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<b>Year</b>	2015
<b>Title</b>	<b>Self-determination and archival autonomy: advocating activism</b>
<b>Publication Details</b>	Published in <i>Archival Science</i> , vol. 50, Issue 4, pp. 337 - 368 This is the author's accepted manuscript version

## Self-Determination and Archival Autonomy: Advocating Activism

### Introduction

Page after page...that [file] there reminded me that I was once upon a time society's reject...it reminded me of all the loneliness, of all the horror and shame that I carried with me my whole life (O'Neill, Selakovic, and Tropea 2012, p. 30).

These are the words of Vlad Selakovic, who was a Victorian state ward as a child. Like the stories told in Australia's *Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse* (2014b) they are confronting and challenging, not least for the archival and recordkeeping community. At the Commission's public hearings, testimonies have told of the fundamental betrayal of children by people in positions of trust and authority, along with how recordkeeping has not played its part as an instrument of accountability in supporting preventative measures, early detection and reporting of abuse, and facilitating action against perpetrators. Instead poor recordkeeping, and consequent significant gaps in the archival record, have contributed to inaction and cover ups (Crittenden 2013). Not finding any relevant records about 'care' experiences can have devastating consequences on care leavers (a term used in Australia to describe people who experience out-of-home 'care' as children, "Care Leaver" 2011). Moreover the lack of uniform, cross-jurisdictional, cross-sectoral access frameworks has resulted in a multitude of barriers to discovering, accessing and interpreting those records that have survived. Navigating a seemingly endless array of systems and processes across different jurisdictions and organisations can be troubling, distressing and re-traumatising. Australian archival systems are denying individuals access to records that may help to address questions of: 'who am I', 'why did what happen to me happen', 'where is the evidence of my abuse', and 'how can I tell my side of the story'? (CLAN 2011).

Unfortunately reports of systemic problems with archival and recordkeeping systems in these situations is not new. A succession of inquiries into Australian communities facing identity, memory and accountability crises over the past two decades – the Stolen Generations, Former Child Migrants, Forgotten Australians and Forced Adoptions communities (as defined and described in the Appendix) – have called for better archival and recordkeeping systems and improved access regimes. A number of inquiries and truth commissions in other countries, including Ireland, the UK, Sweden, Canada, Norway, Iceland, Denmark, Germany and South Africa, have also come to similar conclusions (Sköld, Foberg, and Hedström 2012). All have found that improved access to records is paramount to the emotional, medical and psychological health, financial security and right to legal restitution of impacted communities. They also all highlight poor recordkeeping, inconsistent archival practices, and fragmented discovery and access systems for those records that do manage to survive.

These inquiries into state controlled childhood dislocation are part of local, national and international social movements, driven in part by tireless and tenacious campaigning by activist and advocacy communities to have past injustices recognized and redressed, along with building better and fairer frameworks for the future. Snow, Soule and Kriesi (2003, p. 11) offer a broad and inclusive definition of social movements as:

collectivities acting with some degree of organization and continuity outside of institutional or organizational channels for the purpose of challenging or defending extant authority, whether it is institutionally or culturally based, in the group, organization, society, culture, or world order of which they are a part.

As Bill Moyer, a prominent US activist notes, social movements occur over years and decades and involve co-ordinated activities to alert, educate and mobilize in order "to challenge the powerholders and the whole society to redress social problems or grievances and restore critical social values" (Moyer 1987), with activists engaging in "vigorous campaigning to bring about political or social change" ("Activism" 2014), for the transfer and more equitable redistribution of power (Moser 2007).

A burgeoning literature has discussed how archiving is inherently intertwined with activism and power (Caswell 2014; Duff, Flinn, Suurtamm, and Wallace 2013; Flinn, Stevens, and Shepherd 2009; Harris 2011; Wakimoto, Bruce, and Partridge 2013). This stems from recognising that not only are records and archives instruments of power, but so too are our archival frameworks<sup>1</sup>, processes and systems (Cook and Schwartz 2002). The way archival and recordkeeping professionals appraise, document and provide access to records always involves a level of activism against or support for the power structures built into existing archival infrastructures (Harris 2011). This has led to growing community and participatory archival movements (Eveleigh 2012; Flinn 2010; Flinn, Stevens, Shepherd 2009; Huvila 2008; Shilton and Srinivasan 2007) and increased questioning of traditional archival principles and practices which privilege "administrative and juridical significance" over "emotional, religious, symbolic and cultural values" (Cook 2013, p. 115). These tensions are also echoed in literature on the role that records play in human rights and social justice agendas, particularly on whether traditional archival infrastructures can support healing and reconciliation (Caswell 2010; Ketelaar 2002; Körmendy 2007; McKemmish, Iacovino, Russell, and Castan 2012).

This paper uses a case study of the recordkeeping and archival requirements of members of the Stolen Generations, Former Child Migrants, Forgotten Australians and Forced Adoption communities who experienced out-of-home 'care' in Australian orphanages and children's homes to explore the need for archival activism in support of human rights and social justice agendas. Framed by critical theory, we first discuss the systemic failings of existing recordkeeping and archival infrastructure to help address identity, memory, accountability, redress and recovery needs for these communities. Using reflexivity and Moyer's Movement Action Plan (MAP) (Moyer, McAllister, Finley, and Soifer 2001) as an analytical tool, we then examine the activist role archival research and development projects might play.

To address the systemic recordkeeping and archival failings raised by advocates in the case study communities, and reinforced through our analysis and reflections, we explore how an extended suite of rights in records, beyond discovery and access to appraisal, description and disclosure, might support community self-determination in the context of human rights and social justice agendas, with particular reference to the rights of the child. We define these broadly to mean rights of

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<sup>1</sup> Archival frameworks are the law, policies, cultural and ethical mores, archival theories and models which govern and structure archival processes and systems.

individuals and communities in current and historic records including ownership, privacy and access rights, as well as rights to participate in decision making about records appraisal (what to make and keep), metadata and description schemes, and archival policy making, as well as rights of disclosure and amendment (Gilliland and McKemmish 2014, forthcoming). The relevance of continuum concepts of co-creation and multiple provenance, the emergent concept of the participatory archive, and emerging literature on archival rights are also discussed. We conclude with a proposed National Summit on the Archive and the Rights of the Child as a vehicle for archival advocacy and activism leading to transformative action to address related social justice and human rights agendas in Australia. We outline the objectives and hoped-for outcomes of the Summit, and posit that to meet the grand societal challenge of archival autonomy for communities, archival activism needs to become an integral part of social movements on local and global scales.

### Critical Research Approach

Critical theory is now widely accepted as a third research paradigm in the information disciplines alongside positivism and interpretivism. Cecez-Kecmanovic and Kennan (2013) explore the meta-assumptions of the three paradigms, while Gilliland and McKemmish (2013) have explored how critical theory is being increasingly embraced in archival and recordkeeping research. Critical research moves beyond explanation to a moral and ethical critique of the design, development, implementation and impacts of information and communication technologies. It is motivated by a desire to engender social, political and technological transformations to overcome disadvantage, exploitation, disempowerment, domination and disenfranchisement (Myers and Klein 2011). Critical research aims to address significant social issues through robust and rigorous challenging of status quos in order to reveal "deep-seated, structural contradictions within social systems" and to progress their transformation (Orlikowski and Baroudi, 1991, p. 6).

Critical research brings context(s) into the research frame, the myriad layers of social constructs implicitly and explicitly impinging on the frameworks, processes and systems we use for thinking and doing. Systemic failings of archival and recordkeeping systems point to ingrained issues with local and global frameworks and infrastructure, hence a critical research approach is a way to tackle this 'embeddedness', allowing for the questioning of embodied values and power differentials. In addition in moving beyond insight and critique to transformative outcomes, a critical approach has the potential to enrich interventionist methodologies like action and design science research (Myers and Klein 2011).

