"BIG GAY LIBRARY:"
AN ETHNOGRAPHY OF THE PRIDE LIBRARY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
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Abstract

Officially founded in 1997, the Pride Library is a pioneering Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Queer (LGBTQ) Canadian information-based organization. Although located within D.B. Weldon Library at the University of Western Ontario, the library maintains a primarily grassroots framework. The Pride Library case study reflects a tradition within LGBTQ communities towards preserving and disseminating information otherwise marginalized by larger society. Operating outside of conventional professional informed and institutionally-dominated models, LGBTQ communities create unique grassroots information organizational contexts. In order to develop a deeper understanding of LGBTQ information organizations, an ethnographic study of the Pride Library was developed. The thesis addresses the library's use patterns, and approaches to space, materials and labour relations. Findings demonstrate that the Pride Library is not only valued for providing LGBTQ-specific information resources, but also for creating a symbolically significant, socially-oriented and community-based LGBTQ environment.

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I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter introduces the thesis, which is an ethnographic research project located at the Pride Library at the University of Western Ontario. The chapter includes background information on the Pride Library, the University of Western Ontario and LGBTQ grassroots information organizations. The chapter also highlights the research project's underlying concerns and objectives and provides a brief survey of the upcoming chapters.

1.2 Background

> *You're on the University of Western campus, it's a huge campus, it's not an exceptionally open campus, I would say, it's a very conservative town…So the fact there is a big gay library is appealing for people from a community aspect – that they can come here and meet others.*
> ("Aidan," Interview Transcript)

> *To other undergrads, or to people that I know better … I call it "the big gay library." And if someone then followed up with that, then you know "what we do is carry Weldon's selection of LGBTQ materials"…I [also] like "LGBTQ archive" because it sounds very official and stuffier than the place actually is, it makes the place sound more professional…but it really is more like "the big gay library" because it's more convivial than "the LGBTQ archive" makes it sound.*
> ("Caspar," Interview Transcript)

Taking up a mere seventeen hundred square feet within a large academic library of over two hundred thousand square feet, "big" may not be the initial characteristic that comes to mind when imagining the Pride Library. In other respects, however, the Pride Library looms large: the space is aesthetically striking and represents a functional and symbolic purpose towards serving previously neglected LGBTQ community information needs.

In addition to size and stature, "big gay library" is also a term of endearment and reflects Pride Library users' affection towards the organization. Pride Library users feel a sense of endearment because the library not only functions as an LGBTQ resource but also as a "convivial" for community gathering. As a result, the Pride Library not only looms large symbolically but also emotionally in the hearts of those who use the library on a regular basis.

The Pride Library is located within D.B. Weldon library at the University of Western Ontario (UWO) in London, Ontario. With over 32, 000 full-time students, UWO is the second largest university in Ontario. D.B. Weldon is one of the university's eight "information hubs" but also the largest: the collection contains over eight million items in print and microfilm and is considered the fourth largest academic library in Canada. UWO is also considered one of Canada's top ten research-intensive universities and consistently performs highly in university rankings. For example, as Mayne (2009) notes, *The Globe and Mail* placed UWO first for "overall quality of education" in 2005, 2007 and 2008.

Although UWO is a large academic university, the Pride Library's presence is particularly remarkable because of the university's reputation as a site of white, heteronormative privilege. For example, my informant Riley characterized UWO as having a "vehemently heterosexual agenda." At the most extreme, UWO harbours a reputation as a "party school:" in April 2011 Playboy magazine ranked UWO fourth in their top-ten party schools' list. As the quote from my informant Aidan above highlights, many of informants view the Pride Library as both a refuge from these UWO cultural

"norms" and one of the few places on campus they can actively seek out other LGBTQ people.

Beyond UWO proper, the Pride Library is also a major signpost in a city otherwise not known as a hub of LGBTQ activity. Although the London's census metropolitan area ranked #10 for population in the 2006 Statistics Canada census, the city currently has only one gay bar. There are notable exceptions and LGBTQ activity pockets, such as the London Lesbian Film Festival, which recently celebrated its twentieth anniversary and the local chapter of International Court System, which is a royal-theme LGBTQ fundraising organization (see Chapter VII). In recent history, however, London has served more as a source of LGBTQ oppression: in 1997 an Ontario Human Rights tribunal found the city and former mayor Dianne Haskett guilty of human rights violations after refusing to issue a Gay Pride proclamation in 1995. 1995 also marks the year of the Project Guardian police crackdown on child pornography, which has been subsequently characterized as a "gay witch hunt" with sixty-one, primarily gay male "suspect offenders" but no child pornography charges ever laid.

Despite the overall "conservative" culture in London and on the UWO campus, the Pride Library flourished into a significant Southern Ontario LGBTQ activity site. As the section on the library's history below details, the library's existence can be explained due to a "small" organizational framework, support from the greater LGBTQ community and tireless activist energy, particularly from Pride Library founder and "head volunteer" Professor Miller. Yet, the Pride Library's success can also be credited, in part, to the vision of several key UWO leaders, generosity from UWO and growing LGBTQ

visibility more generally. As a result, the Pride Library not only represents the struggle for but also the subsequent recognition of the LGBTQ community within UWO, London and beyond - which is, perhaps, the "biggest" feat of all.

1.2.1 A Brief History of the Pride Library

The Pride Library's history begins in the nineties amidst the backdrop at UWO and London, Ontario described above. The Pride Library had a relatively "small" beginning in 1991 as source of supplementary course materials. That year, Professor James Miller created UWO's first-ever class exclusively on LGBTQ issues. Professor Miller is a medieval literary scholar by trade but was inspired to create the course through his personal experiences as a recently out gay man and his uniquely flexible appointment as a "Faculty of Arts" professor. In preparation for the course, he surveyed UWO's library holdings for LGBTQ content and deemed them inadequate. In response, he made his personal collection of about 80-100 books available to his students for browsing and lending through his University College office and lovingly dubbed the collection, "The Michel Foucault Memorial Library."

By the mid nineties, Professor Miller stopped teaching his course but continued dedicating LGBTQ activist energy toward the Michel Foucault Memorial Library. The library grew gradually through private donations from the LGBTQ community. A notable early donor was Ed Phelps, a UWO archivist who not only provided an entire run of *The Body Politic* but also provided free appraisal services. In 1996, Richard Hudler and Joseph Couture offered Professor Miller the archival holdings of HALO on the pre-condition that the collection achieved official recognition. As a result, that year

Professor Miller created the "UWO Research Facility in Gay and Lesbian Studies" with help from UWO's Vice-President of Research. At the time of the official opening in February 1997, however, the facility adopted the less-cumbersome name, "The Pride Library." During this period, the library had one volunteer and one work/study student and the space was open one day a week as a reading room.

Between 1997 and 2004 the Pride Library expanded with ever-increasing speed. In 1999, with a collection of approximately 1000 books, the library moved to the "Old Russian Reading Room" during a University College renovation project. This marked the first time that the library had a space autonomous from Professor Miller's office and the introduction of the Pride Library's distinct colour palate. In 2000, due to initiative from UWO's head of technical services, Wendy Kennedy and University Librarian, Joyce Garnett, the library transitioned from a modified Dewey Decimal cataloging system implemented by volunteers and work/study students to full integration within UWO's online public access catalogue (although the library remained non-circulating). In order to do so, the Pride Library secured funds to cover the cataloging fees for the then approximately 2000-volume collection via grants from UWO's Committee for the Safety of Women on Campus. The UWO library system donated all subsequent cataloging at through a weekly quota, currently at ten entries per week.

The Pride Library's donations and popularity continued through publicity from UWO's online catalogue. In 2004, with a collection of over 4000 titles, the Pride Library was deemed a safety hazard. Through help from UWO's provost, Roma Harris, the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities Kathleen Okruhlik and Joyce Garnett, the Pride

Library was allocated a space in D.B Weldon Library along with $65 000 in funds for renovations. Along with the re-opening in fall semester 2006 (the grand re-opening, however, was in February), the library became a circulating collection while maintaining access and borrowing privileges for the general public. The library currently holds over 5,000 circulating books, over 1, 000 rare non-circulating books and the Richard Hudler Archives and relies on a staff of approximately fifteen to twenty volunteers and four work/study students.

1.2.2 The Pride Library as an LGBTQ Grassroots Information Organization

Although the Pride Library currently enjoys official recognition and has received some financial support from UWO in the past, the library continues to run as a primarily volunteer-operated, grassroots institution. For example, the library acquires all materials through private donation and employs only four part-time staff through the university's work/study program that are supervised directly through Professor Miller. The Pride Library's history and current mandate also suggest a grassroots impetus: the library was created and continues to provide a haven for LGBTQ information materials otherwise ignored by the institutional and professionally-dominated library realm.

The Pride Library represents a legacy of within LGBTQ history for creating community-based information entities in response to the disinterest and deliberate acts of information erasure by the general public. These organizations include: the Lesbian Herstory Archives, the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives, the June Mazer Lesbian Archives, the Gerber/Hart Library and ONE National Archives. According to Cvetkovich (2003), these collections have uniquely "queer" strategies, which are increasingly important to

remember in the wake of increasing popularity for LGBTQ studies within the academy and the subsequent creation of academic LGBTQ collections. A major aim of this research project, therefore, is to articulate the unique qualities of an LGBTQ information-based organization located outside out of strict institutional and professional bounds. The Pride Library, represents a particularly compelling case study because the library is located within an academy but maintains a grassroots orientation.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Although Library and Information Studies (LIS) addresses LGBTQ information needs, the focus of these discussions remain exclusively in the realm of uncovering information seeking behaviour and creating solutions for LGBTQ patrons within the conventional, professionally bound library realm. This thesis shifts focus towards a specific LGBTQ grassroots information organization – the Pride Library – in order to examine an LBGTQ community and organization-level response to LGBTQ information needs.

1.4 Research Objectives and Personal Statement

The main objective of this study was to explore and articulate the environment and activities taking place at the Pride Library. In order to do so, this study utilized the ethnographic method, which relies on immersion into a specific social context toward developing rich, community-specific insights. Due to ethnography's position as an "emergent" method (see Chapter III for further detail), this study did not have a specific hypothesis, but rather, guiding research questions. These questions included: how do users perceive the setting and what activities do users engage in within the setting? More specifically, is this a space valued particularly for the concrete LGBTQ information

resources provided or more abstractly as an information-rich site for networking and more social opportunities – or both?

Although the study did not have a specific hypothesis, it is important to note that the research questions and overall direction for the study were informed by my personal and previous research experiences. My curiosity about LGBTQ information activities can be traced back to my dual identity as a lesbian and a library school student. In order to satisfy both needs, I pursued Sexual Diversity Studies in collaboration with my Master of Information degree, which included a graduate seminar course in queer theory. From June to August 2010, I also participated in an internship and completed a preliminary ethnographic research project at the Lesbian Herstory Archives (LHA) in conjunction with an ethnographic research course offered at the Faculty of Information by Professor Jenna Hartel.

My findings from the unpublished ethnographic project at the Lesbian Herstory Archives directly inspired and deeply informed this thesis project. Over the course of my research at the LHA, I observed that the archives were not only valued by users for the information they housed, but also for providing a welcoming, social environment that fosters information exchanges of a less material nature. I also discovered that the LHA has a "queer" relationship to information, such as their "all-over" organizational approach and their value of "real live lesbians" and ephemeral materials. In order to understand these findings within a larger context, I decided to pursue another study with similar designs and concerns over a longer period of time. The resulting study about the Pride Library of Western Ontario, therefore, follows Stebbins (2006) concept of the

"concatenated research approach," where a series of field studies are linked together toward creating grounded theory.

1.5 Outline of the Thesis

Moving from the introductory chapter (Chapter I), this thesis surveys the relevant literature (Chapter II), outlines the project's research method and design (Chapter III) and presents notable findings from the project (Chapter IV – VII). Chapter IV articulates the unique physical and aesthetic qualities to the Pride Library. Chapter V examines the Pride Library's information materials. Chapter VI discusses the Pride Library's labour dimension. Chapter VII focuses on the Pride Library's users and the ways in which their use is made manifest. The final chapter (Chapter VIII), summarizes the major findings from the thesis and relates these findings to more general issues surrounding community autonomy and different spheres of library activity ranging from private to public. The final chapter also provides a meta-commentary on thesis, including reflections on methodology and outlining outstanding issues and questions.

1.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter introduced the thesis project, including relevant background on the project and project's location, the objectives and research questions guiding the project, and a survey of the subsequent chapters that comprise the thesis proper. The following chapter will explore relevant literature pertaining to thesis project.

II
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter surveys three areas of literature relevant to the thesis project: LIS Literature on LGBTQ Issues, LIS Literature on Place, Emotion and Autonomy and Queer Theory. Including Queer Theory within the Literature Review chapter reflects the interdisciplinary nature of the project, which is concurrently informed by LIS and Sexual Diversity Studies (SDS). Literature pertaining to research methodology is absent from this chapter due to inclusion in the following chapter.

2.2 LIS Literature on LGBTQ Issues

LIS has a discursive tradition addressing LGBTQ issues that traces back to professional librarianship's social justice movement during the sixties and seventies. As part of this movement, librarians lobbied for and subsequently created the American Library Association's (ALA) Social Responsibilities Roundtable (SRRT) in 1967. In 1970 the Task Force on Gay Liberation (TFGL) became an affiliate group of the SRRT, making the task force the first-ever professional association for gays and lesbians. During this period, librarians also produced pioneering works critiquing professional and institutional library practices utilizing social justice frameworks that often included anti-homophobic components. For example, Sanford Berman's (1971) *Prejudices and antipathies* examined bias in LC subject headings towards social groups based on various attributes including race, class, gender and sexuality. Similarly, West and Katz's (1972) essay

collection *Revolting librarians* (1972) included a chapter by Gutag addressing homophobia in LIS education.

More recent LIS works addressing LGBTQ issues continue the discursive legacy addressing how professional and institutional library practice relates to LGBTQ information needs. For example, Greenblatt and Gough's (1990) *Gay and lesbian library service* is the first-ever monograph dedicated to library programming ideas for the LGBTQ community. Other works, such as Kester's (1997) anthology *Liberating minds: The stories and professional lives of gay, lesbian, and bisexual librarians and their advocates* and Carmichael Jr.'s (1998) anthology *Daring to find our names: The search for lesbigay library services* provide experientially-based insight into LGBTQ-based institutional library activities and identities. The most recent contributions to this discursive branch include: Martin and Murdock's (2007) *Serving lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender teens* and Greenblatt's (2010) anthology *Serving LGBTQ library and archives users.*

Reflecting an increased attention in LIS toward understanding information seeking and use, the largest branch of inquiry of LGBTQ issues within LIS examines information needs and activities LGBTQ individuals and communities. Works from this branch include earlier studies by Creelman and Harris (1989) and Whitt (1993), which focused on lesbian information seeking. Other contributions reflect different components of the LGBTQ spectrum, including work by Taylor (2003) on the transgender community, work by Joyce and Schrader (1997) and Hamer (2003) on gay men and Rothbauer's (2004, 2004) more recent studies on lesbian reading activities. Rothbauer (2007) concludes, however, that these studies suggest that although LGBTQ individuals often initially seek

out information from institutionalized libraries, their needs are "consistently unmet" (pg.104) when compared to alternative information sources, such as specialty bookstores.

As a result, recent LIS literature on LGBTQ issues is relevant to this thesis because they identify a conflict between conventional libraries and LGBTQ information needs, despite increasing attention to these issues within the library profession. For example, Rothbauer (2007) argues that public library theory and practice fails LGBTQ patrons by remaining heterosexist: "by positioning the library as a safe, anonymous, and private place, place of solace, a place that affords hiding for LGBTQ patrons, re-inscribes the values of the homosexual closet." (pg. 106). Similarly, while examining book clubs for gay men in Wisconsin, Pruitt (2010) found that these clubs deliberately choose meeting settings outside public library settings due to their perceptions that public libraries do not support LGBTQ social movements. By discussing how conventional institutions fail to create meaningful spaces for queer people, studies such as Rothbauer's (2007) and Pruitt's (2010) illustrates why there is a continued need in the queer community for maintaining alternative information-based organizations.

2.3 Queer Theory

In contrast to LIS literature on LGBTQ issues, which focuses on identifying and remedying LGBTQ representational gaps within professional library contexts, recent queer theoretical works by Cvetkovich (2003) and Halberstam (2005) focus on LGBTQ information activities outside of conventional institutional bounds. Queer theory is a multi-disciplinary critical framework that examines social and cultural activities through an outsider or "queer" perspective. As Turner (2004), explains, the term "queer" does

not relate to a specific identity category, but rather, the failure of fitting into an established set of societal expectations.

Due to the Pride Library's grassroots history and operational mandate, queer theory provides useful orienting information about the Pride Library's "queer" motives and qualities. Most notably, Cvetkovich's (2003) *An Archive of Feelings* includes an entire chapter on "queer" LGBTQ archival organizations and activities. According to Cvetkovich (2003), these organizations have a distinctly "emotional" orientation because they are mandated toward documenting areas of experience – "intimacy, sexuality, love and activism" that "are difficult to chronicle through the materials of the traditional archive." (pg.241). By extension, Cvetkovich argues that these institutions have an "emotional" and "idiosyncratic" approach to information, such as locating their collections in warm, home-like environments and collecting information that is expressly nostalgic and ephemeral in nature.

In addition to Cvetkovich (2003), recent queer theoretical work by Halberstam (2005) provides relevant analysis of queer information activities at the Pride Library. Halberstam (2005) introduces the concept of "queer space," which argues that queer counter-publics enable "new understandings of space" by engaging in post-modern "place-making practices" (pg. 6). When read in conjunction with Rothbauer's (2007) argument that conventional information-based organizations such as libraries fail to provide appropriate information environments for queer patrons, Halberstam's argument helps further contextualize the Pride Library's spatial and aesthetic choices (discussed in Chapter IV).

