

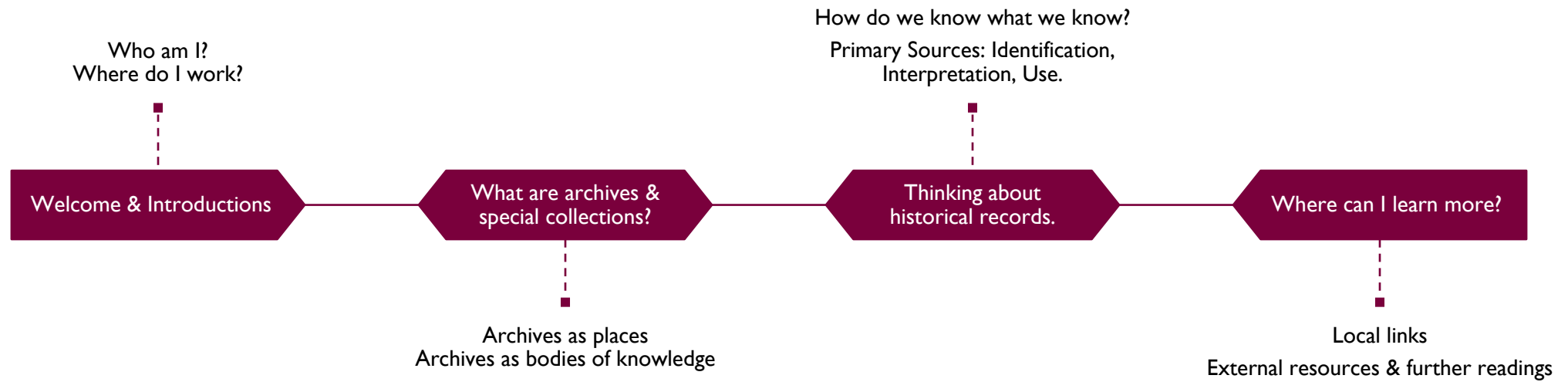
# INTRODUCTION TO ARCHIVAL & PRIMARY SOURCE FLUENCY

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# WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

- Who am I?
  - Myron Groover, Archives & Rare Books Librarian, McMaster University Library
- Where do I work?
  - The William Ready Division of Archives and Research Collections
- Our collections:
  - 4 linear kilometres of archival records (records of people and organisations: personal papers, manuscripts, letters, diaries, etc.)
  - 100,000+ rare and significant books (dating from c. 1050 AD to the present day)
- Why archives & special collections are important:
  - Direct evidence of events that have happened in the past.
  - Tangible statements about societies' priorities & ideals.
  - An opportunity for the past to speak to us in its own words.



# Today's Outline:

# WHAT ARE ARCHIVES?

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**Archives:  
Place**

**Archives:  
Records**

# ARCHIVES AS PLACES: ROLE & MISSION

- Facing the present:
  - Enhancing society's collective understanding of, and access to, historical records.
  - Assessing and cataloguing them (“appraisal, arrangement and description”).
  - Making them available for use & helping users learn more (“access and reference”).
- Facing the future:
  - Preservation and control of archival records and rare books.
  - Maintaining physical and evidentiary integrity.
  - Maintaining and developing the contextual knowledge required to read & navigate them.
  - Advocating for improvements to documentary preservation — and accountability.



**Archives:  
Place**

**Archives:  
Records**

“The secretions of an organism”

(Vivian Hunter Galbraith, *Studies in the Public Records*, 1948)



*Welcome to*

**ARCHIVAL**

***THEORY***

Archives as **REPOSITORIES OF NARRATIVE**,  
where communities can draw on conceptions and  
experiences of our shared past.

These are places that **help us tell ourselves the  
story of who we are.**

Archives as **REPOSITORIES OF EVIDENCE**, where communities and individuals may pursue the elusive search for “historical fact” — at least insofar as it’s provable in court.

These are places we seek **RECOGNITION** and **REDRESS** for the ills of the past.

Archives as **MAUSOLEA**, where the spectres of the past are respectfully interred & distanced from the precincts of daily life.