This exploration of archival activism, archival autonomy and the transformative role they could potentially play in pursuit of human rights and social justice agendas is centred on a case study of the unmet recordkeeping and archival needs of those members of the Stolen Generations, Former Child Migrants, Forgotten Australians and Forced Adoption communities who experienced out-of-home 'care' in Australian orphanages and children's homes. Here the concept of community is fluid and highly contextualised, used to refer broadly to groups which form around shared beliefs, values, experiences, and interests and who come to have a shared sense of identity. According to Delanty (2003, p. 189) communities may have social, cultural, political, economic, professional, religious, class, gender, sexual orientation, racial, familial or geographical dimensions, hence encompassing a multiplicity of relationships. Moreover Ketelaar has depicted every community as a *community of*

*memory* wherein collective identity is linked to a community recognising itself

through its memory of a common past ... To be a community, family, a religious community, a profession involves an embeddedness in its past and, consequently, in the memory texts [in any form, written, oral, as well as physical] through which that past is mediated (Ketelaar 2005, p. 44).

This characteristic of community identity is particularly relevant to the case study communities as they have formed around shared experiences of childhood dislocation, displacement and often deprivation, mistreatment and abuse, with lifetime reverberations and repercussions. Details are provided in the Appendix of the ways in which each of these communities define and describe themselves, and of associated advocacy and service organisations. These distinct communities of memory all share pressing concerns regarding control of, and access to, records which document their experiences.

In this paper interconnected threads of investigation contribute to the development of a rich description of our case study (Yin 2009). Using Alvesson and Deetz's (2000) framework for critical research we seek to incorporate three elements (or moments) – insight, critique and transformative redefinition – into our investigation. Insight and critique are developed from two perspectives. Understanding of the ways in which current archival and recordkeeping frameworks and infrastructure fail to meet community and societal needs is developed through analysis of reports and responses to the numerous inquiries, alongside reviewing relevant literature regarding access, rights, activism and participation in archival and recordkeeping processes and systems. We then couple this with reflexive, insider, accounts of two key participatory action research projects in support of the memory, identity and accountability needs of Indigenous and Forgotten Australian communities with particular reference to members of these communities who were removed from their families and experienced out-of-home 'care'. Reflexivity brings scrutiny of archival research practice to the fore (White and Gilliland 2010), and through these immersive accounts the impacts these research collaborations have had on awareness of the need for archival activism as well as growing understanding of its nature are examined.

Critique is further facilitated through the use of Moyer's Movement Action Plan (MAP) to identify the extent of, and current limitations on, the activist role of such research and development projects in broader social justice and human rights movements. The MAP model was developed as an analytical tool for guiding, organising and evaluating social movements (Moyer, McAllister, Finley, and Soifer 2001). As a guiding framework MAP recognises that activism often requires long campaigning and the ability to adjust strategy and tactics in the face of setbacks and knockbacks, to make and seize opportunities, and to avoid common pitfalls (Moyer, 1987). Another key aim of the MAP model is to enable activists working at the local/grassroots level to see the impact of their actions at national and/or international levels. The many sub-goals and sub-movements within a larger social movement, all at their own MAP stage, implementing relevant strategy and tactics to achieve their particular goals can be recursively represented. While particular sub-goals may differ, in a larger and transformative social movement the sub-movements are united in the promotion of the same paradigm shift.

The MAP model, as illustrated in Figure 1, features eight stages that build momentum towards successful social change. Evidence gathering and research activities form a critical part of the initial Stages 1-4, characterised by identification of injustice, growing recognition and support of the issue, and inclusion of the problem on the social agenda. Stage 5 recognises inevitable fluctuations in momentum, while in Stages 6-7 majority public opinion supports paradigmatic change, with power holders responding with reforms in laws, policies and systems. In Stage 8 the struggle to achieve a paradigm shift continues, dealing with backlashes, and extending and/or refining the movement to address unmet challenges. In these latter stages, evidence gathering and research are critical to successful reform and transformative change.

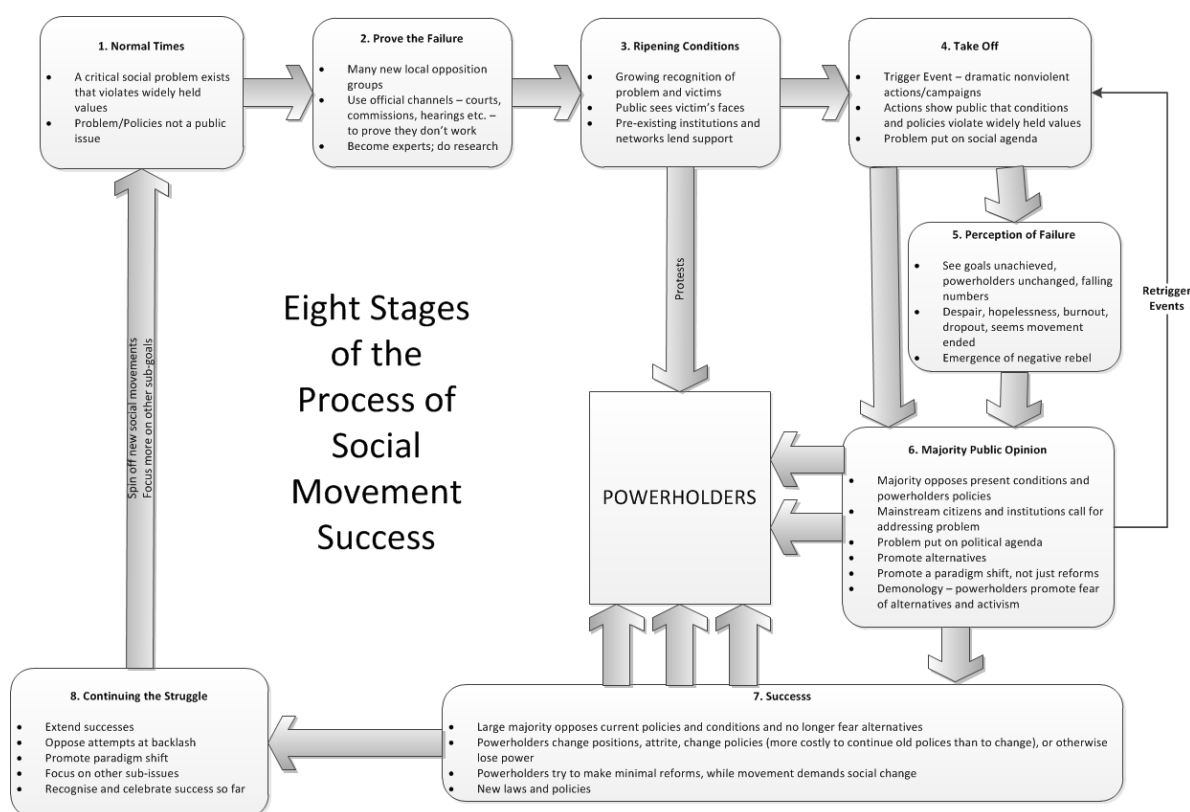


Figure 1. Movement Action Plan Model (Moyer, McAllister, Finley, and Soifer 2001)

The strengths of the MAP model for archives lies in its privileging of relationships. It does not attempt to be predictive or all-encompassing. Instead, it offers a “participatory” view of movement dynamics, where “success” (however defined by the movement) is never guaranteed” (Moser 2007, p. 129). In much the same way, archival scholars have viewed records as “always in a process of becoming”, partial, and dependent on context and relationships for their meaning (McKemmish, 1994). Using the MAP model as a tool for critical analysis lays the foundation for transformative redefinition of the social problem, acknowledged as the most difficult element of critical research. It involves:

the opening up of a new ways of engaging the social world — ways marked by critical insight and added ethical considerations and inspiration for new forms of practice in which certain biases, blinkers, constraints and frozen orientations are struggled with in a more enlightened and reflective manner, and more social criteria for responsibility are taken into account (Alvesson and Deetz 2000, p. 151).