2.4 LIS Literature on Place, Grounds & Affect

LIS literature on "library as place", "information grounds" and the "affective paradigm" provide complimentary frameworks for contextualizing Pride Library activities in conjunction with queer theory. Although these frameworks do not exclusively focus on LGBTQ information issues, they provide models for understanding the specific context of the Pride Library as a grassroots, community and place-centric library. As a result, these frameworks differ from the LIS literature on LGBTQ issues mentioned above, which focus on LGBTQ information seeking activities and institutional and professionalized library environments.

This thesis project draws major inspiration from the "library as place" movement in LIS, as articulated in Bushman & Leckie's (2007) *Library as Place*. Buschman and Leckie (2007) note that a renewed emphasis on "library as a place" allows us to view libraries as "physical entities where a complex mix of activities, processes and actions occur on a daily basis." (p. 3). Focusing on the "library as place," therefore, invites reflection on the location-specific, physical and material qualities to experiences within information-based environments. For example, Van Slyck (2007) discusses how library "architecture" including floor layout and furniture placement "manage pleasure" while reading. (pg. 221) As mentioned earlier, Rothbauer (2007) explores how public libraries create "closeting" spaces for LGBTQ patrons.

In addition to "library as place," the "information grounds" model represents another relevant "context-based" approach to understanding information activities. According to Fischer, Landry & Naumer (2006) "information grounds" describes informal interplays

between people, place and information outside of information-sharing mandated events such as reference interviews, study groups or classroom instruction. Fischer, Landry & Naumer (2006) identify a number of factors that contribute to information ground creation including: "conviviality," creature comforts," and location." Most notably, Prigoda & McKenzie (2007) applied the information-grounds model to knitting club activities in public library settings. This application demonstrates that informal information grounds are created within formal information-based institutions, which is similar to my observations at the Pride Library.

In addition to place-based approaches to understanding located information activities, the "affective paradigm" toward information-seeking and use study also provides a useful framework for understanding Pride Library activities. Most notably, Given's (2006) research on undergraduate student information seeking behaviour demonstrates the emotional dimension to information-based activities. Similar to my research at the Pride Library, Given's (2006) study revealed that students develop emotional attachments to specific spaces they "carve out" on campus for information purposes, such as a specific computer or chair (pg. 172). As a result, as Given (2006) suggests, the affective paradigm represents an opportunity in LIS to develop a more holistic approach to understanding and subsequently developing spaces and services towards information needs.

2.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter reviewed LIS literature on LGBTQ issues and surveyed other literatures relevant to the thesis from queer theory and LIS literature on place, information grounds

and emotion. Although LIS addresses LGBTQ issues, this chapter demonstrated that other paradigms more closely relate to this thesis's goal of providing a contextualized and holistic characterization of an information organization operating outside of institutional and professional bounds. Reflection on contextualized and holistic characterizations of information-based environments and activities continues in the following chapter on research methodology.

III
METHODS

3.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter outlines the thesis project's research methods and design, which are located within the ethnographic tradition. The chapter's structure echoes the research structure by moving from process to analysis. Due to ethnography's relatively new status as a research method within LIS, the chapter not only explicates the ethnographic research process but also the distinct writing product also known as "ethnography."

3.2 Rationale

Ethnographic research focuses on a particular community's social organization and culture with an aim towards understanding their "daily lives" (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 1995, pg. 1). In order to gain a deep insight into a particular social group, the ethnographer immerses themselves fully into that community, acting as a "participant observer" (Bernard, 2006, pg.344). This research project's focus on the Pride Library's unique activities and contexts necessitates the holistic, located and rich descriptive tools that ethnography provides. The ethnographic tradition, furthermore, is especially equipped for the community-centric nature of an LGBTQ-oriented environment, such as the Pride Library.

Ethnography achieves a distinctly community-specific research perspective by utilizing an "emergent" approach to inquiry. In contrast other inquiry forms, the researcher does not begin their study with a specific hypothesis they are testing based on a broader

theory, but rather, they begin by making observations within their chosen field of study and subsequently discover meaningful patterns, which can then be developed into theories. This research process, therefore, has a "cyclical" quality (Spradley, 1980, pg. 26) and ultimately renders data collection and analysis processes "inseparable" (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 1995, pg.11).

Ethnography also represented a viable method for this research project due to its applicability across social science disciplines and flexibility towards investigating activities and activity sites. Although ethnography originated from both late nineteenth and early twentieth century anthropological and sociological disciplines, the method has since been adopted by a number of other disciplines, such as: education, cultural studies, and information (Bernard, 2006, p. 346). Most notably, recent ethnographies located within libraries dynamically investigate the range of activities that take place within library settings. Fried Foster and Gibbons (2007) utilized ethnographic study at an undergraduate library at the University of Rochester as the preliminary stage for the library's renovation project. Another recent project, "Ethnographic Research in Illinois Academic Libraries" (ERIAL), utilized a large team of anthropologists and librarians to investigate the library activities at five Illinois universities towards developing improved services (Asher, Duke and Green, 2010). As Asher, Duke & Green (2010) note, ethnography allows for a more "user-centred approach" than conventional library research methods, such as user surveys, gate counting and bibliometrics.

3.3 Research Design and Implementation

Reflecting the Pride Library's location within a university and the particular rhythms of university life, the study was completed over the course of an academic semester. In order to participate as fully in the Pride Library environment as possible, I visited the Pride Library on a weekly basis from January 13, 2011 to April 8, 2011. In total, I spent nineteen individual days and approximately one hundred and twenty-five to one hundred and fifty hours in the field. In addition to participatory field work, I also conducted semi-structured interviews, took photographs of the space and collected secondary data from the Pride Library's archives.

2.3.2 Entrance into the Field and Ethical Concerns

Prior to entering the field, I first contacted Professor Miller at the Pride Library for approval and input into my proposed study. With informal approval gained, I then pursued and achieved formal approval through both the University of Toronto's and the University of Western Ontario's Office of Research Ethics. The study fully complied with all ethics requirements at the University of Toronto and the University of Western Ontario and I treated all informants with fairness and respect.

Reflecting that LGBTQ life remains precarious for many people in North America, I took special care during my study to maintain informants' confidentiality. As a result, photographs taken within the Pride Library space did not include any human presence. All participants were assigned pseudonyms at the fieldnote-taking stage except for Professor Miller and prominent Pride Library donors because they already occupy publically prominent positions in relation to the Pride Library. Professor Miller's status

as an "expert" on the Pride Library, furthermore, renders him valuable specifically as an identifiable informant.

The study utilized several different strategies for securing informants' consent. Pride Library volunteers were informally contacted for their consent by the library's volunteer coordinator prior to starting field research. In order to ensure informal consent by "heavy" Pride Library users, I also personally identified myself and my research to those I regularly encountered over the course of the study. Individuals encountered frequently through indirect observation fell out of the bounds of "risk" and did not require a consent process. Those selected for semi-structured interviewing were also submitted to a formalized consent process, vis a vis a consent form (see Appendix A).

3.3.2 Participatory Modes

Ethnography's emphasis on contextualized, localized understanding of social phenomena hinges on researcher participation. While in the field, I participated in Pride Library activities in a number of meaningful ways. Two days a week, I served as Queeries Desk volunteer (see Appendix B for the Queeries Desk Schedule), which involved: keeping the library open for users, answering reference questions and performing operational tasks such as shelving and "flagging" (to be described in further detail in Chapter V). I regularly read pulp novel books from the Closet Collection toward a UWO MLIS student initiative that regularly met during my fieldwork days. In addition to performing regular volunteer work, I also completed a special project for the Pride Library by creating an updated box list for the London Lesbian Film Festival archival collection.

Due to the Pride Library's profile as a multi-use and highly social space, my time at the Pride Library also involved utilizing the space on a casual level. According to Bernard (2006), "hanging out" is a fundamental skill allowing the participant observer to build rapport with informants (pg.368). As a result, I also regularly performed such activities as: socializing with others, studying, reading and eating. I also regularly attending a weekly LGBTQ movie screening event.

3.4 Data Collection and Analyses

Data collection and analyses closely followed ethnographic methodology drawing strongly on Emerson, Fretz & Shaw's (1995) *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*, 1995. I relied primarily on an ethnographic record produced via the researcher's observation-based fieldnotes and semi-structured interviews. It is important to note that I also collected secondary data from the Pride Library's archival collections towards the Pride Library history section found in the Introduction chapter. Please see Table 1 for a quantification data collected over the course of the study. The sections that follow explicate this process in further detail.

In addition to writing-based ethnographic data collection methods, I also incorporated "photographic inventory" techniques as per Collier & Collier (1986) and took one-hundred and twenty-two photographs while in the field. The "photographic inventory" is an anthropological method that utilizes a photographic record of field site qualities such as: aesthetic, activities and "character of order." Due to ethical considerations, however, I was unable to capture human activity.

Data Format	Amount Collected
Jottings	Approximately 60 small pages (3X4inches)
Fieldnotes	16 entries; 49 pages single-spaced
Semi-Structured Interviews	9 interviews; 115 pages single-spaced
Photographs	122
Initial Memos	51 entries; approximately 85-100 pages single-space

Table 1. "Quantification of Collected Data."

3.4.1 Jottings and Fieldnotes

The ethnographic research process explicitly weaves data collecting and analyses together through regular, prescribed writing activities, which become increasingly formalized over time. These activities begin with jottings: short observations notes taken while still in the field toward later "jogging" the ethnographer's memory (Lofland & Lofland, 1995, 90). Jottings are undertaken as unobtrusively as possible as to not disturb activities taking place within the field. Due to jotting's status as an ephemeral aid, the materials produced do not require preservation within the ethnographic record. During my time in the field, I usually produced about three double-sided small pages (3 X 4 inches) of jottings per day for approximately sixty pages in total.

After leaving the field in the evening, the ethnographer turns their attention toward the explicit writing activity of producing fieldnotes. During my time in the field, I wrote sixteen fieldnote entries, for a total of forty-nine pages of single-spaced writing. Fieldnotes create a rich, descriptive observational account of activities from that day's fieldwork and represent a fundamental data source for future analysis. Although written

in a looser, more informal style, the ethnographer keeps their secondary future audience in mind in order to include sufficient detail and clarity (Lofland & Lofland, 1995, 93).

3.4.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

In addition to fieldnotes, this study strongly relied on data gathered through semi-structured interviewing. Over the course of my field work, I conducted nine, approximately one hour long, semi-structured interviews with seven interviewees leading to one hundred and fifteen pages of single spaced transcripts. Due to the breadth of his knowledge, Professor Miller was interviewed on three separate occasions. See Appendix C for a brief description of each interviewee.

Semi-structure interviewing combines the "freewheeling quality of unstructured interviewing" with a more formalized interview guide (Bernard, 2006, 212) . Due to the number of different Pride Library "roles" I identified prior to entering the field (user, work/study student, volunteer & Professor Miller), I created four separate interview guides (See Appendix D).

The interview guides began by exploring the interviewee's initial introduction to the Pride Library, moving into discussions about their particular roles and uses of the space and culminating with their perceptions regarding library mandate and operations. I learned while in the field that many Pride Library participants display flexibility in their roles, thus rendering sharply delineated interview guides inadequate (see Chapter VI for further discussion). As a result, I ultimately tailor-made interview guides for each interviewee.

Interviewees were selected based on purposive and chain referral sampling techniques. "Purpose sampling" allows the researcher to select subjects based their study's aim (Bernard, 2006, 189) and requires no systematic sampling design. "Chain referral" is a sample-building technique where the researcher draws from their research subjects' social network to find new subjects (Bernard, 2006, 192). As Bernard (1989) notes, chain referral is a common approach for researching "'hard-to-find' or 'hard-to-study' populations." (192).

The majority of the Pride Library study sample represents individuals who are heavily involved with the library. Although many different "types" of people encounter the Pride Library space, this thesis's scope required focusing on interviewees with strong ties to the library. As will be discussed further in Chapter VII, this sample also reflects the difficulty of soliciting interviews from more "secretive" users that may be using the library for "coming out" purposes. Due to the Pride Library's status as a safe and welcoming space, I determined that it would compromise the library's aims to solicit interviews from individuals that I did not achieve personal familiarity with.

3.4.3 Coding, Memoing and Theme Sorting

The data analysis process drew from Glaser and Strauss' (1967) and Strauss and Corbin's (1990) "grounded" theoretical approach, which prescribes closely reading data samples towards analysis, or, from the "ground" up. The process is "iterative:" one repeatedly reading, analyzing, writing toward increasingly refined understanding (Bernard, 2006, 492). Due to the size of the research project, I relied exclusively on manual analysis as opposed to employing qualitative data analysis software (i.e. NVivo).

Closely following Emerson, Fretz and Shaw (1995), I began analysis by reading through my field data as a "complete corpus" line by line toward generating "open codes." (pg.142-143). I also reviewed my "photographic inventory" toward generating "open codes." As my analysis progressed, I began writing "initial memos" describing a "series of discrete phenomena, topics or categories" that emerged from my reading (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 143). I found the initial memo process particularly rewarding in developing my analysis and ultimately wrote fifty-one individual initial memos (See Appendix E for a list of their titles).

Following the initial coding and memoing process, I identified and selected "core themes" and divided my data accordingly (see Figure 1). Themes were selected based on: volume of data, resonance with activity patterns at the site and significance to site members (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 1995, 157). Utilizing these new delineations, I re-read my data and re-examined my photographs towards creating "focused codes" and re-sorting data accordingly. Analysis proceeded until new codes and memos were sufficiently exhausted.

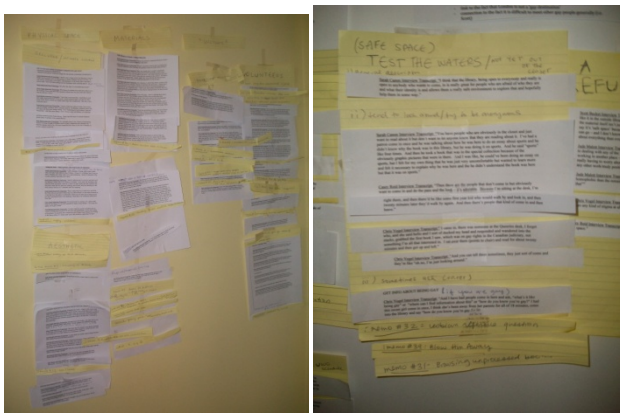

Figure 1. "Theme Sorting." I divided and physically arranged data based on themes developed through the initial coding and memoing process.

3.5 The Final Write-Up

The term "ethnography" not only refers to a research method but also to the final writing product produced by the research method. Similar to the ethnographic research method, there are numerous approaches to producing the final ethnographic writing product. The final thesis write-up presented here follows the "fieldnoted-centred" ethnographic writing format developed by Emerson, Fretz & Shaw (1995). For an alternative approach to ethnographic write-ups, see, for example, Van Maanen's (2011) *Tales of the Field*.

The "fieldnote centred" ethnography as per Emerson, Fretz & Shaw (1995) unfolds through a "thematic narrative." These rich, descriptive pieces draw heavily from fieldnote excerpts to create the "essential kernels" of the research story (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 1995, 171). In contrast to writing structured around an explicitly and previously stated analytical argument, "fieldnote-centred" ethnographies invite readers to build an analytical perspective over the course of their reading. By extension, ethnographies also delegate explicit analytical statements to concluding chapters as opposed to introductions (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 1995, 204).

3.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter outlined the research method, design and implementation utilized during this research project. Due to the project's close adherence to the ethnographic research process, special attention was paid to outlining key ethnographic concepts and conventions, such as: participant observation, grounded theory and thematic narrative. The following chapter shifts focus toward the thesis' findings and is written in thematic narrative style described above.

IV
SPACE AND PLACE

4.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter discusses the Pride Library's physical presence, both in terms of spatial orientation, in relation to Weldon Library and the greater UWO campus, and the aesthetic program that governs the Pride Library's appearance. Informant commentary on the Pride Library's unique "space" and "place" qualities provides fundamental contextual information for subsequent chapters on Users & Use Patterns. My findings also resonate with current LIS discussions surrounding the importance of place within and emotional connections to information-based organizations.

4.2 The Primary Role of "Space" and "Place" within the Pride Library

> *A building's plan determines which interactions – with books, with library staff, with other users –are possible and which are impossible. The three-dimensional qualities of a building's interior spaces, as well as the furnishings and fittings constitute a sort of stage set that encourages users to play certain sanctioned roles, while making others seem unthinkable. (Van Slyck, 2006, p.222)*

Our increasing reliance on "place-less" digital technologies challenges the necessity of a location-specific information-based organization. Yet, my findings at the Pride Library suggest that physical and geographic features play a central role in understanding the library's value to users. As a result, my findings echo the "library as place" and "information and emotion" movements within LIS, which argue that specific information "places" and "spaces" are an essential component to the user's "information experience." Following Van Slyck's (2006) argument encapsulated in the quote at the beginning of this section, I begin my ethnography by

attending to the Pride Library's "stage set" – moving from physical location, to aesthetic strategy, to the furniture "props" - as a necessary context to the activities made possible within.

4.2.1 "A Nice Enclosed Space"

Located off to the side on D.B Weldon Library's main floor, the Pride Library exudes an aura of seclusion and intimacy. The Pride Library's central but secluded location plays a major role in individuals' attitude toward, and subsequent use of, the space. For example, on my first day at the Pride Library, I experienced this sense of seclusion first-hand and recorded the following in my fieldnotes:

> Weldon Library is a very large, brutalist concrete structure. I enter on the main floor and am automatically struck by how vast the main floor of this library is: I weave through many different areas full of study carrels to find my destination. As a first time visitor, the Pride Library has a "tucked away" feeling to I - I couldn't even see any "Pride"-like visual clues until I was directly in front of the library.

My initial experience locating the Pride Library suggests a marked contrast between the Pride Library and Weldon Library's physical profiles. Although the Pride Library is technically part of Weldon library proper, the Pride Library's location "tucked away" on the main floor creates a sense of space that transcends Weldon's otherwise larger-than-life feel. The Pride Library feels "tucked away" in part because of Weldon's floor layout: the Pride Library exists within a pod-like off-shoot off the larger main entryway (see Figure 2 below). In addition to physical location, the Pride Library is also rendered physically separate by being walled off with a key-code secure door way. Note how the floor plan below denotes the Pride Library space using the Pride Library's trademark purple and "Q" design motifs. Subsequent discussion in this chapter highlight how the space is also marked as metaphorically separate through unique aesthetic features.