These are places where we **MOURN, CELEBRATE, REMEMBER, and FORGET.**

Archives as **BARRIERS**, which privilege **WHO** has access —and **HOW** people have access — to representation, fact, and story.

These are places of **OTHERING**, where we define the terms of who is **OUTSIDE** and **INSIDE** our ideas of self and community.

Archives as **GATEWAYS**, through which information and power travels in (at least) two directions.

These are places that we — and the records — **CROSSTHRESHOLDS** to become different selves.



Archives as **CONTESTED SITES** where theories & material legacies of the past are problematized and revised.

These are places we go to **BUILD, REFINE, BREAK,** or **REBUILD** our ideas about ourselves and our world.

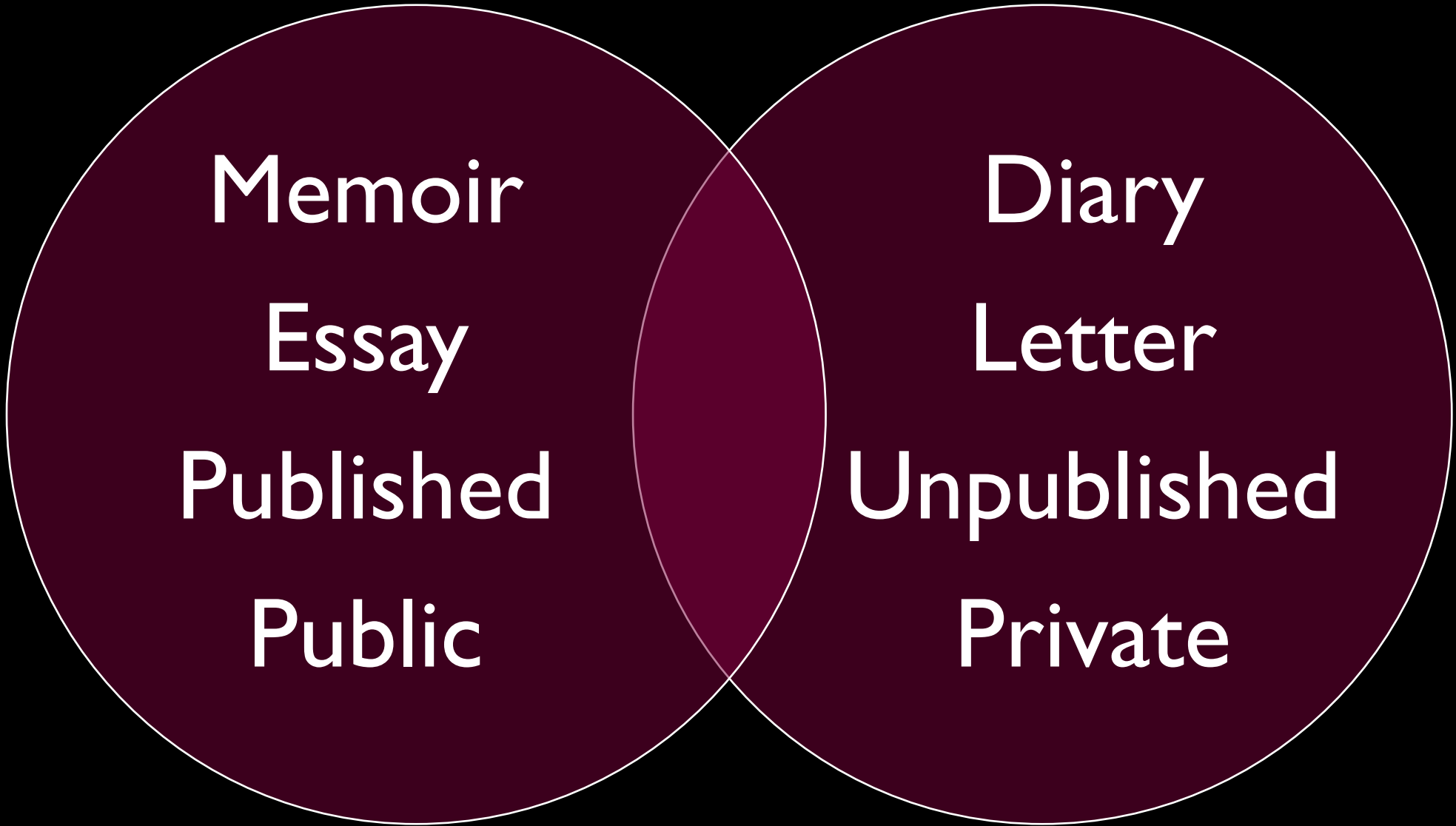
*What even are*  
**PRIMARY**  
**SOURCES ANYWAY?**