For our study we look to planned agendas for archival advocacy and activism with reconceptualisation of rights in records as the catalyst for transformation of archival and recordkeeping frameworks and infrastructure to an inclusive and participatory paradigm that better supports the archival autonomy of communities.

### Meeting the Identity, Memory and Accountability Needs of Communities

In this section, we present a case study relating to members of the Stolen Generations, Former Child Migrants, Forgotten Australians and Forced Adoption communities who experienced out-of-home 'care' in Australian orphanages and children's homes. We describe systemic problems associated with meeting their current recordkeeping and archival-related identity, memory, accountability and redress needs. We also make the case for archival advocacy and activism playing an essential role in social movements pursuing human rights and social justice agendas.

For many years, and particularly over the past two decades, individually and collectively, the case study communities have been campaigning for social, political and organisational change, mobilising public opinion to challenge the institutional structures which have caused and continue to inflict ongoing disadvantage and discrimination (Moyer, McAllister, Finley, and Soifer 2001; Snow, Soule, Kriesi 2003). Their activism has been a major impetus for the instigation of a number of government and other inquiries, the issuing of formal apologies by Australian federal and state governments, as well as other institutions and organisations, and most recently the establishment of the 2014 *Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse*. Although the case study communities have successfully campaigned for political recognition, and achieved success with the apologies and subsequently funded initiatives, their struggle continues. Many of the recommendations from the various inquiries remain unimplemented, particularly those requiring substantive law reform and reparations (O'Neill 2012).

The Appendix provides an overview of the Federal Government inquiries and apologies relating to the case study communities highlighting key statements and findings regarding recordkeeping and archives. While the apologies address notable societal failures, they also draw attention to shortcomings in archival and recordkeeping systems and access regimes. Inquiry recommendations, testimony from members of the communities, and related research findings highlight the need for access to trustworthy, reliable information to support the search for identity and memories, to find family members, and to provide evidence for accountability purposes in seeking redress and compensation, asserting rights, and pursuing action against perpetrators of abuse and the institutions that sheltered them. They also point to a successive failure to implement recordkeeping and archival reforms.

## Forgotten Australian Community

In Australia, survivors of the estimated 500,000 children who found themselves in institutional or other out-of-home 'care' throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> Century have come to be known as Forgotten Australians (Alliance for Forgotten Australians 2011). Taking this self-identified community as an example, a 2010 survey by Care Leavers Australia Network (CLAN) provides a snapshot of the situation faced by care leavers when looking for records about their time in orphanages, children's homes, foster care and other institutions (CLAN 2011). Only 60% who had sought access to records about their time in 'care' received any, with 42% having to wait longer than 3 months, more than double or triple the response times mandated in state based access regulations (CLAN 2011, p. 39). Survey comments also voiced frustration and dissatisfaction with access processes. Survey respondents spoke of being shunted from agency to agency, told that there were no records, or refused access to records relating to their time in 'care' because of 'privacy'. On receiving records many commented on their anger, disappointment and shock at what they did and did not contain (CLAN 2011, pp. 40–41). The paucity of information, the missing information, the withheld information, the cryptic codes and abbreviations, the errors, the tone and language were all causes of distress and concern; perhaps most effectively summed up by the statement: "The records were not about me" (CLAN 2011, pp. 41–42). A significant number also noted the impacts absences or presences of records have had throughout their life, contributing to ongoing discrimination and disadvantage (CLAN 2011, pp. 41–42).

A 2012 investigation by the Victorian government Ombudsman into records relating to state wards held by the Department of Human Services (DHS) illustrates the parlous state of recordkeeping and archival management practices (Victorian Ombudsman 2012). The report's revelations are damning, showing DHS's inability to cope with the size, scope and nature of the extant records and provide adequate access services. With "the majority of these records ... in large part uninspected, unindexed and unscanned ... the department cannot ever be confident that it has located all records relating to an individual ward from within its archives" (Victorian Ombudsman 2012, pp. 3–4). Care leavers have also received differing responses on re-submitting access requests a second or third time, severely undermining their faith in recordkeeping and archival processes. The Ombudsman's report and the CLAN survey illustrate an unfortunate, but not uncommon, combination of poor original recordkeeping, poor subsequent records management, and poor archival documentation and control.

While funding flowing from the 2009 Federal parliamentary apology to the Forgotten Australians has led to incremental improvements with documentation and indexing projects undertaken within individual institutions and the development of the *Find and Connect Web Resource*, the capacity to substantially reform recordkeeping and archival systems and transform services remains problematic. Findings from the 2008-2012 ARC Linkage Project, *Who Am I? The Archive as Central to Quality Practice for Current And Past Care Leavers (Forgotten Australians)*, have highlighted key recordkeeping and archival dilemmas from the perspective of care leavers, social welfare workers, archival and recordkeeping professionals, and social historians (McCarthy, Swain, and O'Neill 2012). Collectively, these findings point to the systemic nature of the problem, with the issues of archival access compounded by poorly resourced, configured and supported recordkeeping practices in the agencies and organisations delivering out-of-home 'care' services today. They also note increasing



awareness of the problems, and a growing desire across professional communities, community service organisations and government agencies to do better, particularly to ensure future care leavers do not end up in the current bureaucratic binds relating to access to records later in life.

The same kinds of conclusions about recordkeeping and archival failures have been reached in international inquiries, along with a lack of substantive progress to address them. A key example is Recommendation 19 from Ireland's 2009 Ryan Report (Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse 2009). The recommendation called for the maintenance of the "the full personal records of children in care", with a subsequent action item in one of the government implementation plans to develop "a National Archive managed professionally for the records of all children in care" (Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs 2009). Reported progress on this has unfortunately been minimal (Ryan Report Monitoring Group 2012). While the will to take action is present, there is not enough understanding of what action to take in the face of all the situational complexities, particularly in sustaining such an archive throughout a person's lifespan, and potentially beyond. It is an archival challenge of the highest order.

### Systemic Failings of Recordkeeping and Archival Frameworks and Infrastructure

The challenges faced by members of the Forgotten Australians community in accessing their records overlaps with and mirrors that of our other case study communities – the Stolen Generations, Former Child Migrants and Forced Adoptions communities. Our analysis identifies the recordkeeping and archival problems as systemic. The organisations and institutions holding and managing records relating to these communities are spread across government, private and community sectors. In Australia there are two strong parallel traditions, one relating to government recordkeeping and archiving; the other to library-based manuscript collections. In the community sector, recordkeeping and archival programs are generally not well developed and are very poorly resourced. Records and archives are managed in silos as there are no cross-jurisdictional, cross-sectoral, unifying frameworks, nor uniform laws, policies or processes.<sup>2</sup> The traditional configuration and focus of recordkeeping and archival services and systems on institutional voices and needs also contributes to records relating to individuals and communities being fragmented, dispersed, often unmanaged, invisible and inaccessible to those whose lives and experiences they witness and evidence.