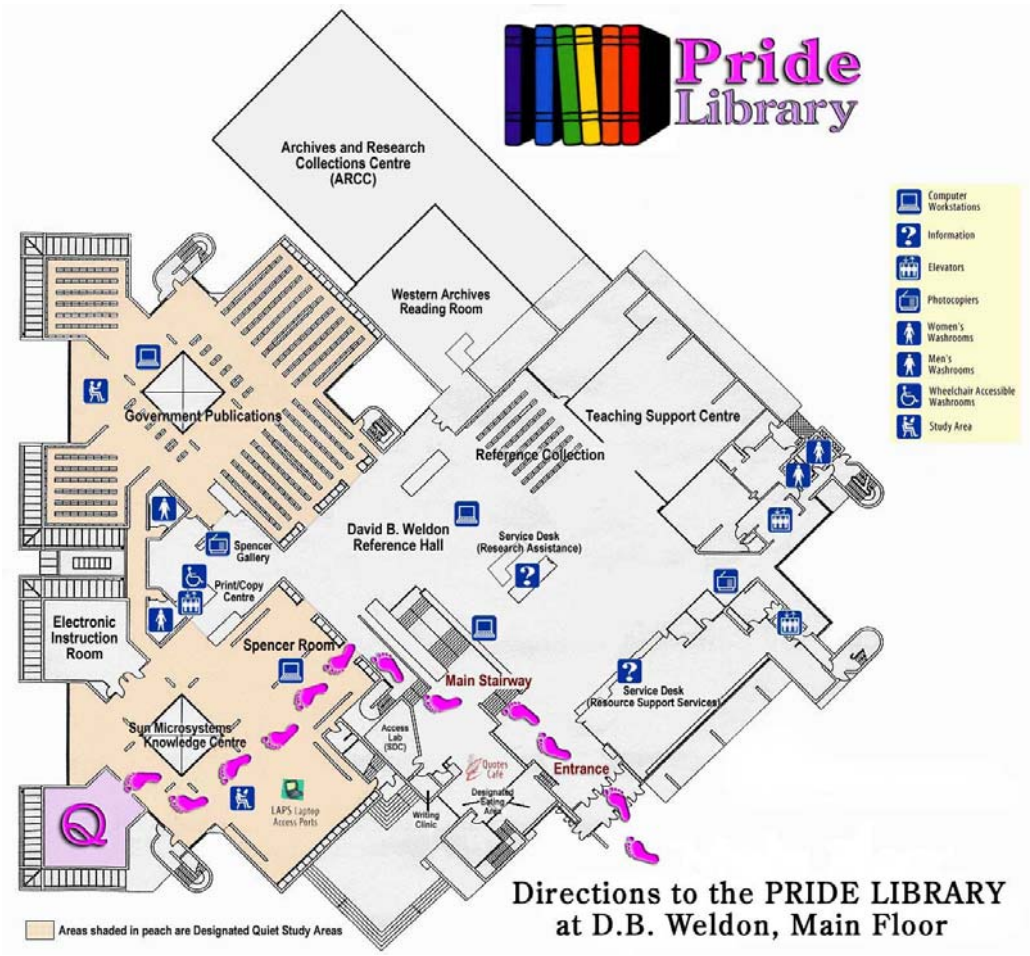

Figure 2. "Directions to the Pride Library." This floor plan illustrates how the Pride Library" (shaded in purple and denoted with the letter "Q") is "tucked away" within a small node on the main floor of Weldon Library proper. The purple footprints also illustrate the indirect pathway to the Pride Library.

Echoing my first encounter of the Pride Library, many Pride Library users also noted the Pride Library's secluded qualities. For example, during an interview with my informant Mike, he described his first impressions of the Pride Library in the following way:

> I saw that it was basically a small library and it was just really relaxing because it was such a small enclosed space, not like the other areas of the library, which are really really huge and complicated. This was a nice, enclosed space.

Mike's observations are revealing because they suggest that Pride Library's "enclosed" physical profile creates positive feelings, such as relaxation, for those who encounter the space. Similar to Mike, my informant Aidan characterized the Pride Library in the following way: "[it's]

secluded, there's not a bunch of screaming wahoos coming through or Western girls on their cellphones that shouldn't be." Note that both Mike and Aidan contrast the Pride Library as calming in relation to the atmosphere in Weldon library proper, which is configured to accommodate many students from various backgrounds simultaneously. While Mike's comments relate specifically to the idea that enclosed, simple spaces are soothing, Aidan's comments also articulate how secluded spaces create a calming effect due to reduced human traffic. Aidan's comments, furthermore, suggest a correlation between the value of physical seclusion and subsequent social intimacy within the Pride Library, which will be discussed in further detail in a subsequent chapter on Users & Use.

The Pride Library's small, private locale not only creates a sense of calm but also provides an opportunity for students to explore the library's materials on an intimate level. When discussing with Riley how she used the Pride Library's materials, for example, she mentioned the following:

> And because it was a small space, I would just start reading books. I would sometimes walk and put books back, and there was like this book on "pomosexuality" and I've be like, "What's this? What's this all about?" And then I read the whole book because you are constantly in contact them."

Riley's experiences at the Pride Library highlight how a small space with an intimate feel creates an ideal environment for exploring materials casually. Riley's comments link the physical reality of a small space to "constant contact" with the library's books. Experiences of "constant contact" create an almost-sensual feeling toward the books, which in turn allows readers to consume the books with a deeper passion. Riley, for example, cited her ability to "read the whole book."

In addition to creating a calm environment with opportunities for literary discovery, the Pride Library's secluded nature also creates an aura of secrecy. For example, my informant Caspar noted in an interview that "the library is tucked away back here, there are a lot of people I know who have been going to school here for years who don't know that the library is here." Similarly, Mike also remarked: "I never really hear about it when I leave here, only by actually coming in have I actually found it." My informant Riley also remarked that "because it is off to the side, it was like a secret code."

The Pride Library's status as a secluded and, by extension, "secret" place holds implications for the types of activities that can take place within. Riley mentioned off-hand during her interview in regards to the Pride Library that "it's off to the side, it's not bothering anyone." This statement, however, suggests the Pride Library's "off to the side" spatial profile also connects to other unique features of the library discussed later in this ethnography including: aesthetic choices, donation policies and coming-out gestures by students. In other words, the Pride Library can exist as a more radical, experimental space within a more conventional institutionalized setting because the library exists both physically and metaphorically in a way that "is not bothering anyone."

4.2.2 "Aesthetic Strategy"

The Pride Library's interior profile reinforces the spatial boundary or sense of difference discussed in the previous section. Returning back to my earliest field notes, I made the following comments when first entering the Pride Library proper: "The walls are green and nearly everything else is purple – even the door jamb." Later in my notes, I also wrote that "I was instructed that if a student wants to take these books to photocopy them, they must enter

information into a binder with a large aestheticized P on the cover." My initial attention to the visual qualities of space suggests that the Pride Library employs a highly unique and incredibly striking aesthetic program. As my quote above indicates, this aesthetic program utilizes an "all over" approach, which physically marks every component of library – including more mundane objects such as the door jamb and binder - in a "Pride Library specific" manner. The pictures displayed below highlight the striking, all-encompassing aesthetic nature of the Pride Library.

Figure 3. "Small Aestheticized Items." Even the smallest and humblest of objects within the Pride Library – including a binder and book cart pictured above - are given aesthetic attention.

Another example of the Pride Library's dynamic aesthetic character is the "big Q" window frame (see Figure 4 below). The "big Q" was originally a table-top that made up the set of the pioneering "Q Files" television program on TVO (which later became "Queer Television" on CityTV). When former Q Files host Irshad Manji visited the Pride Library in October 1999 to give a talk about "queers and g-d," she donated the "big Q" to the Pride Library. When the Pride Library moved into Weldon Library, Professor Miller transformed the piece (which had been leaning against the wall in their previous location) into a striking window between his office and the Pride Library proper. As a result, as Professor Miller aptly described in an interview, there

"is actually a fragment of Ontario queer media history that is built into the structure of the Pride Library." Those who are not familiar with the "big Q's" history can learn by consulting a didactic poster displayed on a Pride Library wall. It is also important to note that the "big Q" window echoes the aestheticized "Q" motif that is found on the CombiTags discussed in Chapter V).

Figure 4. "The 'big Q'" The Pride Library's features a "big Q" window, which was adapted from the set of the pioneering '90s television show, "the Q Files."

My initial observations about the Pride Library's aesthetic corroborate what Professor Miller described in interview as his "aesthetic strategies of the space" to visually mark the Pride Library not only as different from the surrounding environment, but also specifically as "queer." The following interview excerpt from Professor Miller where he describes the process of moving the Pride Library from the "old Russian Reading Room" to Weldon library encapsulates this strategy:

> In terms of the planning of the space...I wanted to mark it in a number of ways as a queer space - right into the fabric of the material surroundings, apart from the books - so that even if you are just Barbie and Ken Western walking in, you would know pretty quickly that this was marked as different, that there was a queer difference. So we imported from our second space the colour scheme of orchid and olive, which is nowhere in the Weldon library, nowhere… this really is distinctive. Also, just historically, purple and lavender and pink have had queer associations, for a very long time, right back to the 19th century. It's actually the colour scheme favoured by the aesthetes in the 1890s, so it has associations for me. Then there's little ways of marking it too. On the desk on the

> vestibule there's a little set of blocks that spells out "Queeries" so it's the queries desk, but inevitably a bad pun on query and "queer" is embedded into it.

Echoing my first impressions, Professor Miller's quote above demonstrates that Pride Library's aesthetic program involves an "all-over" approach that relates not only to the larger decorative gestures and vibrant wall colours, but also through small details such as purple blocks that spell "queeries." Note that Professor Miller specifically cites his colour choices as "queer." In an earlier interview with Professor Miller, he also attributed the Pride Library decoration scheme to "a bit of the 'gay designer' genes [that] came out in my attitude towards to the space." Professor Miller's comments, therefore, suggest that creating an aesthetic strategy is a uniquely queer approach to marking a space. Similarly, my informant Aidan mentioned to me in an interview that "everything matches, which I feel is a pre-requisite of a gay space."

In addition to marking the space as "queer," the Pride Library's aesthetic also serves as beacon that attracts users to the space. Although the Pride Library is located within Weldon Library's predominately concrete structure, relies on fluorescent lighting and has relatively few windows, specific aesthetic details help transform the space. My informant Riley described the Pride Library as "really bright and really crazy, so much so that a lot of other students, non-queer students, would come in to use the couches…it was just very welcoming." Similarly, my informant Laura explained that during her first encounter with the library that "I just remember it being really warm, really open, and really really different [from] Weldon – I know it's in Weldon, but it's not as stark as Weldon and it feels really warm and welcoming… I think because the walls aren't grey." In the same interview, while discussing her job in circulation at Weldon library, she also noted that "while I'm standing at the Reference Desk and people come

up to check out their books and they mention that they don't really like the space for studying, I'm like 'well you should go to the Pride Library because it is a fantastic place for studying.'"

Both Laura and Riley introduce the idea that the Pride Library is aesthetically attractive, especially in relation to Weldon proper. Returning to Professor Miller's earlier comment that "even if you are just Barbie and Ken Western walking in, you would know pretty quickly that this was marked as different," it is important to highlight that while the Pride Library aesthetic is meant to draw attention to the fact that the space is queer, both Professor Miller and Pride Library users do not intend to keep non-queer users from using the space. Instead, my informants' invocation of non-queer use can be understood as a form of pride in the fact that a markedly queer space is considered universally appealing. For example, my informant Caspar explained that "I'd recommend it to anyone. It's a great study area, for one thing, it's a lot more peaceful to study in than Weldon – we've got nice tables, we've got a couch." Beyond displaying a pride toward the Pride Library's study environment, however, the comments from Professor Miller, Riley, Laura and Caspar also hint at a more complex dynamic between the Pride Library and users who utilize the space with no interest or alliance with an LGBTQ agenda, which will be discussed in further detail in the subsequent chapter on Users & Use.

4.2.3 The Pride Library as Art Patron

Art patronage and display the Pride library serves as another component of the Pride Library's aesthetic program. For example, the Pride Library commissioned a stained glass window (see Figure 5 below) by artist Lynette Richards as part of the library's move into Weldon Library. The window incorporates a rainbow motif and includes images of books, names of LGBTQ authors, the HALO symbol ("Homophile Association of London Ontario," whose significance to

the Pride Library is discussed in the introductory chapter) and a quote from Dante's *Paradiso* referring to the "erotics of diversity," which Professor Miller explained in an interview as "the mission statement of the Pride Library." As a result, the window visually reinforces fundamental elements of the Pride Library including inclusiveness, celebration of diversity and gay pride.

In addition to housing a permanent collection, the Pride Library also occasionally serves as a venue for art exhibits. My informant Aidan mentioned one such exhibition when discussing his first impressions of the Pride Library during an interview:

> There was a photo exhibition that was going on at the time, it was actually a trans-oriented photo exhibition – one of the photos that James has over the chair in his office, it was that exhibition that was up. So that was cool – definitely because, like I said, I do have some trepidation in approaching queer spaces because of being trans and not really fitting into that "L" "G" or "B" but the fact that there was trans-related stuff on the wall was definitely cool.

The photographs that Aidan is referring to were self-portraits of Robert Pennee, the transgender husband of Donna Pennee, the now former UWO Dean of Arts and Humanities. Professor Miller owns of the photographs and continues to display it prominently in his office within the Pride Library. Aidan, who identifies as trans, was particularly moved because the exhibition symbolized a commitment towards trans inclusion not generally found with the larger LGBTQ community. The photo exhibition and Aidan's recollections, demonstrates how the Pride Library uses art display and patronage to visually reinforce the library's queer-positive mandate.

Playing an art patron role, therefore, not only symbolizes that the Pride Library supports LGBTQ artistic expression, but also helps mark the space as distinctly queer. Professor Miller explained this in an interview by stating "the art also functions as a pretty clear cue that it is, by and large, a queer library – and very much part of the aesthetic strategies of the space. Pictured below are some examples of art displayed by the Pride Library.

Figure 5. "Pride Library Art." Visitors from the Pride Library are first greeted by artistic details such as the stained glass window and display case with rotating exhibitions. The painting of Virginia Woolf on a stack end also demonstrates how art also has a major presence within the library's interior.

Specifically note how the Pride Library integrates art pieces into the space in a way which creatively reinforces the aesthetic strategy discussed in the previous section. For example, the stained glass window and display case pictured above aesthetically reinforce the sense of physical separation mentioned in the earlier section on the Pride Library's physical seclusion. Furthermore, similar to the mundane objects given aesthetic elements, artwork hung on the end of each stack also helps aestheticize elements that would otherwise prove utilitarian and ugly.

4.2.4 Furniture

In addition to the overall aesthetic impression, patrons also cite the Pride Library's furniture as a major attraction to the library's space. This phenomenon is first hinted at in the previous section where my informants draw contrasts between Weldon Library and the Pride Library's suitability as study spaces. Similar to my earlier discussion on the Pride Library's aesthetic strategy, many of my informants cited the Pride Library's furniture because the furniture enhanced the decorative quality of the space. For example, when asked about his favourite part of the Pride Library, Scott said, "I really like the wooden cabinet things because that's kind of my historical

thing coming in." In this quote, Scott, an undergraduate in history, is noting his affinity for the vintage oak book cases (see Figure 6 below) with grill work that house special collections. Professor Miller also cited this book cases as part of his aesthetic strategy: "[they] worked not to just keep the air circulating in these old books, but also to create a warm, woody, common-roomy feel for the 'chill out' area."

Beyond contributing to the aesthetic "feel" of the space, the Pride Library's furniture choices are also noted for being physically comfortable. More specifically, the green couch and matching chairs where repeatedly singled out as user's objects of desire. For example, my informant Aidan argued "I would say that this [the Pride Library] is probably the most comfortable place within Weldon to sit – our couches are unparalleled." Similarly, Mike mentioned that "the corner with all the comfy chairs and the table, it seems really relaxed." While interviewing Caspar, he also noted that "this chair that I'm sitting in now [a green armchair], I can get my laptop power adapter to a plug from here and I can study here, so in that context I'd recommend it to anybody."

Figure 6. "Couch,Chairs and Bookcases." The Pride Library's comfortable and attractive furniture create a "warm, woodsy, common-roomy feel."

The Pride Library's furniture not only serves as a source of comfortable seating, but also relates to the interplay between the library's relaxing and welcoming setting and the tight-knit social

connections that are found there. For example, when asked what her favourite part of the Pride Library is, my informant Riley explained:

> Probably the couches – I slept on the couch, took naps on that couch, drooled on that couch. It was a nice comfy place to be…I mean, when you know your friends are going to be around it's nice, but [also] that extra comfort. Everyone loved the couch when I was there. If someone else would be sleeping there, there'd be that joke, "I drooled on that yesterday."

Riley's comments highlight how comfortable furniture serves as a primary component to the Pride Library's appeal. Note how she specifically draws attention to the fact that she liked the couch in addition to the fact that she enjoyed the social atmosphere within the Pride Library but then also notes how the couch factored into the social relations between people within the Pride Library. The couch therefore, serves multiple important purposes: provide comfort to the individual user, accommodate social gatherings and operate as a source of shared association between users. Riley's quote also hints at the range of activities that users engage in at the Pride Library in addition to reading or studying, including sleeping and socializing.

4.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter highlighted the Pride Library's spatial qualities including location, aesthetic and décor. Despite being located within a brutalist concrete structure, lack of windows and reliance on fluorescent lighting, the Pride Library's location and "aesthetic strategy" transform the available space. Comments from my informants, coupled with my own field note observations, demonstrate that the Pride Library's unique physical features, such as a secluded setting, striking colour scheme and comfortable furnishings inspire deep emotions in Pride Library users, such as a strong sense of welcome, warmth and calm. Deep emotions, in turn, create dynamic possibilities for user activities within the Pride Library, which will be explored in greater depth

in subsequent chapters. Continuing the focus on the material and physical concerns, the next chapter discusses the Pride Library's approach to informational artefacts, including display, management and collections development practices.