# The *eyewitness* problem.

- The “eyewitness” framework gives us a place to start, but...
- Many sources are not “narrative” in nature, so...
- Indirect sources are also (arguably, more) crucial.

# GENERAL PRINCIPLES & CONSIDERATIONS

- Generally written during the time period of the event, phenomenon, or problem you're investigating, BUT...
- May have been written afterwards as a reflection on events
- Also helpful to think about contrast between public and private “selves” or “lives” — or the contrast between the interpersonal and bureaucratic contexts of our lives



**Memoir**

**Essay**

**Published**

**Public**

**Diary**

**Letter**

**Unpublished**

**Private**

# TOWARDS FLUENCY: FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- What's "missing" from our corpus of sources? What information is kept? What isn't?
- Format issues — e.g. oral history, digital records, ceremonial objects &c.
- Accessibility, admissability, parsing, coding, transcribing, funding &c.  
(Shoah Foundation, Ancestry)
- Broad construal — folk song & story, graffiti, visual art &c.
- "Right to be forgotten" — respecting the intentions of historically marginalised communities.
- Records of carceral trauma (c.f. TRC oral testimony project).
- In-group and out-group formation — whose records are they?
- Algorithmic filtering & social media.



# CITY OF HAMILTON

DATE.	No.	DEFENDANT.	COMPLAINANT.	CONSTABLE.	OFFENCE.	With or Without Summons or Warrant.		Time of Arrest.	
						A.M.	P.M.		
1882 Oct 20	1	Charles Bass	De Castille	Plomeride	Crault, tra horse	Jury		10:30	
"	2	John Crowley	" Moore	" Harris	Brace City, by Law			11:45	
Oct 21	1	Thomas Dutton	" Kelly	" Held	Drunk	without		10:55	
"	2	Jeremiah Somers	" Guggo	" Guggo	"	"		5:00	
"	3	Wm Upthegrove	" Barron	Bentha	"	"		10:15	
"	4	Margaret Harvey	Stephen Learle	" Jimcaw	Refuse to pay wages	Jury		6:45	
"	5	Joseph Quire	James Stinson	Guggo	" M. Bnde	Assault	warrant	5:30	
Oct 22	1	Owen Finnegan	" Smith	Smith	Drunk	without		5:30	
"	2	Daniel Ross	" Dainbridge	Dainbridge	"	"		5:30	
"	3	John J. Donnell	" Ineson	Jimcaw	"	"		5:30	
"	4	John Bourke	" Ferris	Ferris	Drunk & Disorderly	"			
"	5	John Shiel	" Hallisoy	Hallisoy	Disorderly	"			
"	6	James Brown	" Dainbridge	Dainbridge	Taqqancy	"			
"	7	Thos. Daggew	" Hallisoy	Hallisoy	Obstruct the Street	Jury			
"	8	Wm. Gell	" Tamatter	"	"	"			
"	9	Alfred Wright	"	"	"	"			
"	10	George Richardson	"	"	"	"			
"	11	Perry Kemslay	"	"	"	"			
"	12	John Wught	"	"	"	"			
"	13	Chris J. Deloir	James Gillim	Smith	Assault	warrant			

Mashgo-kawass 133-

Difamotshigawin: To reach, attain, get to, catch up to, overtake.  
Difamotshigawin: To reach, attain, get to, catch up to, overtake.

Omb?

Oshki-nawae 244-

Zkazheebauyaumikauk: A passage.

Binita-a-mgoraud: To go upstream.

p. 49.