Despite the mounting evidence of poor documentation, recordkeeping and archiving practices and the recommendations of successive inquiries relating to the case study communities, we are not seeing major reform in recordkeeping practice or archival frameworks to address these problems and stop them from recurring in the future. While there have been some promising projects in national and state archival institutions, these initiatives are constrained by the limitations of existing archival and recordkeeping frameworks. These projects include the National Library of Australia (2012) *Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants Oral History Project*, the National Museum of Australia (2011) exhibition *Inside: Life in Children's Homes and Institutions* (2014) and the National Archives of Australia (2014) *Forced Adoptions History Project*. All three of these projects provide a space for people who experienced out-of-home 'care' to tell their stories, and are focused on increasing awareness and understanding as well as preserving the memory of such experiences. The

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<sup>2</sup> Australia has federal, state and local government jurisdictions, plus government, corporate, NGO and community sectors involved in child welfare and protections services.

importance of this cannot be over stated. However these projects do not encompass (nor are they resourced for) an examination of the role of archival and recordkeeping institutions, and the implications of their practices and policies on the case study communities. This restricts such projects to documenting, and no doubt impacting, the past and present, but having limited influence on future recordkeeping and archival systems or practices.

The limitations of these individual projects highlight the lack of cross-jurisdictional, cross-sectoral, and unifying archival and recordkeeping frameworks and infrastructure in place to support:

- governance and accountability in the organisations and institutions responsible for child protection, care and welfare,
- effective detection, reporting, and investigation of cases of neglect and abuse to enable appropriate and timely remedial action,
- preventative strategies in child care institutions to reduce the levels of current and future abuse,
- current and future archival services that provide discoverable, accessible evidence.

The findings of successive inquiries also raise profound questions about the rights in records current recordkeeping and archival frameworks enshrine, privileging the notion of singular records creators, and consequently denying agency to other participants in the events records document. Extant recordkeeping and archival practices and systems do not allow for the concept of multiple simultaneous provenance (Hurley 2005a, 2005b) and so result in siloed systems prone to dysfunction and disconnects, and further bureaucratisation rather than community empowerment.

### The Case for Activism

Archival and recordkeeping systems are social constructions, man-made and artificial, products of countless contextual contingencies. They have been designed and shaped by a multitude of indivisible social and technical practices, which they then, in turn, reflect and structure (Upward, 1997). Our study points to the need for far reaching and fundamental reform in archival and recordkeeping law, policy and practice to facilitate the transformation of evidence and memory management frameworks and infrastructure into a new dynamic, distributed, participatory paradigm, capable of supporting multiple archival perspectives, more able to heal rather than harm (Cook 2013). The need for frameworks and infrastructure which better protect and respect citizen and human rights, as well as contributing to quality of life takes calls for archival activism beyond just encouraging greater diversity in archival collections or supporting the social justice work of others (Duff, Flinn, Suurtamm, and Wallace 2013; Flinn 2011; Wakimoto, Bruce, and Partridge 2013). Analysis of the systemic problems associated with meeting the current recordkeeping and archival-related identity, memory, and accountability needs of the case study communities illustrates an imperative for archival advocacy and activism, with *archival autonomy* to support community and individual self-determination as a major objective. Archival autonomy is here defined as the ability for individuals and communities to participate in societal memory, with their own voice, becoming participatory agents in recordkeeping and archiving for identity, memory and accountability purposes. In the sections that follow we explore this notion of archival autonomy as a grand societal challenge with reference to the need for archival activism to become an integral part of social

movements on local and global scales, challenging the power structures governing memory management frameworks. We begin with reflections on the activist role that archival research and development projects can potentially play.

## Activism in Archival Research and Development

### The Trust and Technology Project (2004-2008)

The Trust and Technology Project, funded by the Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Project scheme, involved a multidisciplinary team made up of Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers working in partnership with Indigenous communities, the Public Record Office Victoria, the Koorie Heritage Trust, the Koorie Records Taskforce, and the Indigenous Special Interest Group of the Australian Society of Archivists. Although it focussed broadly on the needs of Indigenous communities in Victoria, it acknowledged that within these communities the recordkeeping and archival needs of the Stolen Generations, the estimated 50,000 Indigenous children forcibly removed from their families from 1909 to 1969 under policies aimed at the assimilation of ‘half-caste’ children into white society and ‘breeding out’ Aboriginality, are particularly pressing. Many of these children experienced out-of-home ‘care’ in orphanages and children’s homes and so are also part of the Forgotten Australian community. A hoped-for outcome from the Trust and Technology Project was that its findings would underpin the development of archival frameworks, strategies and tools driven by the needs of Indigenous communities and individuals, and the building of relationships of trust between the archival community (encompassing archival institutions, organisational recordkeeping programs, the profession, and individual recordkeeping professionals/archivists) and Indigenous communities.

In 2011, reflecting on the transformative experience of being involved in the Project, Sue McKemmish (archival researcher), Lynette Russell (historian) and Shannon Faulkhead (Indigenous studies researcher), explained how *trust* was developed “through a consistent and sincere effort to consult, co-operate and collaborate with Indigenous communities” (McKemmish, Faulkhead, and Russell 2011, p. 221). From these reflections came understanding of the need to engage in what was dubbed ‘reconciling research’, to contribute to a broader endeavour aimed at the decolonisation of archives. Embarking on a collaborative, co-creative journey with members of the academy, Indigenous communities and the archival sector led to the recognition that:

the Indigenous community is a crucial and inalienable part of the decision-making process with regard to how their oral traditions and memories should be handled, the records held about them by government and other non-Indigenous archives, and the interrelationship between them (McKemmish, Faulkhead, and Russell 2011, p. 221).

Reconciling research, as it evolved during the Trust and Technology Project, involves a commitment to decolonising methodologies and cultural pluralism, and engages all partners in the research from conception to dissemination:

Reconciling research as it evolved during the Trust and Technology Project was guided by a research philosophy that considers and incorporates the research design and methods of more than one cultural paradigm. It involves a respectful and carefully negotiated

partnership between researchers and community; the sharing of control; allowing all voices to contribute to the overall outcomes; self-reflectivity; open discussion of methods and issues specific to the research being undertaken; and consideration of the emotional and physical wellbeing of all participants, including all members of the research team (McKemmish, Faulkhead, and Russell 2011, p. 220).

Major outcomes of the Trust and Technology Project included a Statement of Principles relating to Australian Indigenous Knowledge and the Archives (Trust and Technology Project 2009c), a Position Statement on Human Rights, Indigenous Communities in Australia and the Archives (McKemmish, Iacovino, Ketelaar, Castan, and Russell 2011; Trust and Technology Project 2009a), and an Action Agenda for Archival Reconciliation (McKemmish, Faulkhead, and Russell 2011; Trust and Technology Project 2009b). The Statement of Principles, designed to be a guide for future archival practice, research and education, focuses on records of Indigenous peoples created by non-Indigenous organisations, and held in mainstream archival institutions. The Human Rights Position Statement, based on an analysis of the international Indigenous human rights conventions, human rights instruments and relevant Australian law by Livia Iacovino and Eric Ketelaar, spells out the implications for archival law, policy and practice of the human right of self-determination, encompassing the exercise of cultural rights as human rights (Iacovino 2010). This statement specifies actions that archival institutions and the archival profession would need to take to address Indigenous human rights, and the implementation of the provisions of the *Joinet-Orentlicher Principles* (UN Commission on Human Rights 2005) relating to the right to know the truth and the right of reply (McKemmish, Faulkhead, Iacovino, and Thorpe 2010).

Just as in reconciling research, the integral involvement of Indigenous people as partners with the archival community is seen as critical to implementing the Action Agenda. A partnership between the Indigenous and archival communities is envisaged to address the priority areas of recovery and re-integration of Indigenous knowledge and history from non-Indigenous archival sources, acknowledging the integral relationship between oral knowledge, community records and institutional records, and developing frameworks for the exercise of Indigenous rights in records.