V
Materials

5.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter focuses on the Pride Library's materials including, object care and organization, acquisitions policies and user value as a unique information source. Continuing the concept of the "stage set" from the previous chapter, my findings demonstrate that the Pride Library's information materials are implicated in the library's "all-over" aesthetic program. The Pride Library also creates a strong emotional connection to the informational materials found within, reflecting the collection's reliance on donations from the LGBTQ community.

5.2 Emotional Content

> *In insisting on the value of apparently marginal or ephemeral materials, the collectors of gay and lesbian archives propose that affects – associated with nostalgia, personal memory, fantasy and trauma – make a document significant.* (Ann Cvetkovich, 2003, 243)

The Pride Library boasts a multi-faceted collection including: over 5,000 circulating books, over 1, 000 rare non-circulating books and the Hudler Archives. Although many of these materials are present within UWO's library catalogue and can be checked out through UWO's circulation services, they are also made available to the general public. The Pride Library's circulation policies reflect that the entirety of the library's collection is acquired through donations, which are primarily from LGBTQ individuals and communities not necessarily affiliated with UWO.

This chapter highlights how the Pride Library not only treats its library materials as informational containers, but also as aesthetic and symbolic artefacts. As Cvetkovitch's quote above suggests, the marginal status of queer communities, and by extension, the marginal status of the materials affiliated with their activities, leads to highly ephemeral and emotional "queer" collecting strategies. Defying conventional wisdom from the LIS approach to collections development, however, the Pride Library's highly "personal" materials also enjoys popularity within the greater UWO community. As a result, the Pride Library's approach to materials reflects the potential for more community-centric materials collection practices.

5.2.1 Blending Aesthetic and Information Material

The previous chapter discussed how the Pride Library has an aesthetic strategy that marks the space as distinctly queer, including a bold colour scheme, art display and unique furniture choices. The Pride Library continues this aesthetic strategy in their approach to the informational materials that the space contains, which transforms "regular" information content into Pride Library-specific artefacts. A excerpt from an early fieldnote where Professor Miller instructed me on the art of "flagging" books with rainbow swatches along their spines highlights how part of the transformation occurs:

> Sitting across from each other at the Queeries desk, Professor Miller explained that newly catalogued books must first be "flagged" with rainbow stickers on their spines before being placed on the shelves. One by one, we cut out pieces of "flag" from rainbow strips and sealed them to the books with glue and clear tape. Professor Miller was very particular about having the flags' placement uniform - purple is always down and the flags must be placed directly below the call number labels - this creates a consistent look along the shelves. He also observed that he likes the way the book spines with their flags on the shelves look, suggesting that they lead up to the Closet Collection and thereby heighten the contrast between "closeted" and "liberation."

During this incident, I also noted that Professor Miller explained the functional motivation behind flagging:

> He said that the Pride Library introduced the rainbow "flags" because a few titles every month had been mistakenly sent up to the Weldon stacks and he wanted to prevent that from happening. The books also have other markers, such as a unique beginning to their call numbers and a "Q" on the part of the book with barcode.

As my fieldnote excerpts indicate, the process of "flagging" books at the Pride Library suggests that materials are marked as "different" much in the same way as the Pride Library's space is marked as different. On a purely functional level, the Pride Library needs to mark their books because Weldon Library's circulation department handles the Pride Library's book circulation. As a result, marks such as rainbow "flags" and unique CombiTag design (see Figure 7 below) help ensure that Pride Library materials are not accidentally re-shelved in Weldon proper.

Figure 7. "Flags and CombiTags." Pictured here are close-ups of a rainbow strip used for "flagging" and a CombiTag used for marking Pride Library books.

In addition to their functional purpose, however, Professor Miller's comments also reflect that aesthetic markers enable the materials to conform to the Pride Library's mandate. Note, for example, an almost militant attention to detail – "purple is always down" – that reflects the Pride Library's aesthetic approach as "strategy." The markers furthermore, are not merely functional, but rather, utilize decoration for highly symbolic purposes. Professor Miller hints at this with his comments about the contrast between being

closeted and being liberated: physically marking books with rainbows reinforces the symbolic value of the Pride Library's collection and the Pride Library more generally as a part of the gay liberation movement (see Figure 8 below).

Figure 8. "Rainbow Spines." All Pride Library books are "flagged" with rainbows on their spines, creating a consistent look with symbolic significance.

In addition to marking books with rainbow flags and Pride Library-specific CombiTags, the Pride Library engages in other strategies to mark informational materials in aesthetic terms. For example, I noted in my field notes that:

> When discussing the Closet Collection on January 20, 2011, Professor Miller explained that "he sees the collection as an "art installation" and is still thinking about how to display it because he doesn't just want the materials housed on shelves. The Closet Collection has an art installation feel because it is housed in half-length bookshelves with glass fronts with a purple exterior. Above the shelves are a series of enlarged images from the covers of the Pulp Novel books from the Closet Collection.

The "Closet Collection" is a vast holding of pulp novels, periodicals and personal photographs with explicit LGBTQ subject matter collected by one individual in London, Ontario. Saved from destruction by the collector's family, the Pride Library now displays the collection through a dynamic "art installation" approach (see Figure 9 below). My field notes above reflect the Pride Library's goal to reinforce information materials with visual cues of significance. Considering the previous chapter's discussion of the Pride Library as art patron, the Closet Collection's status as "art installation" also

suggests a high degree of symbiosis between art and information material at the Pride Library. This visual approach to the Pride Library's materials is also hinted at in Professor Miller's earlier statements about how the rows of rainbow flags on the circulating books "lead up to the Closet Collection, thereby heightening the contrast between closeted and liberation." The various contents of the Pride Library, therefore, work together both on an informational and aesthetic level to support the Pride Library's mandate.

Figure 9. "The Closet Collection." The Pride Library's Closet Collection has an "art installation" feel, through glass-front purple bookcases and enlarged photographs of some of the most visually striking Pulp Novel covers from the collection.

5.2.2 Books As Artefacts

The previous section featured examples of information objects the Pride Library aesthetically transforms – including their circulating book collection - to imbue the space with meaning. In addition to aesthetically marking circulating books, however, the Pride Library also utilizes descriptive markings to convey additional information about the collection. For example, when discussing the Pride Library previous cataloguing

system, which utilized a modified version of the Dewey Decimal Classification scheme adopted from the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives (CLGA), Professor Miller noted: "this classification scheme can still be seen on some of the books in the Pride Library collection, we decided just to keep it as part of the history of those particular volumes that had been there since the beginning."

Professor Miller is referring to the Dewey Decimal call numbers that remain on the spines of many of the Pride Library books. In 1999, the Pride Library transitioned from their self-directed cataloguing process to integration within the UWO library system, including Library of Congress call numbers generated for the Pride Library by the UWO Library Cataloguing Department. Professor Miller's comment suggests that evidence of previous cataloguing practices represents a significant historical marker for Pride Library books and therefore is worthy of preservation. These marks, therefore, transform books from mere containers of important information into significant artefacts in their own right. Unlike more conventional conservation and display practices, however, the Pride Library's books continue to be used as circulating books and are blended into the greater collection within the regular stacks. These unobtrusive markers, therefore, exist as a form of subtle documentary to the Pride Library's varied past.

Another way that the Pride Library uses circulating books for documenting Pride Library history is by recording the names of the book's donors on the book's inside covers (see Figure 10 below).

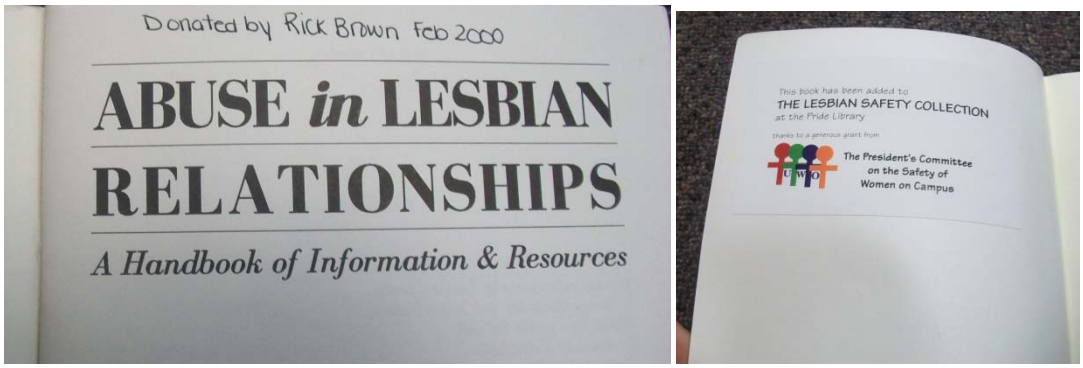

Figure 10. "Donor Inscriptions." The Pride Library physically inscribes each monograph with the name of the donor.

In interview, Professor Miller stated the following about this practice:

> The reason that we record [donor names] in the books, there's two reasons: First of all, I like the idea of people coming to the Pride Library, opening up the book and seeing that it came from somebody, not from some anonymous acquisitions office. And it's a way of honouring the donor, that we recognize that this is still their book in some way, they've given it to us but it's part of the history of the book that it belonged [for example] to Jearld Moldenhauer.

Professor Miller's comments are similar to his earlier explanation about why the Pride Library keeps Dewey Decimal call numbers on book spines: physically inscribing books with donor information creates a tangible record of the book's, and by extension, the Pride Library's history. Note how Professor Miller creates a contrast between collecting books through "some anonymous acquisitions office" and donations by specific individuals. The Pride Library differs from conventional academic libraries because books, in additional to all other materials, are acquired exclusively through donation. The Pride Library places an artefact-like value on circulating books because each title represents a contribution that directly contributes to the library's existence. By extension, the Pride Library's practice honouring donors through book inscription hints at

a much larger emotional connection between the Pride Library and the Pride Library's materials, facilitated through an exclusively donations-based acquisitions policy.

5.2.3 "It Really Is the Donors"

> *And there's always going to be donors, I mean the Pride Library is donor driven…It really is the donors – that's where the impetus is.*
> (Professor Miller, 2011, Interview Transcript)

As Professor Miller's comments above suggest, donations are fundamental to the Pride Library's existence. Specific Pride Library practices discussed in this chapter's previous sections, such as recording donor's names inside book covers and aesthetically incorporating donations into the library's architecture, allude to the central role of private material donation to the Pride Library's existence. Similarly, the Pride Library also records donations through their books' online cataloguing entries, which are integrated into the greater UWO library catalogue. During an interview, Professor Miller explained this practice as follows:

> There's a donor line in the catalogue entry, so the donor's names are recorded for posterity…their name is immortalized on the catalogue entry and then functions as a search term, so under "keyword" you can write "Moldenhauer" and limit the search to "Pride" and up will come all the books that Jearld Moldenhauer has donated…and I like this because I know some donors keep a close eye…and then they see the number of books catalogued from their gift increasing – that encourages donations.

Pictured in Figure 11 below is a screenshot of a specific catalogue record found through Professor Miller's search strategy. The record, and Professor Miller's comments illustrate the multi-faceted and central relationship between Pride Library and those who donate materials to the library. Similar to the Pride Library's procedure for inscribing

donor names into books, including donor names in catalogue records reflects that donor identity represents an important information form to the Pride Library. In other words, by including donor identity as an entry line in the catalogue, the Pride Library transforms donors into a fundamental informational component of the book, on the same level as author, title or subject. Professor Miller's invocation of "posterity" suggests that this information is not only useful for researchers, but also, more abstractly, for memorializing purposes.

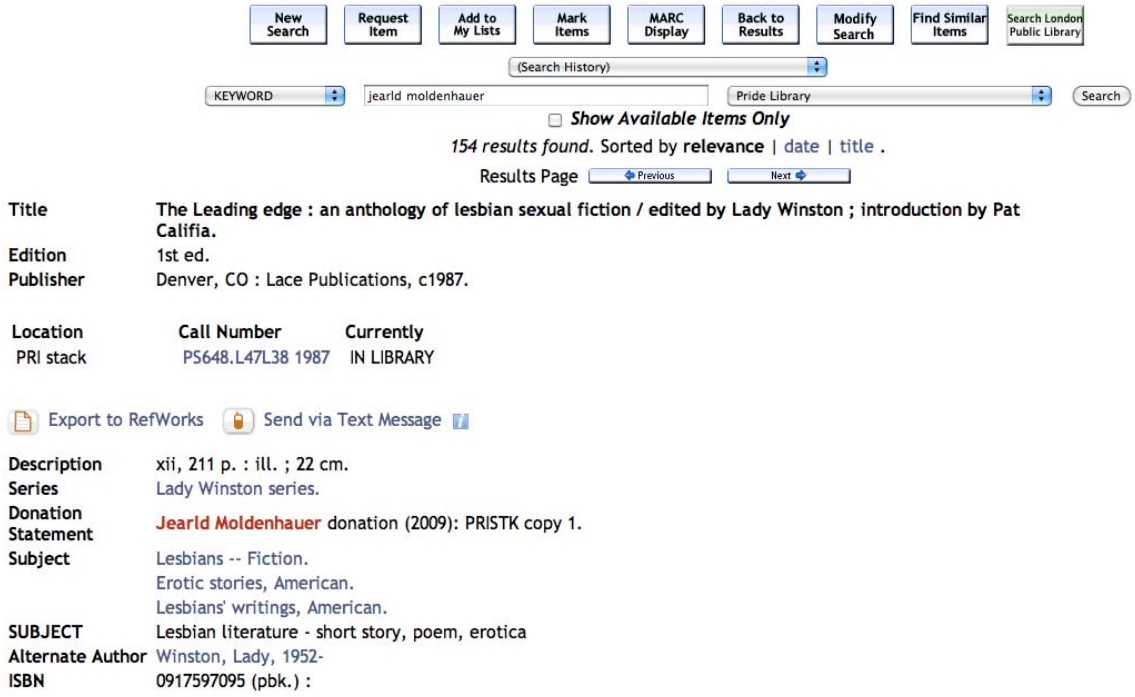

Figure 11. "Donor Search by Keyword." The Pride Library not only physically records donor information in each book but now also makes the information searchable by keyword in the UWO Library catalogue. Note that donor name "Jearld Moldenhauer," which appears in the catalogue in a striking red.

Including donor information in the catalogue also reflects the continuing importance of material donation to the Pride Library's existence and the role that visual representation and recognition plays in this process. As Professor Miller notes in his quote above,

donors watch their contributions increase through increases in their online catalogue entries and this inspires them to donate in the future.

By extension, various other representational features of the Pride Library can also be read as strategies for facilitating an organization maintained through donation. For example, the Pride Library's stained glass window, discussed in the previous chapter, incorporate the HALO insignia to reflect HALO's pioneering donation to the Pride Library. Similarly, Professor Miller made the following comments about the Pride Library renovation process in conjunction with the library's move into Weldon Library:

> [It was] very important that this not only be a designated space, but it would be space that people would want to go to, even if they weren't in the university. Because even from the start, I always envisioned the Pride Library as a community library in the broadest sense of the term, partly because of the addition of the HALO Library from the community and their community library.

Professor Miller's comments underscore that the central role of donors has led the Pride Library to adopt a strong strategy of donor recognition in all of their policies and practices. In his quote above, Professor Miller suggests that the Pride Library's physical space and their underlying operating mandate, which enables individuals outside of the UWO community to utilize the materials and the space, were designed for broader community appeal specifically because donors have such strong involvement with the library.

Echoing Professor Miller's earlier comments that including donor information in catalogue entries inspires future donations, creating a library space that is visible and thereby accessible to donors helps facilitate future donations. For example, Professor

Miller noted while discussing the Pride Library's various locations that "[with] every space along the way, as the space has expanded, there has been a boost to donations. The space and the donation rate are really relevant." Similarly, my informant Aidan observed that:

> Especially because we have the archives and we have the Aids Committee of London fonds here and we have the London Lesbian Film Festival collection here as well, we get people coming in from there as well who are not students or anything like that, they're just people who are either accessing the archives or who come in and give donations…And they do go through the stacks as well, they go through and check out the space.

Aidan's observations coupled with Professor Miller's comments highlight how the Pride Library's publically accessible policies are informed by and facilitate ongoing donor relations. Some donors visit on a regular basis to "check out" the space, and by extension, "check out" the progress of the organization they are donating to. In addition to checking out the space, however, donors also use the space for their own research. By facilitating community research, therefore, the Pride Library is able to demonstrate the viability of the organization and thereby ensure future donations. The Pride Library's use by the greater LGBTQ community will also be explored in further detail in the upcoming chapter on Users & Use.

5.2.4 Unique Materials

The Pride Library not only places such a strong emphasis on donor importance because the pioneering and fundamental role donations play toward the library's existence, but also because they provide the unique material collection that makes the Pride Library a dynamic resource. For example, my informant Aidan explained in an interview:

> Our entire collection is comprised of donations, whether they have been purchased by Professor Miller himself and donated or whether they have been donated by other people – all of our books are donated. If we were under the jurisdiction of Weldon fully, I'm sure they would…require us to adhere to their collection policies and along with all the bureaucracy that goes along with that, we wouldn't be able to pick all the books that we have…it would be a lot more constrained in what we could have what we are required to have, which wouldn't work with the space, it would destroy the space.

Aidan's comments suggest that relying exclusively on donation enables the Pride Library to exist outside of more conventional library acquisitions processes and create a unique collection specially attuned to the needs of both the LGBTQ community and those studying the LGBTQ community. His comments also reveal how the Pride Library's unique materials help transform the Pride Library into a dynamic space more generally.

The Pride Library's unique, donation-created collection is highly valued by users. For example, I recorded the following incident in my fieldnotes: "A girl came into the library and asked for my helping finding a specific book – she mentioned that this is the only place in and around London, Ontario that has it."

