2026 conference, we will address the topic of missing information in the archives. We wish to explore the reasons why records are missing – poor appraisal decisions, the demographics of our profession, lackluster budgets, colonial policies, and genocide impact the records we hold, or do not hold. We will also share how we tackle these obstacles to better serve and represent our archival stakeholders.

We are inviting proposals that address the silences and missing voices in archival holdings. Presentations may address the following topics:

- Repatriation of archival records to Indigenous communities;
- Work with underrepresented groups to fill gaps in the holdings;
- Research in archival materials in attempt to uncover silences;
- Leveraging advocacy to prevent archival loss;
- Policies, administration and/or standards which prevent archives from better representing a diversity of voices;

- The use of digital technologies to fill in gaps and/or empower communities;
- Creative approaches that are outside of traditional archival work which give voice to stories that are not represented in archival holdings.

The extended deadline for submitting conference proposals is **January 15, 2026**. Please send your abstracts, 250 words or less, to reneg@archivesalberta.org. Include your contact information, the format you'd like to present in (ex. Individual presentation, roundtable discussion, or panel discussion), a title, and a bio of 50 words or less for each presenter.