Specifically the Action Agenda references the negotiation of appraisal, metadata, disclosure, and access policies, protocols and strategies based on an extended suite of rights in records relating to Indigenous peoples, their knowledge and culture, applicable wherever those records are held. It also envisages “a virtual national archival network that identifies, integrates, and provides for appropriate management and access to information about all archival records relating to Indigenous knowledge and history” (McKemmish, Faulkhead, and Russell 2011, p. 234). The Action Agenda also addresses inclusive archival education; for example the development of culturally sensitive curriculum and support for scholarship and programs for Indigenous students, and wider engagement in reconciling research.

At the conclusion of the research, it was hoped that the rich understandings and findings of the Project would contribute to the reform of archival laws, policies and practices, and ultimately lead to a paradigm shift that would enable Indigenous communities to become participatory agents in recordkeeping and archiving. This in turn would promote the healing of family and community ties

and subsequently encourage the regeneration of community life and culture, thus making an important contribution to national efforts of reconciliation.

The archival research and education components of the Action Agenda are being progressed locally and globally, through the engagement of the international archival academic community in the development of archival research agendas relating to grand societal challenges at the Archival Education and Research Institute (AERI) (Gilliland and McKemmish 2012), and the work of AERI's Pluralising the Archival Curriculum Group (Pluralizing the Archival Curriculum Group 2011). Those directly involved in the Trust and Technology Project continue to evolve reconciling research approaches, working in participatory, partnership projects and contributing to the archival literature on archival research methodologies which guides research training in doctoral and master's research programs. However, the hoped-for outcome of reforming, or even transforming, policy and practice has not as yet gained much traction with archival institutions or the profession, let alone the wider community. Indeed the initial response of the Australian Society of Archivists (ASA) to the Statement of Principles and the Position Statement on Indigenous Human Rights and the Archives was hostile. Although there has since been a change of leadership and direction in the ASA, no priority has yet been given to addressing them.

Further reflection using the MAP model, leads to the conclusion that the findings of a project like Trust and Technology may well only fulfil their potential to contribute to the broader social movements relating to Indigenous human rights, social justice and reconciliation within a larger context of action aimed at achieving archival autonomy for individuals and communities. This requires archival activism on a much grander scale than we have yet seen.

### **The Who Am I? Project (2008-2012)**

The Who Am I? Project, also funded by the ARC Linkage Project scheme, brought together social welfare, archival and historical researchers, with care providers and advocacy organisations to investigate the role played by archiving and recordkeeping practices in the construction of identity for people who experienced out-of-home 'care' as children. As an interdisciplinary research response to the *Bringing them Home*, *Lost Innocents* and *Forgotten Australian* reports (see Appendix) the research project explored issues of creating, storing and accessing records using research practices and tools from the fields of social work, history and archival studies. Adopting an action research approach, the project was comprised of a series of iterative workshops over a three year period. Using 'The Knowledge Diamond', devised by Cathy Humphreys, each workshop emphasised an exchange of ideas between key stakeholder perspectives, namely Research Evidence, Service User/Consumer Experience, Policy Perspectives and Practitioner Wisdom (Downing, Jones, Humphreys, McCarthy, O'Neill, and Tropea 2013). Each workshop involved representatives from all stakeholder communities and always started with the voice of a care leaver. This simple act was found to have a profound effect on participants, ultimately leading to a sense of coherence among these communities not experienced before. As Frank Golding, a care leaver, noted while addressing the final meeting of the project, perhaps the most important outcome was the coherence it brought to what had been a fractured group.

One key action research tool, instrument of collaboration, and important outcome, was the development of the *Pathways: Historical Resources for people who experienced out of home 'care' in*

*Victoria* web resource. By utilising existing archival knowledge mapping technology based on open network informatics derived from archival standards, the project's archivists and historians were able to work with other stakeholders to develop a resource that attempted to decode existing archival description and provide a framework that was both meaningful and useful to care leavers (McCarthy and Evans 2012). The rapid development of this resource was a revelation to the social workers, policy makers and care leavers involved. *Pathways* was made available publicly online within the first year of the project and became the place where language was rehearsed, concepts tackled, new knowledge shared, and new ways of thinking as a community emerged. The web resource only worked with information already in the public domain; it was not a system for delivering records directly to record seekers but a means by which those record seekers could discover and then negotiate access to relevant records, as well as providing a contextual framework to help in decoding and interpreting them. *Pathways* also incorporated published materials, including publishable photographs, systematically interconnecting them with relevant entries about children's homes and other institutions and their surviving records.

The Federal Government apology in 2009 to Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants provided a timely opportunity to reimagine the Victorian experience at a national level. This was realised in the *Find and Connect* Web Resource Project which commenced in May 2011. As a core component of a suite of services and projects for Forgotten Australian and Former Child Migrants, the aim was to develop a single online access point to better enable care leavers to discover information about the history of out-of-home care and locate records held by past care providers and government agencies (FaHCSIA 2012). *Pathways* was used as the model for this national project along with adopting the action research approach from the Who am I? Project as the methodology for its development. Workshops were again crucial in bringing together stakeholders, and facilitating faith, goodwill and trust amongst them. Some truly remarkable and unexpected outcomes were achieved. Perhaps the story of the care leaver in South Australia who with minimal writing skills learned to work with digital communication technologies and ultimately led the local community in the establishment of a memorial to children who died in custody is amongst one of the most heart-warming. However as the initial development phase of the *Find and Connect* Web Resource Project concludes, there remains a strong sense that the transformational work has only just begun and of the need to keep building on achievements lest the systemic failures of the past overwhelm this community so desperately seeking change.

### **Critical Reflection on the Who Am I? and Trust and Technology Projects**

Both Who Am I? and Trust and Technology are examples of activist research and development projects informed by continuum thinking. Despite successful outcomes, their achievements have also been limited by traditional archival and research paradigms. The projects were designed to contribute to wider social movements and, although they engage with different communities, some significant parallels and conclusions can be drawn. Both projects were explicitly participatory. This meant that the agency, and hence autonomy, of all participants, including those whom the mainstream paradigms casts in the role of 'record subjects' or 'research subjects' were respected throughout all stages of the projects. Denial of autonomy has been identified as a key component in objectification (Papadaki 2012).

In terms of archival autonomy, denial of agency in records manifests itself as a silencing of individual and community voices, rendering those represented in records as captives of the archives (Fourmile, 1989). Recognising that records have multiple creators and provenance (Hurley 2005a 2005b), and calling for those documented in records to be documented as co-creators and sources of provenance with agency, challenges the current archival paradigm. Concepts of communities of records and communities of memory, and associated ideas about shared ownership, negotiated rights and obligations in records and joint heritage (Bastian 2003; Ketelaar 2005) come into play when the multiplicity of agency in records is recognised. The 'Knowledge Diamond', used as a key methodology in the Who Am I? Project, along with the reconciling research approaches used by the Trust and Technology Project, were used to enact recognition of co-creation and multiple provenances. This had an empowering effect on participants including academics, practitioners and community members.

Both projects were able to provide space for what Todorov (1996) describes as teleological and intersubjective actions with a moral bent. Teleological actions are those which are judged by their end result, and are therefore goal orientated. This end result may be the meeting of certain predefined goals, or the perceived value or merit of the outcome of a set of actions. Intersubjective actions focus on communication, understanding and relationships. Although intersubjective actions are considered by Todorov to be the 'moral' actions, they always co-exist with teleological actions. Participatory research aimed at contributing to the emergence of participatory archival practice can potentially enable both teleological and intersubjective actions. The processes of the Who Am I? and Trust and Technology projects were very intersubjective, based on understanding the needs of others and selves, engaging, giving voice and empowering. As Gilliland and McKemmish state, "the process is as important as the ends" (Gilliland and McKemmish 2014b, p. 6).