Weendigo-w'nae-issind (ac-missind) 174-178

n'gabigoburaen: to reside, live, dwell.

Animochusuk 171-175

Paukiwaundjigaewin: Pry open.

Puchkuidouch

Zhanwushk-kishkidaustar-bigam

Wau-weskaure tobigawin: to be kind.

Meligo-bura-aukawin: A wooden table.

A tree.



work covered by the  
or used in any form or  
mechanical, including  
ion retrieval  
of the publisher.

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## Sentenced to Spanish. →

Most of the 135 inmates, ranging in age from 4 to 16 and sometimes 17, have occasion, came from broken homes; some of the boys have fathers having lost either one or both parents. Others were committed to the institution for something or other; and a few were ex-munitions; and a few were ex-soldiers to receive some kind of training.

## Contents

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to find out what was going on... and that it'll make two!" One of the grandmothers were both appalled and young, he can't go to school yet, he's

the agent knew how to handle Indians, "Well! if you women. Now! if you sole family. Now! if you her and grandmother red my sister. hurry up, or we'll be d, looking at his w when my sister was back seat of his car. in ample time. On or chairs in the time, I was getting circumstances

of clippers. "What's your name?" he (Where are you from)? "Coker)?" "chirped, flit

of pop which my sister and I drank all peas. how long I was at home. The more I guess my other peas. and do me between leaf, an

you got that? Where money? "Sharp and pop. It was a good English otherwise she was the old man said. "Anything wrong ed while some of my mother and for them. like a how what



DISSENT

The time has come for  
 It is now that black people in the United States should  
 re-evaluate the effectiveness of non-violent resistance.  
 For it has been made clear, by loud implications, by <sup>recent conservative</sup> Senator  
~~Barry Goldwater's xxx~~ <sup>Republicanism</sup> and by the increased brutalities  
 and injustices against the black man throughout the United  
 States, that there is to be no honest, prompt redress. If  
 Dr Martin Luther King could boast, as he did recently in  
 Florida that his christian restraint prevented an open, bloody  
 clash between whites and blacks over the integration of  
 beaches in the Florida area; that power <sup>of</sup> restraint ~~will~~ <sup>has</sup>  
~~very soon be~~ <sup>already been</sup> taken away from him, <sup>restraint will</sup> by a national recourse  
 to violence, ~~first by the whites; and then by the blacks.~~ <sup>away</sup> <sup>in relation to</sup>  
 This will be the complete wiping/away of the practicability of  
 non-violent resistance.

But non-violent resistant is ineffective for  
 two other reasons. Firstly, it can never be applied in  
 the United States with any amount of aggregative success,  
 because it is inappropriate, <sup>tactic</sup> <sup>The</sup> <sup>white socialism</sup> to the ~~gain~~ <sup>can never be achieved</sup> defeat of ~~the~~  
~~for~~ <sup>in a society which is based on the</sup> which the black man is fighting, and because it will  
 never meet its ends in the <sup>cohesiveness</sup> condition of racism in the society  
 in which it is applied. Unlike India, where the tactic  
 reached its most outstanding historical success, ~~the~~ black  
 Americans are <sup>neither</sup> united either by <sup>a common hostile</sup> attitude against the white man;  
 nor by religious and nationalistic ~~ferour~~ <sup>cohesiveness</sup>. In fact there  
 is no nation to gain, <sup>as the Indians could expect. The black man will never entrust the</sup> ~~there is no control of a nation, even~~ <sup>in American</sup>  
~~the black man could~~ <sup>to be gained in that nation</sup>