Similarly, Aidan made the following comments about the collection:

> A lot of these books are hard to find, you can't go into any library and pick these up, not only on our own campus but on other campuses as well, because I know we get plenty of interlibrary loans, where people are pulling these not only for our own campus but [also for] other universities.

Aidan's observations and my own encounter with a user reflect that people are drawn to the Pride Library's materials because they cannot be found in other library collections. Most notably, although acquired through individuals with no background in formal collections development – including Professor Miller, an English Professor with no LIS education – the Pride Library's collection is popular in high demand with students at

UWO and beyond. For example, I also noted the following incident in my field notes: "a worker from Weldon comes to return a large stack of books – she remarks that the circulation is very high at this time of year, but also that the Pride Library has high circulation generally." I later learned that the "worker" was able to make these observations because they also generate the circulation statistics that the Pride Library includes in their annual report (see Appendix F).

The Pride Library collection's high relative circulation, therefore, suggests that a collection development based exclusively on community donation is an effective way to acquire books about a marginalized community. Unlike the Pride Library's more institutionalized library counterparts, the Pride Library collects outside of rigid, conventional collections development policies that have traditionally been slow to recognize the value of LGBTQ materials. Recall that the Pride Library's began with Professor Miller making his personal collection of LGBTQ related books available to students in 1991 after realizing that UWO did not have sufficient materials to support his pioneering class on gay and lesbian issues. My findings above demonstrate that twenty years later, the Pride Library continues to be at the forefront for collecting LGBTQ materials – arguably because the materials are still acquired through those directly involved in the LGBTQ community.

5.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter highlighted how the Pride Library's dynamic approach to materials creates unique environment, which draws users to the collection and the space. Echoing the

previous chapter, the Pride Library's approach to material display is highly aesthetic and demonstrates that the library utilizes visual display to maximize materials' informational qualities. Materials are also inscribed with additional informational value, creating a Pride Library-specific artefact culture. The Pride Library's material practices are due to donations' fundamental role in creating and maintaining the collection. Reliance on donation also explains the unique character and subsequent popularity of the library's collection contents. The following chapter will continue discussion about the Pride Library's collection policies as part of a larger examination of the library's operational framework.

VI
LABOUR

6.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter explores how the Pride Library's labour model, which relies primarily on volunteers, relates to the organization of, and operations within, the Pride Library environment. This chapter, therefore, reveals the complex implications of relying on non-professional labour in the traditionally professionally-dominated context of the library. My findings demonstrate that this grassroots model provides both challenges and opportunities when offering library services.

6.2 Professionally "Enabled," Not Professionally Operated

> *In the new library era, it seems likely that a librarian will function primarily as an enabler, as a person who can help others create their own personal space libraries…* [LIS education] *will incorporate significant elements of the library as a personal (i.e., limited and highly controlled) function of individual or small group needs.*
> (Miksa, 2007, pg.17-18)

The Pride Library represents a unique case study within the academic library context because the organization maintains autonomy in labour and decision-making processes while benefitting from the larger UWO library system through circulation services, cataloguing and site hosting. Table 2 below provides a brief snapshot of the various forms of labour affiliated with Pride Library operations, which will also be discussed in further detail throughout the chapter:

Position Type	Duties
Voluntary	- Three types: Queeries Desk staffers, Pulp Novel readers, Pride Library "Head" (Professor Miller) - Refer to Appendix G for further details
Work/Study	- Work on projects for Pride Library under Professor Miller's supervision (i.e. process donations, supervise volunteers) - Duties sometimes overlap with volunteers - Paid directly through UWO's work/study program
UWO Library System Employees	- Create & input cataloguing records - Circulation services: check in/out books (including inter-campus and inter-library requests)

Table 2. "Pride Library Labour Snapshot."

The Pride Library's labour model reflects the library's development from a reading collection made available by Professor Miller to an informal reading room in his office, to an autonomous space hosted by the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, and currently to a semi-autonomous space with some library services, facilitated through the D.B. Weldon Library. Throughout these points of transformation, however, the Pride Library concurrently maintained a strictly grassroots approach to library labour: Professor Miller, a Faculty of Arts Professor with no formal library experience, serves voluntarily in a leadership capacity, supervising mainly volunteers and some work/study students.

By maintaining labour autonomy, the Pride Library provides a radically different approach to library services, which users repeatedly cite as their main attraction to the space. These labour features serve as a direct contrast to traditional LIS theory surrounding the professional's role in library settings, not only through the lack of

professionalized knowledge utilized in the Pride Library's decision making, but also through the decidedly "community" and "non-expert" feel to library services. My findings, therefore, strongly resonate with Miksa's (2007) projections that the library, moving beyond its "modern-era" manifestation, will transform into smaller scale, privately defined and administrated outfits, "enabled" but not exclusively run by professionals. Considering that "enabling" relations have not formally arrived within the library sphere, however, my findings below also demonstrate that the Pride Library also experiences serious difficulties while striking the balance between professional and non-professional labour tasks.

6.2.1 "The Heart of the Library"

Professor Miller plays a central role in Pride Library affairs as "Head Volunteer" and is a constant physical presence in the space. For example, during my semester at the Pride Library, he worked in the library approximately three to four days of the week and anywhere from one to five hours on any given day (with intermittent breaks throughout the day). Note that Professor Miller is often in library because the space includes the office from which he conducts professorial duties in addition to Pride Library duties. As a result, when on campus and not teaching courses (he has, however, also taught upper-level seminar courses in the library), Professor Miller is most likely to be found at the Pride Library. Ultimately, separating Professor Miller's other academic activities from his Pride Library activities is impossible: even the space dividing Professor Miller's office from the Pride Library is a window (as discussed in Chapter IV).

In addition to my own observations, my informants also displayed an acute awareness of Professor Miller's central role and presence at the Pride Library. For example, my informant Caspar explained that:

> So much of the library resides with James, I suspect that if you grabbed five books at random off the shelves, one or two of the them would say on the inside that they were donated by James Miller. And he didn't just build the collection by donating, he built the collection through, as they say, his enthusiasm – this sort of relentless energy and this sort of dogged pursuit of things.

Caspar's statements introduce the idea that Professor Miller plays a fundamental role in the Pride Library's maintenance and does so through a distinctly personal approach. These comments relate back to findings from the previous chapter because they reflect that Professor Miller is one of the major donors to the Pride Library. Note, however, the contrast Caspar makes between "just build[ing] the collection by donating" and his characterization of Professor Miller as an enthusiastic and relentless in his work. Caspar's comments suggest, therefore, that Professor Miller's role, similar to the function of the Pride Library as an entity, represents far mare more than the creation and maintenance of a book collection.

Caspar's comments also suggest that those involved with the Pride Library not only sense Professor Miller's deep personal connection to the library but are also specifically drawn to the library because of this feature. For example, when asked about her favourite part of the Pride Library, my informant Laura explained: "I think Professor Miller is my favourite part of this library and I say that because he is the heart of the library – it wouldn't exist without him…he is the library." My informant Riley also noted that the Pride Library "is very much James's heart.. [and] because that came through, it was

really important to you if you were a volunteer or a work/study student – it felt like I was doing something important by merely keeping it alive.

An example of how Professor Miller's strong involvement with the library is not only through his presence in the space, but also through specific tasks he undertakes. For example, he generates up to ten search terms for every Pride Library book entered into the UWO library catalogue. As he explained in interview:

> I was also given in my negotiations with the library administration the go ahead to create a queer specific thesaurus of search terms...like "drag queen" as opposed to "impersonator comma female"…[these are] ten terms that I make up or that I derive from the book that are not Library of Congress search terms.

Professor Miller's role generating search terms not only demonstrates his deep involvement in the Pride Library's operations, but also his underlying motivation for maintaining this tie: as an LGBTQ community member and activist, Professor Miller has an acute awareness of the information needs of his constituency, including a need for more organic search terminology. His personal ties to search terminology, therefore, also relates back to the Pride Library's donor-based collection acquisitions policy, which was developed in response to the lack of LGBTQ materials at UWO proper.

Most notably, despite his lack of professional background, my informants still perceived Professor Miller as being specifically qualified for Pride Library decision-making. For example, when discussing the future of the Pride Library my informant Aidan stated: "I don't want James's influence to disappear. I think he has a good touch for it, it should reflect him." Aidan's statement reflects that personalized, community-based library decision-making holds value for constituents seeking information for and about LGBTQ contexts. In contrast to library professionals, who have historically ignored or

marginalized LGBTQ information, Professor Miller provides the close "touch" required to adequately respond to LGBTQ informational needs.

6.2.2 "Staffing the Queeries Desk"

In addition to Professor Miller's role as "head volunteer," the Pride Library's other major volunteer labour source comes from Queeries Desk "staffers." Over the course of my fieldwork, I also observed a volunteer-based pulp novel cataloguing project organized by MLIS students. Due to the relatively small scope of the project, however, sustained discussion of the "pulp novel readers" fell outside of the bounds of this thesis (please refer to Appendix G for table summarizing and comparing the different voluntary duties at the Pride Library). In contrast, the Pride Library directly relies on "staffing" for regular operating tasks such as: supervising the space, answering patron questions, and re-shelving library books. Appendix B also provides the Queeries Desk Staff schedule for the semester in which I was in the field.

Those involved with staffing the Pride Library view the activity as undemanding and un-skilled. For example, my informant Aidan holds the work/study position as "Volunteer Coordinator" characterized staffing in the following way: "it's not like their position is really a difficult one to do… You just have to be here on time and you have to be here consistently or let me know when you're not going to." When discussing the volunteer training procedure, he also noted, "Usually I try to emphasize the fact that you must be here and you must be on that time …if they don't know how to shelve books or are not confident on how to shelve books, you tell them just to leave them… Other than that, there is not a lot of activity [required when staffing] the desk."

Although volunteers have the possibility to engage with special projects beyond staffing, those who chose to do so were rare and selected tasks based on their own initiative. For example, I observed that my informant Sana took the initiative to dry-clean the purple blanket used as a throw over the green couch, paying for the service as a form of donation to the library. As discussed in the previous chapter, I also observed Laura take on a lobbying project to get the Pride Library a new cataloging agreement with UWO. These cases, however, were atypical and went beyond expectations for volunteering. In contrast, in some cases volunteers were actively discouraged from undertaking projects. For example, I noted in my fieldnotes the following about a training session between Aidan a new volunteer, Frank:

> Frank inquired about cataloging and if Weldon is paying enough attention to "provenance" – he said he'd like to do something with that. Aidan referred him to Laura because she is the one currently lobbying Weldon about that issue. When Frank was gone, Aidan expressed frustration that volunteers come in expecting to work on projects they want to do as opposed to what actually needs to be done.

"What actually needs to be done" refers to the volunteer staffer's primary role to keep the library open for patrons. The following section, "Keeping the Space Open," will go into further detail into the significance of this activity for the Pride Library.

Aidan's statements characterizing staffing as primarily "un-skilled" supervisory work also parallel staffer perceptions of their duties. Riley described volunteering as "making sure that the space was open and available when James wasn't there and no one would take anything – you were just watching over the space…So I just often [sat] at the desk and [did] my homework and [made] sure things were okay." Riley's comments parallel Aidan's explanation that providing a supervisory presence is the essence of staffing.

Because the activity only requires maintaining a physical presence, staffers can use their volunteer time for other activities, such as working on their homework. Returning back to the previous section on role overlap, ease in staffing tasks also accounts in part for why those involved with the Pride Library in other capacities incorporate staffing into their participation regimen.

In contrast to volunteer/leader Professor Miller, volunteer staffers do not occupy informal positions as "experts" on the LGBTQ community. For example, Laura stated, "I don't know if I'm still anybody who can speak about the culture with any great authority." Caspar also described the following experience with a Pride Library patron: "I had a sweet girl come in once…and say, 'how do you know you're gay? And I was like, 'well I'm not really equipped to handle that." Similarly, Caspar noted that although "no one would regard it as out of line if I had sat down and engaged with her on a emotional level… It's never been expressed to me is that part of my responsibilities is that when I'm holding down the desk is to be a therapist for people." Caspar's statements, therefore, when read in conjunction with Laura and Aidan comments, highlight that discussing personal topics relating to LGBTQ issues is not an inherent component to volunteer work at the Pride Library.

6.2.3 "Keeping the Space Open"

Although "staffing" is not considered a skilled or difficult task, those involved with staffing perceived the activity as integral to Pride Library operations, and by extension, safeguarding the Pride Library's mandate. As Laura summarized, "if we don't have volunteers here the doors don't open and the space goes to waste and nobody is able to

come in, nobody is able to be part of the community because it is closed off. Similarly, when highlighting his innovative practices for keeping volunteers accountable for attending their shifts, Aidan explained that "I try to get them to show up…[because] even if you are a couple minutes late, everybody has to be kicked out, the door has to be closed and locked because there is no one here to watch the library."

Note that Aidan and Laura specifically cite using the library as a space as the Pride Library's primary function. Similarly, although Weldon circulation staff have a code so that they can open the Pride Library for a patron requesting materials if the library isn't open, this feature is not considered adequate toward maintaining the Pride Library's mandate. For example, Aidan commented that when the library is closed "the resources are still accessible, but it's just not the same if you can't wander the stacks, if you can't come in here and look around and it's not the same if you can't have the library open proper." Also highlighting the importance of keeping the space open is Riley's characterization that she was "in demand" by Pride Library patrons:

> It got to the point where my friends, queer people or anyone, would be texting me and asking, "when are you going to be in the library so I can go and use it?" You had to know someone who could facilitate the use of the space…I think that everyone who was volunteering there and had the code felt special because you had something that people wanted.

Riley's comments draw attention to the fact that volunteer staffers are acutely aware of their responsibility toward keeping the Pride Library space open, and that this is highly valued by patrons. This awareness allows volunteer staffers to feel "special" and creates a strong emotional tie to the space. For example, volunteer staffers also feel that a strong sense of trust and a need to protect the space. Riley noted that "I wouldn't tell anyone what my code was, and I was very serious about it when I was going there."

Invested with a special sense of duty to "keep the space open," I often observed that individuals voluntarily staffed when they were not officially scheduled to work in that capacity. For example, I noted in my field notes on January 13, 2011 that: "John stayed behind to work and said he would keep the library open even though the volunteer scheduled to staff never showed up." John is a MLIS student who had a work/study position overseeing a cataloging project for Pulp Novels in the Closet Collection. Although not officially trained as a Queeries Desk staffer, John has his own door code and chose to make the space available while conducting his own work at the library.

Similarly, the next day, I also noted in my field notes that "I found Caspar at the Queeries desk doing his homework and staffing despite it not being his shift." In this circumstance, Caspar came by the library at a time when there are no volunteers scheduled for staffing, wanted to use the library himself, and decided to open the library for everyone. Returning to Riley's earlier comments about being in demand by patrons, both Caspar and John's actions, therefore, reflect an awareness of the Pride Library's value as an open space and a willingness to help share access, regardless of a personal obligation to do so.

Part of the reason why individuals involved with the Pride Library have no problem informally undertaking staffing duties is because work, volunteer and leisure activities at the Pride Library often overlap. I first made this discovery when apportioning question guides for my interview sessions. Prior to entering the field, I created guides based on the four different activity roles I identified at the library: patron, volunteer, work/study and Professor Miller (or "leadership"). The distinction ultimately proved artificial

because I observed that many people who work at the library often also volunteer or use the library as patrons and vice versa. For example, Laura explained, "I volunteer at the Pride Library…[but] I probably come here four or five hours a week where I'm not actually volunteering." She also noted: "the socializing and the [volunteer] work do tend to overlap, particularly when people come in and I'm on my shift and we start talking." Similarly, Caspar commented: "I usually devote half the portion of my [work/study] shift to [work]…and half the shift to, often, it's Mandarin." He also mentioned: "when I am not using the library as a work space, I'm using it primarily as a social space."

Volunteer and worker interest in using the Pride Library as a study and social space underscores their willingness to help participate in keeping the space open, even when they are not formally scheduled to do so: through multiple identities and high level of involvement, Pride Library participants are personally invested in Pride Library operations. As a result, "keeping the space open" directly relates to participants experience of the Pride Library space and therefore creates heightened sensitivity towards other users' desire to utilize the space. The following chapter on the Pride Library as a social space where users can seek community will further highlight the importance of "keeping the space open" from a user perspective.

6.2.4 The Information Organization "Learning Curve"

Although the Pride Library relies heavily on alternative expertise and labour, it is important to note that the organization also exists within a larger, more institutionalized library setting with more formalized labour requirements. As a result, Pride Library's operations represent a constant negotiation between formal and informal information-

based labour tasks. For example, I noted the following exchange with Professor Miller in my fieldnotes regarding the management of a Pride Library archival collection:

> I asked Professor Miller about whether or not there is a donor agreement form for the collection and he said that he doesn't have one for any of the [archival] collections. He explained that when he started [the Pride Library] the idea did not occur to him because HALO, who provided the inaugural archival donation, was dissolving [at the time of the donation] so it wasn't as immediate of an issue [to them]. He said that with everything to do with the Pride Library, he's had to just learn it as he goes and sometimes he is very far behind. He says he would be interested in me sending him some information on donor agreement because he does think it would be a good idea to have a policy in place.

My conversation with Professor Miller demonstrates that there is a "learning curve" at the Pride Library for integrating institutionalized information processes within the predominantly community-centric context. Although specific information management practices do not initially "occur" to Professor Miller, he "learns it as he goes" through the input of others who have more experience. During an interview, Professor Miller described the same discovery process regarding the Pride Library's Collection Policy:

> In the beginning [of the Pride Library's creation], there was a sort of "mothering" process by an MLIS student… as part of [a] project when she was a grad student, she wrote up those [Collection Policy] documents in consultation with me. Because I had no idea how to do such a thing it never occurred to me that we should even have one and she said "we need one" and I said, "yes, she's right, you really do need to define what your collection is, what your priorities are, what should be excluded from the collection." It was a wonderful exercise, I mean, she did all of the work, I just helped her with the conceptualizing of it.