The outcome of the two projects, the teleological 'objects', the web resources and reports, can be used as points of reference, as exemplary memory stores to guide ethical and moral action into the future, and as evidence for wider societal justice action beyond the particular story of the individual participants. Participatory research and the participatory archive have a unique transformative power in this regard, to serve as both process and object, to empower individuals and groups. Both the Trust and Technology and Who Am I? projects were in part motivated by human rights and social justice agendas, respecting and encouraging the agency of community participants in the development and design of the archival solutions they wanted and needed. In the context of genuine and open engagement between all stakeholders and of enabling participation by all partners, archival researchers and archivists could not remain neutral, but had to become activists. In the Who Am I? Project, the Jenkinsonian myth of neutrality was dramatically shattered when the professionals charged with managing the records of people who had experienced care openly confessed their failures, and admitted the disastrous impact the current system of recordkeeping has had on people who experienced care. It was openly recognised that inaction would simply perpetuate harm and inequality (Cook and Schwartz 2002).

However both projects were limited by the context within which they found themselves namely recordkeeping and archival frameworks at odds with their values and needs. To achieve systemic change, the continuum approach, which seeks to implement the concepts of co-creation and multiple-provenance (McKemmish, Reed, and Piggott 2005) based on principles of participatory

archiving, needs to be part of broader archival activism movements. Using the MAP model, the projects could be understood as largely operating in Stages 1 and 2 (Moyer, McAllister, Finley, Soifer 2001). Specific groups of archival researchers, along with partners in allied professions and in affected communities are agitating for change in archival practice and process due to perceived, and arguably real, problems with the current archival paradigm. The 'Knowledge Diamond' is potentially a very useful tool in mobilising people during the early stages, and pushing movements towards the later stages. In the Who Am I? project, as well as ensuring that the voice of care leavers was paramount in everyone's minds, it also created the opportunity (as yet largely unrealised) for power holders such as archival policy makers to become actively engaged and involved in the struggle. In terms of the MAP model, involvement of power holders in the advocacy process marks increased momentum and improved chances of success. It also play a part in the development of a cohesive front, arguably far more influential than isolated individuals agitating for change.

The social movement to decolonise the archive, encompassing archival functionality and professional recordkeeping practice, and giving agency through an extended suite of rights in records to all participants, is in the early stages identified in the MAP model (Stages 1 and 2). Moving into Stage 3 would involve gaining the support of existing institutions and networks. A Stage 4-type trigger point for moving forward towards reform and eventual transformation would require widespread support from the mainstream archival community and its key constituencies, as well as the activist communities driving the broader social justice movements, and associated power holders, like policy makers and resource allocators. Laying the foundation for moving beyond Stage 4 requires partnerships between stakeholder and archival communities to pluralise archival functionality and professional recordkeeping practice. Reform of legal, policy and professional frameworks to begin to accommodate such pluralisation could only be achieved by escalating the issues to a political agenda. It would also be dependent on the relevant power holders becoming convinced that they have no choice but to support reform of policy and practice. Moving beyond reforms to transformative action, as described in Stage 8 of the MAP Model, requires fundamental shifts in current mainstream thinking. For example in relation to Trust and Technology's ultimate goals, decolonising the archive would first require widespread

acknowledgement of the continuing impacts of colonialism and post-colonial recordkeeping and archival structures; strategies and tactics on Indigenous communities; recognition that Indigenous communities rely on sources of knowledge; evidence paradigms and methods of transmission that differ in some significant respects from those of the wider community; and acceptance of differing constructs of ownership of records, privacy, access, and what constitutes secret and sacred material in different space-times (Upward, McKemmish, and Reed 2011, p. 218).

Both projects potentially demonstrate the imperative to move beyond traditional archival values and redefine the measures by which the success of the archive is judged. Replicating Hannah Arendt's test for philosophy would be relevant here, judging success not by its "vapors of cleverness", but its capacity to improve the human condition" (Power 2004, p. ix):

Process rather than product, becoming rather than being, dynamic rather than static, context rather than text, reflecting time and place rather than universal absolutes – these



have become the postmodern watchwords for analysing and understanding science, society, organizations, and business activity among others. They should likewise become the watchwords for Arch Sci in the new century, and thus the foundation for a new conceptual paradigm for the profession (Cook 2001, p. 24).

## Towards a National Summit on the Archive and the Rights of the Child

### Rights in Records

The systemic failures described here are a far cry from the safeguarding of individual and collective memory, the protection of citizens' rights and the enhancement of quality of life espoused in the *Universal Declaration on Archives* (UNESCO 2011). The *Declaration* places an increased responsibility on the archival and recordkeeping community to ensure that action lives up to the rhetoric. It states that archives:

are authoritative sources of information underpinning accountable and transparent administrative actions. They play an essential role in the development of societies by safeguarding and contributing to individual and community memory. Open access to archives enriches our knowledge of human society, promotes democracy, protects citizens' rights and enhances the quality of life (UNESCO 2011).

But how well do existing archival models and their access regimes support the needs of the case study communities? Do these models deliver the pressing identity, memory, accountability and redress needs of the victims of human rights abuses? How well do they support reconciliation and recovery?

While the academic and professional discourse reflects increased sophistication in understanding of the multiple, complex and often conflicting role of archives in society (Cook 2001; Hurley 2005a 2005b; Ketelaar 2005 2006; McKemmish and Piggott 2013; Nesmith 2002), archival infrastructure continues to be representative of, and configured around, traditional orthodoxies. Appraisal, description and access models in particular have limited capacity to take account of rights in records other than singular notions of creation, ownership and custody. Existing power relationships are confirmed through traditional appraisal, description and access practices rather than facilitating their ongoing contestation and negotiation, as well as lacking mechanisms for assuring their own accountability and transparency (Harris 2002; Schwartz and Cook 2002). Traditional archival processes and systems have been designed for a different age; a different cultural, political and technological paradigm. Radical transformation is required to allow for multiple rights in records to be respected, acknowledged, represented and managed.

Gilliland and McKemmish (2014b) advocate a re-conceptualisation of the archival role in serving social justice, human rights, reconciliation and recovery agendas and of the 'participatory archive', arguing that "there is a moral and ethical imperative for an archive that works in the interests of those who have been wronged". Extending their work on archival description rights (Gilliland 2014) and Indigenous rights in records (McKemmish, Faulkhead, and Russell 2011; McKemmish, Iacovino, Ketelaar, Castan, and Russell 2011), they propose an extended suite of rights in records and archives. Moving beyond the current focus on individual archival access rights, the adoption of appraisal,

description, access and disclosure rights for individuals and communities are recommended, along with the development of principles, policies, strategies and tools for managing appraisal and description to support “multiple provenances, differentiated access, and the exercise of mutual rights and responsibilities” (Gilliland and McKemmish 2014b).

In Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, Mick Gooda, speaking at a 2010 Archives and Indigenous Human Rights Workshop, highlighted the 2007 UN *Declaration on the Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UN General Assembly 2007) as a “framework for asserting the rights of Indigenous people to become active, participating agents in recordkeeping and archiving practice relating to all records relating to them, rather than the passive, disempowered subjects of records created and maintained by non-Indigenous institutions and organisations” (McKemmish and Piggott 2013, p. 136). This approach affords a useful way forward in other human rights and social justice contexts. The notion of agency in records is re-defined, repositioning the subjects of records and others involved in the events and actions documented as participatory agents with a suite of legal and moral rights and responsibilities (McKemmish, Iacovino, Ketelaar, Castan, and Russell 2011).