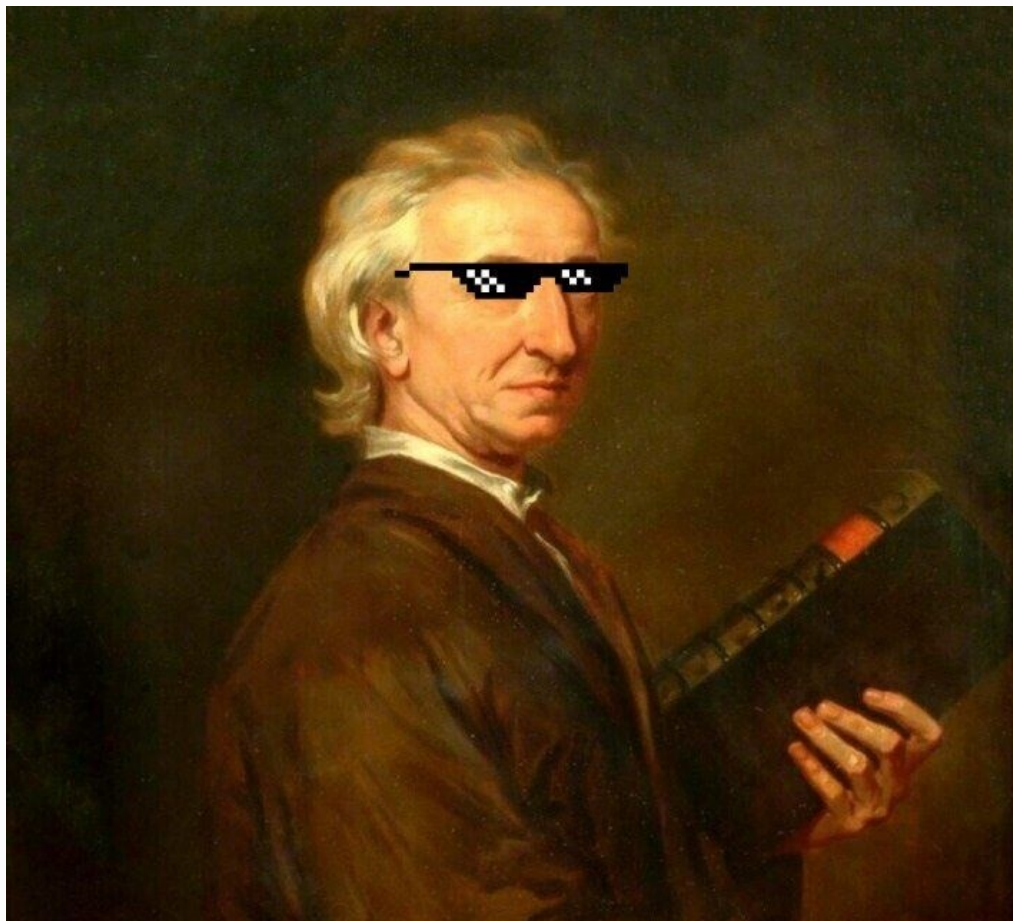
gaude. Ora pro me ad dominū nōm <sup>in</sup> **in**clia  
xp̄m. Ut dictas fructes et colos spiritū **H** in  
mitoz ame repellat. ut ad celi palacia p  
tua noīa p̄cepta ponat me laudantem tui  
p omnia secula seculoz. Quō ip̄e p̄stare dignetur  
q̄ i t̄b p̄sonis un̄ deus uiuēt et regnat. et  
gloriatur cum angel̄ et electis suis. **Ob.** p̄ imō  
talia secula seculoz Amen. **Opus signaz**  
**sequitur in p̄ totuz ut q̄. Dic itez illam o**  
**rationez. Ante secula. anq̄ n̄das comitū.**











THANK  
YOU!

GROOVER@MCMASTER.CA  
[HTTPS://LIBRARY.MCMASTER.CA/SPACES/ARCHIVES](https://library.mcmaster.ca/spaces/archives)

# Local Resources:

- McMaster Archives and Research Collections [homepage](#).
- McMaster Archives Searchable Database ([AtoM](#))
- McMaster Archives and Research Collections “[Guide to Archival Research](#)”
- McMaster Archives and Research Collections “[Guide to the William Ready Division of Archives and Research Collections](#)”

# Further Readings:

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Fraser, Crystal & Zoe Todd: "[Decolonial Sensibilities: Indigenous Research and Engaging with Archives in Contemporary Colonial Canada](#)" In *Decolonising Archives* (Ed. l'Internationale Online with Rado Ištok. 2016.)

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