Both my personal experience and that described by Professor Miller demonstrate the role of library students in identifying and suggesting formalized information organization policies for the Pride Library. As Professor Miller also noted in interview: "the policy discussions [I've found] most valuable were with MLIS students…or with experienced archive folk. So I'm very amenable to guidance from people who are knowledgeable and

I've utterly depended on the kindness of MLIS students." When discussing the Pride Library's relationship with Weldon library, he also highlighted that:

> Advice is always proffered free of charge – they could say if we want our technical professional librarian advice, you should hire us as consultants. That's what the evil world outside of Weldon would demand [but] if I have any question about anything, I can just go to the right person, advice always freely offered, so a really good symbiotic relationship. I should say, we don't have an operating budget but that doesn't mean we aren't given constant donations from the library system - not just these ten cataloging opportunities a week, but the space, the lighting, the computer – that's not insignificant.

Professor Miller's comments reflect that the Pride Library benefits from more conventional information expertise and this expertise manifests in a variety of ways, not just through the "kindness of MLIS students" who have not yet completed the professional accreditation process. For example, in the quote above, Professor Miller cites professional intervention from the UWO library administration and information professionals providing pro-bono advice. Similarly, Professor Miller also cites a variety of ways in which the Pride Library benefits from professional expertise, such as: policy insights, skill donation, and facilitating services through donations.

6.2.5 Starting to Resemble a Closet

The Pride Library's reliance on, and subsequent negotiation between, professionalized and non-professionalized labour tasks also leads to tensions and complications. For example, during my time in the field, the Pride Library suffered from serious over-crowding [see Figure 11 below], which I noted as first impressions in my fieldnotes:

> Upon entering the space, another thing that immediately struck me was the large number of boxes informally stacked in what serves as walkways throughout the main are of the space. There are many pictures of the Pride Library online,

> however, these do not have these boxes in them. It made the space feel as if the Pride Library is in the middle of a massive undertaking or some other sort of flux.

Figure 12. *"Boxes in the Pride Library."* During 2011 Winter Semester, the main areas of the Pride Library were filled with boxes from recent donations that had not yet been processed.

Similarly to my comments, my informant Aidan made the poignant observation that "we need more space, we need more stacks. We are, increasingly, [and] ironically enough, starting to resemble a closet." Aidan's comments are striking because they highlight how the Pride Library's mandate towards LGBTQ information accessibility is being undermined by materials management difficulties. Recalling the previous chapter on Space and Place, "resembling a closet" is particularly problematic for the Pride Library because the mandate is geared toward creating a meaningful space.

The Pride Library's overcrowding problems can be traced to several recent large-scale donations. Another incident from my fieldnotes about a user looking for a book further encapsulates this state of flux:

> [A patron] went to the stacks herself at first [to find a book] but then came back out and asked if there were any signs to direct people to a particular shelf. Someone said no to her but asked her what her call number was and then told her which row those call numbers were to found. I asked Caspar why there were no signs and he responded that it was because they keep on moving the books around so much. I asked the last time that happened and he said at the beginning of the semester when they had received books from Moldenhauer.

Caspar's comments and my observations indicate that the Pride Library's informalized acquisitions policies create space constraints within the library. Similarly, my informant Laura explained:

> I feel that the current intake of books is 100% indiscriminate and I feel that our collection is growing at such a pace that we need to start being a little more discriminating…We get some sources that it looks like people are just clearing out their shelves and they don't really have anything connected to the GLBTQ community, there doesn't seem to be any connection. We have a basic collection policy but I don't think that it's followed in any way, shape or form and I think that part of that is that we have volunteers doing most of the intake and not everybody is capable of making those decisions – not that they are incapable – just that we don't train for that.

Laura's comments highlight the Pride Library's difficulties adhering to a formal collection development policy and the their subsequent lack of control over an ever-growing collection. Recalling the Collection Policy project described in the previous section, the problem Laura identifies is not the lack of policy, but rather an inability to implement this policy adequately due to the Pride Library's reliance on volunteer labour. It is also important to note, returning to previous discussions of personal and emotional connectivity created through a donations-based collection, that the Pride Library's indiscriminate acquisitions approach also reflects difficulty rejecting or discarding materials that hold personal connection. The Pride Library, furthermore, was specifically created in response to the historic neglect and marginalization of LGBTQ materials, which further complicates the materials elimination process.

6.2.6 Cataloguing Conflicts

The Pride Library's over-crowding is coupled with a severe cataloguing back-log, which also reflects the conflicts between volunteer and professional labour delineation. Prior to

joining the UWO library cataloguing system, the Pride Library catalogued their books independently by modifying Dewey Decimal and maintaining a card catalogue. In 2001, the Pride Library secured funds through the President's Committee for the Safety of Women on Campus towards cataloguing their entire collection within the UWO library system. In order to match that contribution, the UWO library system donates ten new entries a week, which is meant to ensure circulation for the growing collection.

Considering the Pride Library's acquisition rate, however, the ten entry weekly donation does not meet the library's cataloguing needs. As a result, many Pride Library shelves are currently full of books that have been initially processed by volunteers but have yet to formally entered into the cataloguing system, which makes inaccessible to users [see Figure 12 below].

Figure 13. *"Processed Books."* Orange slips represent books that are processed by Pride Library Volunteers but have not yet been catalogued.

The following episode from my fieldnotes encapsulates some of the difficulties users encounter with the Pride Library's uncatalogued collection:

> At 5:20, a [patron] comes in and starts looking around the entire space – not just the stacks. He starts over in the area by the computer, and then circles the periphery of the library…[I ask him if he needs help and] he asks me if I know what happened to the unprocessed books that were on a cart last week next to the computer. These books seem to have been cleared away in just the past day. I tell him [that I'm not sure where those books went] but that if he leaves me his email I can ask Professor Miller where they have been put…he says that he will probably end up buying the book at Indigo or on Amazon.

The next day I also note the following experience trying to locate the book with Professor Miller:

> Professor Miller takes me to several places where the book would most likely be, including a spot in the middle of the reference shelves that I would never have thought to look. These books do not yet have orange slips and are part of a newer donation. You can distinguish them from the reference books because they do not yet have call numbers. Some books are double-stacked. Professor Miller cannot find the book.

The experience described above demonstrates the difficulties involved with having large quantities of uncatalogued materials within the Pride Library. First, the bulk of the uncatalogued materials are inaccessible because users cannot search for them in the first place. Although the incident above demonstrates that some patrons still casually browse these books because they are left out in the open while being processed, their experiences are rare and ephemeral: if the book is moved, it is incredibly difficult to find again. As my experience above highlights, uncatalogued books are so difficult to find that even those highly familiar with the library, such as Professor Miller and myself, are not successful.

In addition my own observations, those highly involved with the Pride Library are acutely aware of the cataloguing backlog. For example, my informant Aidan commented that:

> We are experiencing a crunch right now, we are hitting our critical mass. We have almost as many items un-catalogued as we do in the system. We are running out of space, we have no funds. We exist solely by the good graces of Professor Miller, to which he deserves many many rounds of applause. But I think this has gone way beyond just being a stack of books just in his office, it's a full-flung library, it's stuff – lots of stuff, more stuff then can be handled by me and a bunch of volunteers and the occasional MLIS student.

Aidan's comments demonstrate that those involved with the Pride Library are highly conscious of the Pride Library's current collections management problems. Note how he specifically cites a labour and funding deficiencies as sources of these problems. Due to an acute awareness of the cataloguing backlog, volunteers are assisting Professor Miller lobby UWO for a new cataloguing agreement. For example, I noted the following exchange in my fieldnotes:

> Laura asked Aidan to proofread a letter she had begun to draft to lobby [the UWO Library system to re-visit their cataloguing agreement with the Pride Library]… We also talked about certain points in the letter, such as the fact that it will take thirteen years for all of the books to be catalogued at their present rate, assuming that the library receives no new books in that time. In the letter, she noted that this is not a suitable estimate because the library [will continue to] grow over the next thirteen years.

Laura's lobbying project reveals the severity of the Pride Library's cataloguing backlog: echoing Aidan's earlier comments that nearly half of the collection is currently un-catalogued, the present ten title per week entry quota represents a perpetual cataloguing backlog into the indefinite future. The Pride Library's re-negotiation options are limited, however, because the UWO library system only allows those with professional training who are directly affiliated with the library system to have cataloguing privileges. As a

result, the Pride Library cannot use volunteers to supplement the cataloguing process , nor can they can they afford hiring a cataloguing librarian or pay the UWO library system to catalogue additional books.

6.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter surveys both the challenges and opportunities that arise from the Pride Library's reliance on volunteer labour with some input and operational support from professional labour sources. The Pride Library benefits from a "personal" LGBTQ community-specific touch, which is made by possible by maintaining autonomy from UWO. This autonomy, however, conflicts with the Pride Library's relationship with UWO, most notably the library's features as an accessible space and a circulating collection. The Pride Library case-study, therefore, provides insight into the delicate interplay created through professionally enabled community library projects, which Miksa (2007) projects as the post-modern library model.

VII
USERS & USE

7.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter surveys the activities undertaken at the Pride Library and the actors that undertake them. Paralleling discussions from the previous chapters, my findings demonstrate that the Pride Library creates a dynamic LGBTQ-centred community space, where UWO students and the community-at-large conduct a wide range of activities, ranging from the strictly scholastic to the purely social. The chapter also discusses the success and consequences of the Pride Library's popularity beyond the LGBTQ community.

7.2 A "Collection of People"

> *We're tucked out of the way, we're a small space, we don't have a lot of publicity, but people find their way here and I that speaks to something very fundamental, which is that this is a space that the LGBTQ community at Western…feels well served by.*
> ("Caspar," Interview Transcript)

The previous chapters' focus on setting, materials, and operational underpinnings provide the framework for understanding the user and use patterns explored in this chapter. My findings demonstrate that in addition to being utilized for LGBTQ resources, the Pride Library also represents a social and symbolic space for those at UWO and beyond. As my informant Caspar's comments above suggest, the Pride Library is a popular site that attracts a wide variety of users, despite various access obstacles, because the library's mandate and operational impetus "serves" patrons incredibly well. Similarly, my

informant Laura described, the Pride Library has "types of patrons as varied as the collection."

What follows below is a survey of this varied "collection" in order to give an impression of the human activity I observed at the Pride Library. The Pride Library does not employ gate counting techniques, however, during my time in the field, I observed approximately five to fifteen people in the library over the course of an average day. This number may not seem high, however, one must also take into account the relatively small size of the space (about seventeen hundred square feet) and that the space appeals to users because it is not as high traffic as the rest of Weldon Library proper. These numbers, furthermore, do not reflect the duration and nature of the time individuals spend within the library. For example, the Pride Library is specifically valued for prolonged use. Similarly, although the Pride Library user population is predominately made up UWO students (fairly evenly distributed between undergraduates and graduate students), the sheer presence of and participation from members from the public-at-large is noteworthy considering the Pride location on a university campus (see 7.2.2 below for further details).

Due to privacy concerns, I could not casually question individuals entering the space (i.e. regarding their purposes of entry, relationship to UWO, sex and gender identity) and by extension, could not create a more detailed numeric portrait of the Pride Library's average user population. Over the course of my fieldwork, I was especially sensitive to the Pride Library's status as a safe space (see section 7.2.4 below) and the possibility that an over-zealous researcher may threaten that status entirely. The following findings,

which were made based on extended observation and conversations with consenting individuals, provide a compromised approach to representing the Pride Library community without compromising individual right to privacy.

7.2.1 Modes of Discovery

The variety of ways in which patrons report "discovering" the Pride Library introduces the diverse users and use patterns discussed throughout the chapter. Reflecting LGBTQ studies' increasing popularity within the academy and the Pride Library's representation within the UWO library catalogue, I found that many UWO students "discover" the Pride Library when conducting school research. For example, my informant Mike noted that he learned about the Pride Library while looking for books for an essay on "the acceptance of homosexuality up until the 1960s and how it's changed since this point." He explained, "I was looking for a book for this essay and I was searching [the UWO library catalogue] and [the search results] said 'Pride Library'…[and] there was a little link to the website."

For Mike, choosing an LGBTQ-related topic for an essay represented an opportunity to explore issues relating to his own sexuality. He commented that , "I found [that topic] out of the list of all the essay topics…because I am more confident with my sexuality than I was before, I thought this would be a good time to explore." Mike's experience discovering the Pride Library, therefore, reflects increased representation of LGBTQ subjects within the academy, and by extension, increased opportunity for LGBTQ students to pursue topics that resonate with their identities through their studies.

For many students, "discovering" the Pride Library through the UWO catalogue merely represents another location from whence they need to retrieve materials. As my informant Laura explained, "the entire catalogue is on the Western catalogue and a lot of people who come in here looking for books have already found the call number they are looking for." These "quick users" often represent students that need Pride Library materials for a class but do not identify with the library's larger ideological project. As Laura also commented: "you have people who come in who obviously are just getting a book for a class and they don't care about the community, the just come in, they grab a book and they leave. Recalling the previous chapter's discussion of the Pride Library's high circulation, the presence of "quick users" also reflects a wide-spread popularity of the Pride Library's materials.

For other students, however, the "discovery" of the Pride Library through their research pursuits represents an introduction to a rich community environment. Returning back to Mike, he made the following statements about his use the of the Pride Library:

> [I've used the space] firstly, as a resource for the material that's here…but it was also interesting because I got to listen to different peoples' conversations as they came in and out…and it was actually really interesting to see who came in and did what here.

Mike's comments suggest that although he was technically introduced to the Pride Library through the materials he required for his essay, he was truly drawn into the space through the social dimension he witnessed when he physically located himself within the environment. Mike's comments reflect that the opportunity for social activity is a major attraction to the space for many patrons, which will be discussed further detail later in the chapter.

Similar to discovering a "social dimension" once within the Pride Library space, many users report learning about the Pride Library through their social network. The "word of mouth" method circumvents the Pride Library's visibility obstacles, which Caspar summed up in the previous section as: "we're tucked out of the way, we're a small space, we don't have a lot publicity." In contrast, Caspar also cited the common phenomena of "people being brought in by their queer friends and being walked up and down the stacks and being introduced to people." Riley also explained that during her time at the Pride Library "there was a community of friends, mostly queer people who…would bring people they liked [to the library]."

As will be discussed in greater detail in a later section of this chapter, the Pride Library holds strong symbolic significance as an LGBTQ space, which many fear will "out" them if they enter. Being introduced to the Pride Library through social connections, therefore, not only represents a way to learn about the library, but also provides a less intimidating context for visiting. For example, Riley was formally introduced to the Pride Library through her two queer roommates, one of which volunteered at the library. Prior to her introduction, Riley reported that she was aware of the library but too shy to enter: "It was one of those things that I would pass…I remember I would keep looking past…I would kind of just look in." Once a participant within the space, Riley noted that she also observed others doing the same thing: "there are the people that don't come in but obviously want to come in and do the 'pass and look.''

Echoing discussion from the previous chapter, my findings also indicated that many patrons also learn about the Pride Library through Professor Miller. Laura, for example,

stated: “I first heard about the Pride Library when I was in my undergrad – I took one of the Dante courses with James Miller and I heard about the Pride library that way.” Returning back to the previous chapter’s discussion of Professor Miller as a public figure, it appears the Professor Miller is not only open about LGBTQ issues when teaching, but also regularly mentions the Pride Library to his students. For example, Aidan recalls learning about the Pride Library while taking Professor Miller’s first year class on Sex and Culture. During a lecture, Professor Miller announced event that captured his interest: “I checked it out when he had a researcher who had been working on the Closet Collection, he gave a speech about the books and essentially presented his thesis and I went to go see that. And then I came here for tea and snacks afterwards – on a lovely a tea set.” Aidan’s comments reflect that although the Pride Library’s special events can serve as an introduction to the space, Professor Miller represents the major source of publicity behind those introductions.

Professor Miller’s students are not only introduced to the Pride Library because Professor Miller makes announcements in class, but they are also specifically drawn to the library because they like him as a figure. This finding, therefore, also resonates with the previous chapter’s discussion of Professor Miller. For example, Aidan characterized Pride Library volunteer and patron, Janice, in the following way: “I think she’s largely here because she works with James – she’s one of his TA’s.” Aidan then explained more generally that, “there is a portion of people who come in here as well because they love James – he’s a good time. He definitely does have a bit of cult of personality of people who come in here and speak with him or work with him in general.”

7.2.2 Users From Beyond UWO

In addition to Pride Library introductions made through associations with UWO, the Pride Library also has a reputation beyond the university. For example, I noted the following incident in my fieldnotes: "… a woman came in from Fanshawe college with a research question.…her topic is on gay marriage (she has to give a 45 minute group presentation for social-services related class)." During our exchange, the woman explained to me that she learned about the Pride Library when soliciting research help from a librarian at Fanshawe College. I helped her by showing her relevant content from Statistics Canada, surveying several books from the Pride Library, and pouring over a map of the Church/Wellesley neighbourhood in Toronto.

The Pride Library also attracts researchers from the general public. Aidan shared the following example of an elementary school teacher who came to the Pride Library seeking resources for her sex education class:

> She [told us that] she had a student who had approached her with questions about lesbian sex. And she was like, "I don't know what to do," so she came here. Because we are open to the public, we are not just restricted to Western Students…[a Pride Library volunteer] went and photocopied pages out of the "Big Book of Lesbian Sex" for her and sent her on her way.

Aidan's example is notable because it demonstrates how the Pride Library's mandate also creates an accessible information environment for patrons without academic affiliations. Remaining accessible for all levels of use is an essential component to the library's activist-informed mandate, which officially states that the library exists to provide "a coalition-building environment that cuts across traditional boundaries between disciplines, institutions, and communities."

In addition to providing research support for individuals beyond UWO, the Pride Library also serves as a notable space and resource for the greater LGBTQ community. For example, I noted the followed incident in my field notes about a person who came by the Pride Library to "check the place out:" "He [explained to] us that he learned about the library because he was at Glad Day books in Toronto the day before and was told about the collection of books recently donated by the Glad Day owner. After our conversation, he brows[ed]." This episode suggests that individuals hear about the Pride Library through contacts in the LGBTQ community and then are inspired to check the place out themselves. Similarly, Aidan explained that:

> We get a fair amount of people who are not students and who are not from UWO at all, [that] are just people off the street. Nicole, Queen of the Americas, just came in – she's from San Francisco [and] had heard about the space and came to visit because she happened to be in town.