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations, 1990) is one of a suite of conventions that support the 1947 UN Declaration of Human Rights. One of its aims was to change views on the treatment of the child, through regarding children as human beings with a distinct set of rights, not as passive objects of care and charity. The Convention’s guiding principles include non-discrimination, acting in the best interests of the child, and the right to life, survival and development. It also emphasises the right of the child to participate in decision-making which impacts on their lives, supported by adequate access to relevant information.

The records continuum concepts of co-creation, parallel and multiple simultaneous provenance (Hurley 2005a 2005b; McKemmish 2011) are particularly pertinent to rights relating to participation and agency. Hurley has argued for the abandonment of the traditional archival view of a singular creator who alone exercises rights in the record.

By expanding the definition of record creators to include everyone who has contributed to a record’s creative process or been directly affected by its action, notions of co-creation and parallel or simultaneous multiple provenance reposition ‘records subjects’ as ‘records agents’. They support a broader spectrum of rights, responsibilities and obligations relating to the ownership, management, accessibility, and privacy of records in and through time (McKemmish and Piggott 2013, p. 137).

In current practice, the institutions and organisations that provide out-of-home ‘care’ are recognised as the ‘singular record creator’ with all of the rights in the records, including ownership and decision-making powers relating to appraisal, description and access policies and their implementation. There is no requirement in current recordkeeping and archival frameworks, processes and systems to involve records ‘subjects’ in exploring appraisal, description and access needs or to include them in related decision-making. Recognition of those formerly considered ‘subjects’ of the records as co-creators, applying Hurley’s multiple or parallel provenance construct, would involve granting and enacting a more extensive suite of rights in their records. Co-creators would be engaged in decision-

making about appraisal, description and access both now, and into the future – a vision of active rather than passive participation. Recognition of co-creation rights in records is thus a necessary step towards archival autonomy.

### Archival Activism for Archival Autonomy

Our critical research has explored a new concept of archival autonomy and its relationship to community self-determination. Defined as the ability for individuals and communities to participate in societal memory, with their own voice, and to become participatory agents in recordkeeping and archiving for identity, memory and accountability purposes, we also propose that the achievement of archival autonomy extends beyond being a grand archival challenge, to being a grand societal challenge.

What is clear from the various commissions and inquiries mentioned in this study is how extant recordkeeping and archival infrastructure undermines the autonomy of those whose lives and experiences they document and so contributes to their objectification (Papadaki 2012). Our research engagement with the case study communities, with other allied professionals, and with researchers from other disciplines has resulted in a shared interest in and commitment to participatory recordkeeping and archival frameworks and systems.

### Trigger Event: National Summit on the Archive and the Rights of the Child

In response to the systemic recordkeeping and archival issues raised in the reports, by advocates in the case study communities, in the scholarly literature, and in our research findings, a National Summit on the Archive and the Rights of the Child is proposed for late 2015. This high level meeting is envisaged as a vehicle for archival advocacy and activism leading to transformative action that will address related social justice and human rights agendas in Australia. The Summit will address the shared and diverse recordkeeping and archival needs of members of the Stolen Generations, Forgotten Australians, Former Child Migrants and Forced Adoptions communities who experienced out-of-home 'care'. Its overarching objective is to support community action, advocacy and activism and the archival autonomy of communities. To achieve this, the Summit aims to develop an action agenda for archival and recordkeeping responses that would meet the needs of the stakeholder communities, whether that be for

- uniform laws, policies and standards, solutions tailored to the specific needs of particular communities,
- a more extensive suite of rights in records, and/or
- support for a national network of community-based archives with community-controlled nodes.

The Summit is being organised to address the need for transforming frameworks, policies, systems and practice. It is to be driven by the key stakeholders – first and foremost the communities themselves, and the groups and individuals that champion, advocate for and serve them (including community service and advocacy organisations, human rights bodies, and the legal firms that represent the communities). Invitees will also include people we need to partner with and/or influence – the law makers, resource allocators, policy makers, standard setters, leaders of key government departments, organisations and institutions who provide out-of-home care, the

privacy and information watchdogs, auditors, heads of cultural institutions, communities of professional practice, politicians, media, and the general community.

Anticipated outcomes include:

- Decadal (i.e. 10 year) plan for collaborative action to address recordkeeping and archiving needs of key stakeholder communities, including national policies, resourcing and infrastructure and law reform
- Proposal for National Archival and Recordkeeping Framework
- Proposal for National Access Policy and Instruments
- Proposal for an independent Living Archive of the Child in 'Care'
- Recommendations for more extensive suite of rights in records, including rights of disclosure, rights to 'set the record straight', and rights to share in decision-making about records of individuals, plus rights to forget.
- Proposal for National Network of Community-based Archives with community-controlled nodes, and support for community recordkeeping infrastructure
- Identification of a research and development agenda to support the Decadal Plan
- Recommendations for clever use of enabling technologies

The Summit itself is part of the process. It aims to be a coalescing point, a beginning of a 10 20, 50 year plan for transforming recordkeeping and archiving, and a springboard for action. A series of meetings with stakeholders and people we seek to influence will be held in the lead up to the Summit, with communication, media, social media, advocacy, research and development strategies developed for the Summit and beyond. A major challenge is advocacy within the recordkeeping and archival community of the need to transform our frameworks, policies, systems and practice – for the needs of these four communities, but also for all Australians. With reference to the MAP model we are, as a community, in Stages 1 and 2. The vision for the Summit and its outcomes is that it will provide a blueprint for navigating Stages 3 to 8. If the Summit's goals are achieved, it will contribute in the long term to archival activism becoming an integral part of social justice and human rights movements locally and globally, playing its part in the reforms and transformative actions envisaged in Stages 7 and 8 of the MAP model, and addressing the grand societal challenge of archival autonomy for communities.

## Conclusion

Transformations of archival law, policy, systems and practices beyond the boundaries of individual organisations and jurisdictions is required for the development of archival and recordkeeping frameworks and infrastructure which better protects and respects citizen and human rights, as well as contributing to quality of life. Archival activism must extend beyond encouraging greater diversity in archival collections or supporting the social justice work of others to transform the way that archival and recordkeeping systems connect and communicate and are threaded into the community, organisational and social fabrics.

Unless the archival community embraces archival activism and archival autonomy as a grand societal challenge then the inquires, the apologies, the battle for funds to adequately resource responses will continue. The beginnings of a new cycle is already evident as Australia's Human Rights Commission

undertakes an inquiry into the over 1,000 children currently held in immigration detention centres (Australian Human Rights Commission 2014). Dysfunctional recordkeeping and fragmented archival access networks will also continue. The latest Victorian Auditor General's report into residential care services for children once again highlights how inadequate recordkeeping is putting children at risk (Victorian Auditor General 2014).

As we were writing this paper, we were reminded in one of the many tributes to Terry Cook that we can and should be looking to make a difference:

Rather, take the archival ideal, the best from the past, and go and re-invent how society can best archive itself, in an entirely new context of record making and record keeping in a wired, socially networked, and inter-active world. ... to take our profession to a better future (Cook 2010).

## Acknowledgements

We gratefully acknowledge the Trust and Technology Project's community and industry partners: the Public Record Office of Victoria, the Koorie Heritage Trust Inc., the Victorian Koorie Records Taskforce and the Australian Society of Archivists Indigenous Issues Special Interest Group, the Project's Advisory Group, and the eighty-one participants from the Koorie communities of Victoria who agreed to be interviewed as part of the project, along with thirteen archival service providers, managers and mediators.