Aidan is referring to prominent North American LGBTQ activist, "Empress Nicole the Great, Queen Mother of the Americas." Empress Nicole is the head representative of the "International Court System," [ICS) combines royal-themed programming and activities with fundraising for the LGBTQ community. Professor Miller was not familiar with the ICS prior to Empress Nicole's visit, but rather, consented to give her a tour when she visited because of the Pride Library's mandate towards serving the greater LGBTQ community. The Pride Library is now a beneficiary of the ICS: during my semester at the Pride Library, Professor Miller not only spoke at an ICS conference but London's local ICS chapter also held a fundraising event on the Pride Library's behalf.

In addition to serving as a notable LGBTQ site, the Pride Library also represents resource for the LGBTQ community. Recall Aidan's comments previously quoted in Section 5.2.3:

> Because we have the archives and we have the Aids Committee of London fonds here and we have London Lesbian Film Festival collection here as well, we get people coming in from [those organizations] as well. [We get people] who are not students or anything like that, they're just people who are either accessing the archives or who come in and give donations…and they do go through the stacks as well, they go through and check out the space.

Reinforcing Chapter V's findings on materials, Aidan's comments suggest that donors not only visit the Pride Library to "check out" the space they donate to, but also to use the materials. Most notably, Aidan's comments also reveal that donors visit the library to access their own collections, which connects back to earlier discussion about the Pride Library's community-centric approach to material acquisitions. During my field work, I also encountered members from the London Lesbian Film Festival (LLFF) using the Pride Library. For example, I noted the following episode from my fieldnotes:

> Two volunteers from the London Lesbian Film Festival arrive to return the movies they took out from their accession several weeks ago. They mention that they want to do research on London, ON's gay history and mention that Professor Miller was going to tell them about the various collections at the Pride Library.

The episode above highlights how the Pride Library fosters relationships with the LGBTQ community by providing community-accessible information through the library's mandate toward universal accessibility. This mandate not only allows the LLFF to easily access the materials they donated, but also allows the LLFF to utilize the library as a resource for their secondary research. Recalling previous discussion, this episode also highlights how the Pride Library and Professor Miller serve as LGBTQ information resources.

7.2.3 A "Community of Friends"

The Pride Library is not only notable a place where patrons access LGBTQ information materials, but also as a site for social activity. Returning back to the observations made in the earlier section on "discovery modes," recall that my informant Mike noted that he was drawn to conversations he heard while in the library accessing books. Although the books served as Mike's "formal" introduction to the Pride Library, the social surroundings were what kept him coming back regularly over the course of the semester. Laura also discussed how she became more involved the Pride Library after her undergraduate studies: "I spend a lot more time here [now as a graduate student] because I have more contacts that spend a lot of time here." Her comments suggest, therefore, that socializing represents a major impetus behind utilizing the Pride Library space.

The Pride Library represents a notable social space not only because users socialize within the space, but also because the way in which they socialize creates a distinct "community feel." As Riley explained about her time at the library, "there was a community of friends…it was a mostly social space." This "community feel" is created through the core group of Pride Library "regulars" and therefore differs from other library spaces, such as in Weldon proper, where students are allowed to socialize but only do so in a transitory way.

Returning to an earlier quote by Laura: "most of the people who come in here already know what they want and leave, and the rest are our regulars who come in and sit and

chat." Similarly, Caspar explained that "there's a core group of people who come here and I think it's known that there are times of the week when we can be found here."

Caspar's statement highlights that regular patrons are so "regular" in their visiting habits that they are known for being in the Pride Library. This feature was dramatically demonstrated during the interview in which Caspar made that statement: about half-way through our interview, some of Caspar's friends unintentionally interrupted us because they came by the Pride Library unplanned to see if Caspar might be there.

Although Pride Library has a culture of "core regulars," the social atmosphere remains distinctly open and welcoming towards everyone entering the space. As Caspar noted, "if you crop up enough times people will eventually strike up a conversation with you." The Pride Library's socially welcoming atmosphere not only relates to being open to new people, but also being non-discriminatory toward people and subject-matter. As Caspar noted, "one of the primary functions of the library is to provide a social space that is accepting and non-judgemental…[we provide] a space where you are unlikely to run into any trouble."

The Pride Library's context as an "accepting" social space also relates back to how the library creates a distinct "community feel." For example, Aidan explained his attraction to the library in the following way:

> I like chatting with the people that are here because we at least have some shared context…I know that if you are in here, you are down with the gays [and] you are at least going to know what a trans person is, which is something that is not guaranteed in the general public.

Aidan's comment highlights how Pride Library patrons are specifically drawn to the social community because of a sense of shared context. In other words, by creating a mandate toward the LGBTQ community, the Pride Library automatically evokes community. This "automatic community" feel fosters the library's distinct social culture and serves as a major hallmark of the space.

7.2.4 A "Safe" Space "Open to Everyone"

For many users, the Pride Library represents a "safe space" for seeking refuge from the stigmas of the outside world. This need for "safe space" reflects that for LGBTQ people, social stigma remains a major concern. As Riley noted: "I am constantly worried as to whether or not a space I'm in is a safe space." The Pride Library's explicit LGBTQ centred mandate represents such a safe space and attracts users accordingly. For example, Caspar stated that the Pride Library is " a space where it's really unlikely I'll ever run into any kind of stigma at all."

Note that in the comment above, Caspar specifically stated "any kind of stigma." Caspar's statements reflect that the Pride Library is not only valued as a refuge for LGBTQ people, but for all types of people. Similarly, Mike commented that "this is the sort where you can go [where]…it just feels more positive about everything than everywhere else." The Pride Library's "positive about everything" approach, therefore, also reflects that the library attracts many users seeking community that do not identify as LGBTQ. For example, my main informant Laura described the Pride Library in the following way:

> I think it's 100% inclusive. I've never been asked to explain my identity – people know that I have a boyfriend…this particular community [is] incredibly open and incredibly welcoming to anybody –anybody who is willing to be welcoming and open to them.

Laura's comments encapsulate that the Pride Library does not represent an exclusively "LGBTQ- identified" community, but rather, an inclusive community motivated by LGBTQ community needs. Recall that many people are attracted to the space because of Professor Miller or because the space is aesthetically pleasing compared to other spaces at UWO. As a result, the pre-requisite for participating in the Pride Library space is not strict membership to the LGBTQ community, but rather an openness to the LGBTQ community and openness to people more generally.

7.2.5 Come Out, Explore Your Identity and Meet Other LGBTQ People

In addition to providing a "safe" and "welcoming" community environment more generally, the Pride Library also attracts users specifically interested in exploring their LGBTQ identity. Due to the Pride Library's explicit LGBTQ mandate and aesthetic, merely entering the library often represents a major gesture toward "coming out." As a Riley described, "it's like there's this weird space, like that door means that if you're in there, you're gay." As a result, many of my informants reported personal anxiety about first entering. Riley stated, "I remember looking at the door and wondering if anybody I knew would see me in there, or if they would know [I was gay] or if it would be a coming out thing." Similarly, Caspar noted: "I wasn't used to being in a space [where] it was pretty likely that if someone walked by and glanced in they'd probably identify me as gay…so I was quite nervous."

After taking the initial leap, the Pride Library's profile as a "library" represents a less intimidating way to seek out the LGBTQ community than more traditional avenues such as bars or social groups. As Laura explained, "I think that the library, being open to everybody…is really great for people who are afraid of who they are and what their identity is and allows them a really safe environment to explore that." For example, Caspar described his first visit to the Pride Library in the following way: "I came in…and I sort of ducked my head…and wandered into the stacks [and] grabbed the first book I saw…and read for about twenty minutes and then got up and left." Caspar's experience highlights that the Pride Library's premise as a library provides an easier entry-point for "coming out" because you can always revert to library activities while in the space such as browsing, reading or studying. Although these activities may appear "passive," the significance of "coming out" gives these gestures a sense of overt action. Returning to Caspar, he also characterized himself at the time of his first visit to the library in the following way: "I was more of a hypothetical homo. I think one of the reasons I was interested in the Pride Library was…I was looking for practical experience at being gay."

In addition to the symbolic significance of entering the Pride Library, patrons also come to the library to specifically seek resources about LGBTQ identity for personal use. For example, I noted the following episode in my field notes: "Laurie announced to me that she finally got her first reference question here…She said that a girl came in and asked [her], 'where are the lesbian books?'… Laurie then asked [the girl] to refine her question [and ultimately] helped her find some titles on lesbian sex." Note that Laurie reports that she "finally" got a reference question, which reflects that explicit questions of this nature are rare.

Similar to the gravity of entering the library, therefore, the rarity of reference questions at the Pride Library reflects anxieties around "coming out" and exploring LGBTQ subject matter. A more commonly cited activity among my informants was patrons seeking out LGBTQ related information in secret. Laura noted:

> You have people who are obviously in the closet and just want to read about [LGBTQ subject matter] but don't want to let anyone know that that they are reading about it…I had a patron come in once and he was taking about how he was here to doing an essay about sports and he [said he] didn't know why the book was in this library, but he [insisted] he was doing [an essay] on sports and he said "sports" like four times.

Laura admitted that she cannot know for certain what the patron's motives were for requesting the book, however, she also argued that the book's graphic nature and his discomfort during the exchange strongly suggested more personal motivations. This anecdote, therefore, also reflects the difficulty in observing and quantifying personally motivated information seeking activities as they relate to the often sensitive topic of LGBTQ identity and action.

Returning to previous discussion of the Pride Library's community-feel, patrons also visit the library to specifically seek out the LGBTQ community. For example, Aidan stated: "some people come here to meet people [because] it's a huge campus, it's not an exceptionally open campus…it's a very conservative town." Aidan's comments highlight that UWO and London, Ontario do not represent thriving LGBTQ communities. Similarly, Riley explained:

> I just started hanging out there a lot in third year – the community was there…there was more of a queer academic community. I know that may sound classist, but in the London lesbian scene there were lesbians that were students of Western and lesbians that just lived in London…[there was] sort of a divide.

Returning to earlier observations, Riley's comments demonstrate that the Pride Library is especially sought out by LGBTQ students at UWO who do not feel a commonality with London, Ontario's "local" scene. These students also gravitate toward the Pride Library as an alternative to UWO's official LGBTQ student organization, Pride Western. When asked about the range of LGBTQ activities he participates in, Aidan remarked, " I most certainly do not use Pride Western…the only thing they really do is organize dances." Similarly, I noted the following during a conversation with Randy:

> He said that he heard about [the Pride Library] at the beginning of the year, just as he was in the process of coming out and wanted to start meeting other gay people. I asked him about Pride Western – he said he tried that too at the beginning of the year, but that the didn't really have time for social events once school got busy, whereas the Pride Library enables you to be in a gay atmosphere while still doing your school work. He also said that he had found the Pride Western support groups "depressing."

Randy's comments demonstrate that LGBTQ students at UWO use the Pride Library as an alternative avenue toward LGBTQ community participation. He cites common student barriers to other forms of participation, such as being too busy with school work or lack of connection with more regimented social activities. In contrast, the Pride Library provides the optimal "mix-use" environment, where LGBTQ students may meet peers, seek out LGBTQ information or work on other tasks.

7.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter surveyed the diverse patronage and patron activity that takes place at the Pride Library. My findings suggest that the Pride Library boasts a wide range of activities in addition to more conventional library activities, such as: finding and retrieving materials and using the space for reading and study. For example, due to the

Pride Library's mandate toward serving the LGBTQ community, users' also approach the library as a symbolic site for visiting and seeking community. By extension, the Pride Library also attracts users beyond the traditional academic library mandate, most notably, individuals and groups from the greater LGBTQ community and beyond. As a result, the Pride Library's "User & Use" activities demonstrate the wide-ranging implications of creating a library through an "LGBTQ community-specific" mandate.

VIII
CONCLUSION

8.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter provides a summary of research findings and discusses possible future research aims. The thesis explored, described and analyzed the information context of the Pride Library towards creating a dialogue about grassroots information organizations. The findings generated from this thesis demonstrate that the Pride Library creates a unique and rich environment for information activities. Although LIS scholars acknowledge that communities have different information contexts and needs, there is little research that explores these activities outside of professional and institutional information contexts. This thesis, therefore, also suggests a need for future research both on LGBTQ information organizations and non-institutional and non-professional information organizations more generally.

8.2 Research Summary

The thesis utilized an ethnographic approach to generate rich, context-specific information about the Pride Library's environment and community. Data generated from the study supported the research aims guiding the project (as outlined previously in section 1.4) including: describing the overall organization of the Pride Library environment, exploring user perceptions and user activities within the space and comparing these qualities to more conventional library models. Overall, the thesis' findings illustrate that the Pride Library's grassroots mandate creates a uniquely LGBTQ

community-specific approach to library space and activities. Through this approach, the Pride Library not only provides resources and services traditionally overlooked by institutional structures but also fosters a distinct community. In addition to demonstrating the information and greater community opportunities the Pride Library creates, the findings also highlight distinct challenges associated with maintaining grassroots operations, particularly in lieu of the traditional institutional and professional models on which libraries generally rely.

The Pride Library creates an LGBTQ community-friendly environment, first and foremost, through a distinctly "queer" aesthetic strategy and comfort-driven approach to space. Notable physical features at the Pride Library include: a vibrant colour scheme, vintage furniture and an art-installation approach to Pride Library artefacts and materials. Echoing arguments from Buschman & Leckie's (2007) *Library as Place*, the thesis findings demonstrate that "place" and "space" considerations play a major role in the "information experience:" users from this study consistently cited physical characteristics as a main motivation behind their use and subsequent activities within the library.

In addition to the physical environment, the Pride Library also demonstrates a unique relationship to information-based materials. The Pride Library creates a symbiotic relationship between aesthetic and information materials, such as through the "flagging" of book spines, creating art installations through the Closet Collection, and incorporating artefacts that visually mark the space and reinforce the symbolic significance of the library as queer. In addition to aesthetic motifs, Pride Library materials are also marked with documentary information to relay information about the library's history and it's

donors. This emotional connection to the library's materials reflects the special relationship created by the library's exclusively donor-created collection. Most notably, the donor-created collection has allowed the Pride Library to remain attuned to the LGBTQ community's specific information needs, which were historically ignored by conventional library acquisitions policies.

Similar to relying exclusively on donations for materials acquisitions, the Pride Library runs primarily on volunteer labour, which creates a highly personal and emotional approach to library services. Professor Miller, the "head volunteer," is also the library's "heart." The library's other major source of volunteer labour – those who "staff" the library – reflect the symbolic importance of keeping the space "open" and physically available for discovery. The staffers' profile as "unskilled," however, also highlights the library's conflicted relationship toward professionalized library labour: the Pride Library also relies on donations from the formal UWO library system and from informal input from professionals and has some conflicts with lack of timely input, such as the inability to adhere to a formal acquisitions policy and a backlog in cataloging.

In addition to examining the Pride Library's setting, materials and labour force, the thesis also demonstrates that the Pride Library attracts a wide variety of users from UWO and beyond. In addition to the library's popularity with students conducting research and studying, the library is also a notable social space, boasting a crowd of friendly "regulars" that specifically seek out a non-discriminatory atmosphere and the LGBTQ community. This observation reinforces the importance of libraries as places where activities take place, as opposed to serving merely as book repositories. It is also important to note the

Pride Library attracts users from outside of the UWO community not only because of it's reputation for LGBTQ resources, but also because community members who have donated their materials feel a connection to the space and want to use the resources they have donated. This finding, therefore, demonstrates some of the implications of a donations-heavy acquisitions policy.

8.3 Methodological Reflection

By grounding my thesis in the ethnographic method, my research produced a holistic, contextually rich perspective into the Pride Library as a place and as a community. Ethnography is an immersive, disciplined approach to research that requires a strict adherence by the researcher from pre-field contact to the final write-up. Over the course of my thesis work, I pursued this method with the vigor and due diligence required due to my conviction that the method only provides the best entry point into my particular case study, but also because the method has broader applicability within LIS.

In regards to my experience conducting fieldwork at the Pride Library, it is important to note that I had great ease gaining initial access and subsequently immersing myself within the community. As I learned from my previous ethnographic project at the Lesbian Herstory Archives, entering a new social community as an ethnographer is a delicate and often difficult endeavor. In addition to my ability to draw upon previous ethnographic experiences, however, I also credit my relative ease entering the Pride Library to the high degree of commonality I share with that particular community including: having an LGBTQ identity, being a university student and having previous library experience. The specific context of the Pride Library also greatly contributed to

my comfort in the field because the environment is specifically geared toward promoting warm, welcoming social encounters.

Ethnography represents an over-arching research approach with many possible variations both in implementation and final report writing. Variables that determine an ethnographer's personal research approach include: topic choice, disciplinary concerns, the researcher's personality and the particularities of the field setting. In addition to these variations, ethnographers also always struggle with their concurrent status as cultural "insiders" and "outsiders," also termed in anthropology as the "emic" and "etic" perspectives. Due to privacy concerns (as discussed in Chapter VII) and my personal orientation toward research, this thesis relies heavily on data from textual description with a decidedly "emic" orientation. In contrast, an "etic"-weighted or "scientific" ethnography, would include more direct measurement of the field environment through less textually heavy data display techniques including: graphs, charts and models.