We also gratefully acknowledge the care leavers who were willing to share their stories in the Who am I? project and participating organisations: the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare, the Victorian Department of Human Services, Child and Family Services Ballarat, Berry Street, Anglicare Victoria, Glastonbury Child and Family Services, Good Shepherd Youth and Family Services, Kildonan Child and Family Services, Mackillop Family Services, Office of the Child Safety Commissioner, Victoria, Orana Family Services, Public Record Office Victoria, St Lukes Anglicare, Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency Co-op Ltd, Wesley Mission, Westcare (Salvation Army), Care Leavers Australia Network, CREATE Foundation, Connecting Home, Link Up and Open Place.

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## Appendix: Case Study Communities, National Inquiries, National Apologies and Select Statements on Records and Archives

Community	Major National Inquiry	National Apology	Records
<p><b>Stolen Generations</b> From 1909 to 1969 up to 50,000 Indigenous children were forcibly removed from their families under policies aimed at the assimilation of 'half-caste' children into white society and 'breeding out' Aboriginality.</p>	<p>April 1997 <i>Bringing Them Home Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families</i></p> <p>Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (now the Australian Human Rights Commission )</p>	<p>13 February 2008 Apology</p> <p>'We apologise for the laws and policies of successive Parliaments and governments that have inflicted profound grief, suffering and loss on these our fellow Australians. .... For the pain, suffering and hurt of these Stolen Generations, their descendants and for their families left behind, we say sorry. To the mothers and the fathers, the brothers and the sisters, for the breaking up of families and communities, we say sorry. And for the indignity and degradation thus inflicted on a proud people and a proud culture, we say sorry.' (Prime Minister of Australia 2008)</p>	<p>From the Bringing them Home Report:</p> <p>'The Inquiry's recommendations are designed to achieve three broad objectives. First, all records which may be of assistance to Indigenous people seeking to re-establish family and community links or establish Indigenous identity must be preserved. All culling of relevant or potentially relevant records must be embargoed. Second, access to records must be made easier and less hurtful. This involves improving access procedures, ensuring culturally appropriate access and involving the counselling and support assistance of Indigenous family tracing and reunion services. Third, in the longer term Indigenous communities should have an opportunity to manage their own historical documentation. For those communities which desire it, copies of relevant records collections should be provided to Indigenous repositories within established privacy principles.' (Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, 1997)</p> <p>The <i>Wilam Naling Report</i> is an example of response from archival community (Victorian Koorie Records Taskforce 2006)</p>
<p><b>Former Child Migrants</b> From 1900 through to the early 1970s an estimated 7,000 unaccompanied children were brought to Australia from the United Kingdom and Malta under a variety of approved schemes. Many were removed without their parents' knowledge or consent and ended up put to work as labourers in remote and harsh institutions (Child Migrants Trust 2014).</p>	<p>30 August 2001 <i>Lost Innocents: Righting the Record – Report on Child Migration</i></p> <p>Parliament of Australia, Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs</p>	<p>16 November 2009 Apology</p> <p>'We acknowledge the particular pain of children shipped to Australia as child migrants - robbed of your families, robbed of your homeland, regarded not as innocent children but regarded instead as a source of child labour. To those of you who were told you were orphans, brought here without your parents' knowledge or consent, we acknowledge the lies you were told, the lies told to your mothers and fathers, and the pain these lies have caused for a lifetime.</p> <p>To those of you separated on the dockside from your brothers and sisters; taken alone and unprotected to the most remote parts of a foreign land - we acknowledge today that the laws of our nation failed you. And for this we are deeply sorry. (Prime Minister of Australia 2009)</p>	<p>From the Lost Innocents Report:</p> <p>'The Committee notes that many former child migrants have been helped by the Child Migrant Trust in the search for their families. The Trust has built up significant expertise in tracing. Often tracing is a long and difficult process with Trust officers liaising with sending and receiving agencies to tracking down old records, sifting through birth, deaths and marriage registers and finally locating lost family members. Other agencies also provide tracing services: C-BERS through the Catholic Child Welfare Council UK, NCH, Barnardos UK and the Salvation Army. However, past attitudes to family contact, record keeping practices and the falsification of records has made the tracing of many families enormously difficult.' (Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs 2001)</p> <p>Outcomes revisited in 2009 with <i>Lost Innocents and Forgotten Australians Revisited Report</i> (Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs 2009)</p>

Community	Major National Inquiry	National Apology	Records
<p><b>Forgotten Australians</b> Survivors of the estimated 500,000 children who found themselves in institutional or other out-of-home 'care' throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. (Alliance for Forgotten Australians 2011)</p>	<p>30 August 2004 <i>Forgotten Australians: A Report on Institutional or Out-of-Home Care as Children</i></p> <p>Parliament of Australia, Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs</p>	<p>16 November 2009 Apology</p> <p>'Sorry - that as children you were taken from your families and placed in institutions where so often you were abused. Sorry - for the physical suffering, the emotional starvation and the cold absence of love, of tenderness, of care. Sorry - for the tragedy, the absolute tragedy, of childhoods lost, childhoods spent instead in austere and authoritarian places, where names were replaced by numbers, spontaneous play by regimented routine, the joy of learning by the repetitive drudgery of menial work. Sorry - for all these injustices to you, as children, who were placed in our care.' (Prime Minister of Australia 2009)</p>	<p>From the 2009 Apology:</p> <p>'Third, many Forgotten Australians and child migrants continue to need help in tracing their families. That is why we'll be providing a National Find and Connect Service that will provide Australia-wide coordinated family tracing and support services for care leavers to locate personal and family history files and the reunite with members of their families, where that is possible.</p> <p>The service will provide a national database that will collate and index existing state identified records into a national searchable data base, accessible to state and other care leaver services and also directly to care leavers themselves.'</p> <p>Outcomes revisited in 2009 with <i>Lost Innocents and Forgotten Australians Revisited Report</i> (Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs 2009)</p>
<p><b>Forced Adoptions</b> Those impacted by policies in the 1950s-1970s which removed babies at birth from young unmarried mothers against their will to put them up for adoption.</p>	<p>29 February 2012 <i>Commonwealth Contribution to Former Forced Adoption Policies and Practices</i></p> <p>Parliament of Australia, Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs</p>	<p>21 March 2013 Apology</p> <p>'Today, this Parliament, on behalf of the Australian people, takes responsibility and apologises for the policies and practices that forced the separation of mothers from their babies which created a lifelong legacy of pain and suffering. ... We say sorry to you, the mothers who were denied knowledge of your rights, which meant you could not provide informed consent.. ... To each of you who were adopted or removed, who were led to believe your mother had rejected you and who were denied the opportunity to grow up with your family and community of origin and to connect with your culture, we say sorry. ... To you, the fathers, who were excluded from the lives of your children and deprived of the dignity of recognition on your children's birth records, we say sorry. .... To you, the siblings, grandparents, partners and other family members who have shared in the pain and suffering of your loved ones or who were unable to share their lives, we say sorry.' (Attorney-General's Department 2013)</p>	<p>From the 2013 Apology:</p> <p>To redress the shameful mistakes of the past, we are committed to ensuring that all those affected get the help they need, including access to specialist counselling services and support, the ability to find the truth in freely available records and assistance in reconnecting with lost family. We resolve, as a nation, to do all in our power to make sure these practices are never repeated. In facing future challenges, we will remember the lessons of family separation. Our focus will be on protecting the fundamental rights of children and on the importance of the child's right to know and be cared for by his or her parents.' (Attorney-General's Department 2013)</p>

Note: As identified by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (2014a) there have been at least 79 different inquiries across a number of jurisdictions into these communities and their needs.