8.4 Outstanding Research Questions

Following Stebbins (2006) concatenated research model, the individual field study presented here aims towards building a larger chain of studies, which will ultimately result in formal, grounded theory. The sections below identify future research threads made apparent over the course of this study that have potential for concatenation:

8.4.1 Towards an LGBTQ Information Organization Landscape

Due to this thesis' orientation as an ethnographically-informed case-study, in-depth reflection on the Pride Library's relationship to other LGBTQ grassroots information

organizations past and present, the history of LGBTQ studies and LGBTQ history more generally fell beyond the scope of discussion. The Pride Library case, however, suggests a number of intersections based on these topics. For example, I observed that the Pride Library is part of a larger "LGBTQ information resources food chain" in Southern Ontario, which involves a number of individuals and organizations (i.e. The Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives, Out on the Shelf in Guelph, Ontario, the University of Toronto's Sexual Representation Collection) that share and compete for information materials. Similarly, I recently attended the third "ALMS" conference ("International LGBTQ Conference Highlighting Archives, Libraries, Museums and Special Collections")[1], where LGBTQ grassroots information organizations met on an international-scale to discuss issues of related interest. As a result, there is a need for more research that not only examines individual LGBTQ information organizations but also reflects on the relationships and networks created between them.

In addition to exploring LGBTQ information organizations and their networks in the present tense, there is also a need to create a more comprehensive model relating these organizations to recent LGBTQ history. Recalling Cvetkovich's (2003) observation that the LGBTQ studies increasing mainstream academic popularity is leading to the creation of LGBTQ information collections within conventional libraries and archives, there is a need to not only discuss "grassroots" solutions of LGBTQ information organizations past, but also to create a model that acknowledges the growing spectrum of LGBTQ

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[1] ALMS 2011 was hosted by the June Mazer Lesbian Archives between May 13 – 15, 2011 in Los Angeles, California. The conference has been held three times but has no over-arching structure: each incarnation is hosted and subsequently organized autonomously on a voluntary basis by different LGBTQ information organizations. Please refer to the June Mazer website for further details about the 2011 Conference (http://mazerlesbianarchives.org/).

information spheres. Returning back to my experiences at the ALMS conference, I observed the presence of LGBTQ organizations that ranged from the militantly grassroots (i.e. the Lesbian Herstory Archives) to grassroots organizations with institutional partnerships (i.e. the June Mazer Lesbian Archives, ONE National Gay Archives). As a result, there is a need for future research that comprehensively surveys the LGBTQ information organizations as a landscape with evolving conflicts and needs.

8.4.2 The Public/Private Library Continuum

The Pride Library's profile as a grassroots information organization located within and utilized by a large, academic institution has major implications for LIS. My findings not only suggest the validity of grassroots information approaches, but also the reality that these approaches fill an informational service gap created by the dominance of professional and institutional models within LIS. As Miksa (2007) explains, this service gap exists because public and academic libraries operate according to a "modern-era" model of information and information needs: the modern-era positions libraries as publically funded social institutions that provide access to the otherwise inaccessible bibliographic universe. The modern-era library model, by extension, defines the public as relatively homogenous group with normative information needs.

In contrast to the modern-era library model, the Pride Library is a predominately privately funded and operated institution geared towards the information needs of a specific community. According to Miksa (2007), individualized library models like the Pride Library will become increasingly popular due to societal shifts towards recognizing population diversity and the transition toward digital technologies. Most notably, Miksa

(2007) predicts that in the "new library era," librarians will function as enablers and advisors as opposed to mandating, designing and operating information spaces. This prediction echoes the Pride Library's current relationship with UWO: Pride Library services are creatively controlled and predominately operated autonomously through an institutional donation of space and cataloging services. Recall however, that the Pride Library even provides creative input into the cataloging process by providing ten search terms per book.

The Pride Library case study, when read in conjunction with Miksa's (2007) arguments, demonstrates a need for sustained discussion of information organizations outside of institutional and professional bounds. These discussions cannot be dominated by the perspective that private and community-based information approaches have qualities that can be adapted to institutionalized library contexts, but rather, must signal a move towards embracing alternative information organizations in their entirety. Ultimately, private and community-specific information organizations should be understood as valid points on an information organizational continuum that also includes public and institutional library models.

In addition to studying grassroots and private information organizations as independent entities, there is also a burgeoning need to study how these organizations overlap with public and academic information environments. For example, the Pride Library does not receive regular funding from UWO but still provides a regular service to UWO students. Similarly, the June Mazer Lesbian archives maintains an autonomous collection and physical location while also partnering with UCLA on specific projects and allowing

certain collections to be housed on their campus. As these partnerships continue and increase in numbers, they suggest major shifts in grassroots/institutional relations that beg for greater scrutiny.

8.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter provided a summary of the findings from the thesis and presented outstanding questions for future research. The thesis' findings demonstrate that the Pride Library's grassroots approach to information organization through alternative imaginings of: information space, materials, labour and activities. These alternative imaginings, furthermore, are directly informed by LGBTQ community-specific perspectives and experiences. These findings suggest a need for further research that not only explores other unique, grassroots information organizational case-studies, but also links these studies towards LIS theory that accommodates and embraces non-institutional and non-professional approaches to information services.

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APPENDIX A
INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM
(2 PAGES)

Date:

To:

INTERVIEW TYPE

☐ Pride Library Patron ☐ Pride Library Volunteer ☐ Pride Library Employee
☐ Other

OVERVIEW

You have been chosen for interviewing because of your unique perspective on the Pride Library at the University of Western Ontario**.** This interview is part of a Masters thesis at the Faculty of Information collaboration with the Sexual Diversity Studies Department at the University of Toronto. The thesis, tentatively titled, "An Exploratory Ethnography of the Pride Library at the University of Western Ontario," focuses on the information activities in the context the library. Towards this end, the researcher is interviewing patrons, volunteers and employees of the Pride Library to gain a better understanding of the activities regularly occurring therein. The researcher may also use this data at a later point to publish articles based on their thesis research.

Your participation will involve being interviewed by the researcher for approximately one to two hours. You may also be asked to take the researcher on a tour of the Pride Library from your perspective and the researcher may take photos of the features of the library you find compelling. The researcher will not take any photographs of you. There are no known risks to you for assisting with this project. In fact, you may find that positive feelings, such as enthusiasm and pride, occur during the interview. Your responses will be kept confidential unless you give permission to quote you directly. You may request that any part of the interview remain confidential even if you agree to be quoted directly. Participation in this interview is voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time. You may request and receive a summary of the research results.

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant, you may also contact the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Toronto: ethics.review@utoronto.ca or 416-946-3273.

CONSENT

I acknowledge that the topic of this interview has been explained to me and that any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I have agreed to participate. I know that I may ask, now and in the future, any questions that I may have about this project. I understand that I can withdraw from the interview at any time. I have been assured that the notes, transcript, and/or photographs relating to me will be kept confidential and that no information will be released or printed that will disclose my personal identify unless I specify otherwise. Only the researcher will have access to the information I provide. I have been given a copy of this consent form for my records.

I agree to be quoted directly in the report ___ Yes
___ No
I agree to be tape-recorded ___ Yes
___ No

_____ _____
Interviewee Name (please print and sign) Date

_____ _____
Interviewer Name (please print and sign) Date

APPENDIX B
QUEERIES DESK STAFFING SCHEDULE

Note: The image above is a reproduction of the schedule used at the Pride Library during Winter Semester 2012. All names (with the exception of the researcher's) have been changed to match their corresponding pseudonyms.

APPENDIX C
INTERVIEWEE BIOGRAPHIES

Name	Brief Biography
Riley	24 year-old self-identified queer female. Recently completed an undergraduate degree at UWO, currently pursuing a graduate degree at U of T. Participated at the Pride Library primarily during her 3 & 4th undergraduate years as a work/study student, volunteer & "regular" user.
Caspar	29 year-old self- identified gay male. Currently in the third year of am undergraduate degree at UWO with a work/study position at the Pride Library. A Pride Library "regular" user.
Susie	Self-identified lesbian female. Completed an undergraduate degree at the UWO in the late 80s and was an early visitor to the Pride Library. Currently involved with the Pride Library primarily through participation with London Lesbian Film Festival; visited several times over the course of my research on the LLFF's behalf.
Aidan	27 year old self-identified trans male. Currently in the third year of an undergraduate degree at UWO with a Pride Library work/study position as "Volunteer Coordinator." A "regular" user.
Laura	27 year old self-identified female currently in a heterosexual relationship. Completed an undergraduate UWO and currently a graduate student at UWO. A Pride Library volunteer and "regular" user.
Mike	18 year-old self-identified gay male currently in first year of an undergraduate degree at UWO. First encountered the Pride Library due to school research early in my fieldwork, I observed Mike visit the library with increasing frequency over the course of the semester.
Professor Miller	Self-identified gay male; Founder and current "Head Volunteer" of the Pride Library. An Associate Professor at UWO affiliated with Modern Languages and Literatures, English and Philosophy Departments.

APPENDIX D
SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDES
(3 PAGES)

1. Interview Guide for Pride Library Patrons

- Briefly describe (without identifying yourself) your relationship to UWO
- How did you first hear about the Pride Library?
- Describe your first impressions of the Pride Library
- What, from your perspective, is the purpose of the Pride Library?
- What, from your perspective, is the relationship between the Pride Library and the University of Western Ontario?
- How, from your perspective, is the Pride Library organized? (i.e. Who works at the Pride Library? Who picks the books? Who decided where to put the books?)
- Do you have any other background knowledge of the Pride Library (i.e. history)?
- How often do you use the Pride Library?
- Why do you use the Pride Library?
- How do you identify in relation to concepts including: LGBTQ and Pride?
- Do you use LGBTQ related resources at UWO? Beyond?
- What is your favorite part of the Pride Library?
- Is there anything about the Pride Library you don't like/would like to change?
- Take me on a short guided tour of the Pride Library from your perspective.
- Do you know anyone else who uses the Pride Library?
- Who would you recommend the Pride Library to?
- How would you describe the Pride Library to a person who had never heard of it before?
- What do you see as the future of the Pride Library?
- Is there anything about the Pride Library that you would like to say beyond my original questions?

2. Interview Guide for Pride Library Volunteers

- Briefly describe (without identifying yourself) your relationship to UWO
- How did you first hear about the Pride Library? How did you hear about volunteering at the Pride Library?
- Why did you decide to volunteer at the Pride Library?
- How do you identify in relation to concepts including: LGBTQ and Pride?
- Do you use LGBTQ related resources at UWO? Beyond?
- Describe your first impressions of the Pride Library
- What, from your perspective, is the purpose of the Pride Library?
- Do you use the Pride Library for any activities outside of volunteering? If so, describe.
- Describe for me your tasks as Pride Library volunteer/take me through a regular day of your work as a volunteer

- What, in your opinion, is the purpose of volunteers at the Pride Library? (Alternatively worded, how do Pride Library volunteers relate to the organizational structure of the library, such as patrons, staff)?
- From your perspective, who are the patrons of the Pride Library? To what ends do patrons use the Pride Library?
- Who would you recommend the Pride Library to?
- What is your favorite part of the Pride Library?
- Take me on a short guided tour of the Pride Library from your perspective.
- How would you describe the Pride Library to a person who had never heard of it before?
- What do you see as the future of the Pride Library?
- Is there anything about the Pride Library that you would like to say beyond my original questions?

3. **Interview Guide for Pride Library Employees**

- Briefly describe (without identifying yourself) your relationship to UWO
- How did you first hear about the Pride Library? How did you hear about working at the Pride Library?
- Why did you decide to work at the Pride Library?
- How do you identify in relation to concepts including: LGBTQ and Pride?
- Do you use LGBTQ related resources at UWO? Beyond?
- Describe your first impressions of the Pride Library
- What, from your perspective, is the purpose of the Pride Library?
- Do you use the Pride Library for any activities outside of your work? If so, describe.
- Describe for me your tasks as Pride Library employee/take me through a regular day of your work
- How do Pride Library employees relate to the organizational structure of the Pride Library?
- From your perspective, who are the patrons of the Pride Library? To what ends to patrons use the Pride Library?
- Who would you recommend the Pride Library to?
- What is your favorite part of the Pride Library?
- Take me on a short guided tour of the Pride Library from your perspective.
- How would you describe the Pride Library to a person who had never heard of it before?
- What do you see as the future of the Pride Library?
- Is there anything about the Pride Library that you would like to say beyond my original questions?

4. **Interview Guide for those involved in the creation and continuing management of the Pride Library**

- Take me on a guided tour of the Pride Library. Show me your favorite parts.

- How and why you were first inspired to create the Pride Library?
- What was the impetus behind the organizational structure of the Pride Library, including: nature of the collection, use of staff and volunteers, choice of being housed on the UWO campus?
- Describe the impetus between the design and décor of the Pride Library?
- Describe the sources of the Pride Library's financial support (i.e. from the UWO, the role of donors)
- Describe the process involved in creating the Pride Library at the University of Western Ontario (i.e. finding the space on campus, creating an agreement for using the online cataloging interface)
- Describe the process involved in publicizing the collection
- Do you have/what is your relationship to other LGBTQ information collections in Canada? Beyond? (i.e. Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives)
- Who, from your perspective, currently uses the Pride Library? To what ends?
- What do you see as the future of the Pride Library?
- What do you as the future of the LGBTQ information collections (will they exist autonomously, who will staff them)?

APPENDIX E
INITIAL MEMO TITLE LIST

1. Spatial Boundaries
2. Everything is Aesthetic
3. Volunteers Fill In/Ensure Space is Available
4. Trust/Consequences of a Widening Sphere
5. Books as Artifacts
6. Emotional Content
7. Community Users
8. Checking the Place Out
9. Conversation Joining
10. Collection as Art Installation
11. Volunteer After UWO
12. LGBTQ Info Food Chain
13. Multiple Roles
14. Visits Schedule Contingent
15. Professor Miller is the Pride Library
16. Cataloging Anxiety
17. Weekly Lunch Dates
18. Volunteers Not Signs
19. Growing Pains
20. Quiet Work Too
21. Hang Out Reputation
22. Reading Habits
23. The Regulars
24. Eat and Sleep
25. Volunteer Duties/Expectations
26. Noise Complaint
27. Not Only for Gay People
28. Introduced by Friends
29. Drop Off Your Stuff
30. Books Nowhere Else in London
31. Browsing Unprocessed Books
32. Lesbian Reference Question
33. Just Be
34. Learn As You Go Along
35. Funding from LGBTQ Organizations
36. School Reference Questions
37. Librarything
38. Funny Users
39. Blow Him Away
40. UWO Rhythms
41. Media Darling
42. High Circulation
43. Ugly Weldon
44. Meet Other Gay People
45. Skeptical Outsiders
46. Staff Show Off
47. History of the Pride Library Aesthetic
48. Donors are Users
49. Donors and Space
50. The Big Q
51. Secluded but Central

APPENDIX F
PRIDE LIBRARY CIRCULATION STATISTICS*
(3 PAGES)

Pride Library Circulation from Opening Date in The D.B.Weldon Library

	Checkouts….	Renewals……	Total Circulation
Dec 2005	91	18	
Jan 2006	87	28	
Feb 2006	170	83	
Mar 2006	315	127	
Apr 2006	127	98	
May 2006	71	24	
Jun 2006	74	58	
July 2006	61	40	
Aug 2006	41	16	
Sep 2006	71	17	
Oct 2006	112	68	
Nov 2006	274	86	
Dec 2006	113	68	
Jan 2007	67	50	
Feb 2007	132	64	
Mar 2007	211	90	
Apr 2007	100	64	
May 2007	44	28	
Jun 2007	61	42	
Jul 2007	65	12	
Aug 2007	23	5	
Total	2310	1086	3396

Pride Library Circulation from Sept.2007 to August 2008

	Checkouts….	Renewals……	Total Circulation
Sep 2007	51	25	

Oct 2007	131	42	
Nov 2007	195	83	
Dec 2007	58	65	
Jan 2008	101	31	
Feb 2008	97	36	
Mar 2008	238	98	
Apr 2008	90	43	
May 2008	49	19	
Jun 2008	51	34	
Jul 2008	41	28	
Aug 2008	34	9	
Total			

Pride Library Circulation from Sept.2008 to August 2009

	Checkouts….	Renewals……	Total Circulation
Sep 2008	93	30	
Oct 2008	175	70	
Nov 2008	254	116	
Dec 2008	46	45	
Jan 2009	122	62	
Feb 2009	180	91	
Mar 2009	257	95	
Apr 2009	115	60	
May 2009	58	48	
Jun 2009	83	33	
Jul 2009	47	18	
Aug 2009	35	23	

Total			

Pride Library Circulation from Sept.2009 to August 2010

	Checkouts….	Renewals……	Total Circulation	HOLDS
Sep 2009	52	11		4
Oct 2009	130	42		22
Nov 2009	187	98		28
Dec 2009	79	42		7
Jan 2010	85	58		29
Feb 2010	128	59		40
Mar 2010	330	116		50
Apr 2010	95	33		17
May 2010	76	61		34
Jun 2010	57	27		7
Jul 2010	73	25		10
Aug 2010	33	32		7
Sept 2010	87	26		22
Oct 2010	147	77		30
Nov 2010	217	118		45
Dec 2010	64	44		15
Jan 2011	114	104		21
Feb 2011	122	63		26
Mar 2011	216	98		41
Apr 2011				
Total				

*Circulation statistics compiled and provided by Catherine Morrisey; Resource Support Services, D.B Weldon Library. Statistics were tracked using Western Libraries' Millennium Circulation system (Innovative Interfaces Inc.).

APPENDIX G
PRIDE LIBRARY VOLUNTEER TYPES

Volunteer Role	Population	Schedule	Duties
Head Volunteer	Professor Miller; Associate Professor at UWO	Approximately 3-4 days/week during most of the academic year, about 2-5 hours per day (with breaks)	- Oversee all library operations - Design and supervise projects for work/study students - Co-ordinate library activities (i.e. acquisitions, special events) - Create search terms for catalogued books - Liase with UWO
Queeries Desk "Staffers"	Approximately 15 individuals; *1 UWO Staff member *2 UWO Alumni *12 UWO students (approximate even distribution between undergraduate and graduate students)	Approximately 1 shift per week, 2-3 hours per shift * many staffers also informally "keep space open" outside of their official shifts	- Supervise space - Answer reference questions - Re-shelve books - Perform other special activities and projects (varied by individual): flag books, provide dry-cleaning service, etc.
Pulp Novel "Readers"	4-6 MLIS students	1-2 afternoons per week, about 2-4 hours per week	- Read pulp novels from the Closet Collection toward creating search terminology and developing an organizational system