Trauma-informierte Archivarbeit und soziale Gerechtigkeit

Impulse für eine archivische Ethik

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Data Ethics for Archival Science and Historical Research, 30. Archivwissenschaftliches Kolloquium der Archivschule Marburg, 26.-27. August 2026 in Marburg

Agenda

- Begriffliche Grundlagen
- Trauma-informierte Archivarbeit
- ICA-Umfrage „Understanding the international landscape of trauma and archives“
- *Social Justice* und Archivethik
- Care-Ethik und „radikale Empathie“
- Exkurs: „Quellenschicksale und Bewertungsfragen“ (Josef Henke)
- Fazit: Impulse für eine archivische Ethik



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Begriffliche Grundlagen

Was ist ein Trauma?

Traumabegriff

Trauma: singuläre traumatische Erfahrung (Typ-I)

komplexes Trauma: langandauernde, wiederholte, meist interpersonelle traumatische Erfahrungen (Typ-II)

historisches Trauma („historical trauma“)

transgenerationales Trauma

Posttraumatische Belastungsstörung (PTBS)

Retraumatisierung

“Traumatic events overwhelm the ordinary systems of care that give people a sense of control, connection, and meaning.”
Judith L. Herman (1992)

“Trauma is not just an event that took place sometime in the past; it is also the imprint left by that experience on mind, brain, and body. This imprint has ongoing consequences for how the human organism manages to survive in the present.”
Bessel van der Kolk (2014)

“Historical trauma is the cumulative emotional and psychological wounding across generations, including the lifespan, which emanates from massive group trauma experiences.”
Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart (2003)

„traumatic records“

“traumatic records”: “representations of disturbing or distressing experiences” (Sexton, 2019)

“traumatic potentiality” (Sexton/Shepherd/Duff, 2023)

„Archive des Terrors“ («archives de la terreur»): von totalitären Regimen zur Überwachung und Unterdrückung erstellt

„Archive des Schmerzes“ («archives de la douleur»): von Opfern produzierte Zeugnisse und Spuren (Adama Aly Pam, UNESCO-Chefarchivar, 2022)



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Trauma-informierte Archivarbeit

Trauma-informierte Archivarbeit

„trauma-informed archival practice“
(Nicola Laurent / Kirsten Wright)

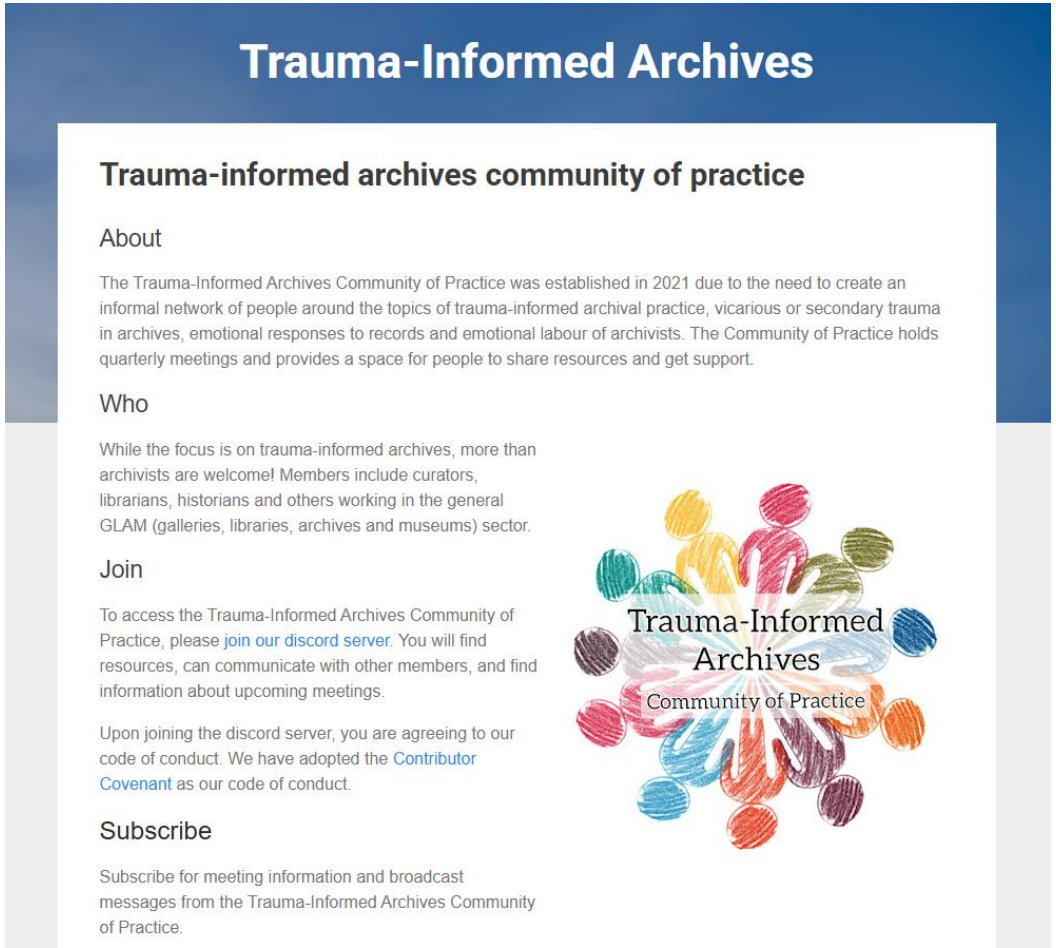
organisationsbezogen

“creating safe spaces for people to engage with archives” (Laurent & Wright)

- Bedarfe von Betroffenen stehen im Mittelpunkt
- Retraumatisierung vermeiden ("do no harm")

Grundprinzipien:

- **Sicherheit**
- **Vertrauen und Transparenz**
- **Wahlmöglichkeit**
- **Kollaboration**
- **Selbstermächtigung**



„Trauma-informed archives community of practice“

ACA Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct (2017)

P.O. Box 2596, Station D, Ottawa, ON K1P 5W6 phone 613 234-6977 fax 613 234-8500
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Association of Canadian Archivists
Association canadienne des archivistes

b. Recognizing that records originate in and are influenced by a complex interplay of legal, administrative, informational, and cultural factors over time, we strive to continuously improve our preservation and representation of these contexts.

c. We draw guidance for gathering, maintaining and communicating records' context from:

   i. established principles of archival theory, such as *respect des fonds* and respect for original order;
   ii. institutional policies and guidelines governing records and our responsibilities to them;
   iii. laws and regulations, particularly with regard to privacy and data protection;
   iv. discourses adjacent to—or distinct from—traditional archival ideas but still relevant to archival work (see also principle 6.a); and
   v. the communities from which the records originate, or that they represent.

d. We recognise that discrimination, trauma or violence may be inherent in the circumstances of records creation and transmission, and that these considerations may have a bearing on how the records are described, preserved, and accessed.



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„Understanding the international landscape of trauma and archives“

ICA-Umfrage (2022)

„Understanding the international landscape of trauma and archives“

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Results

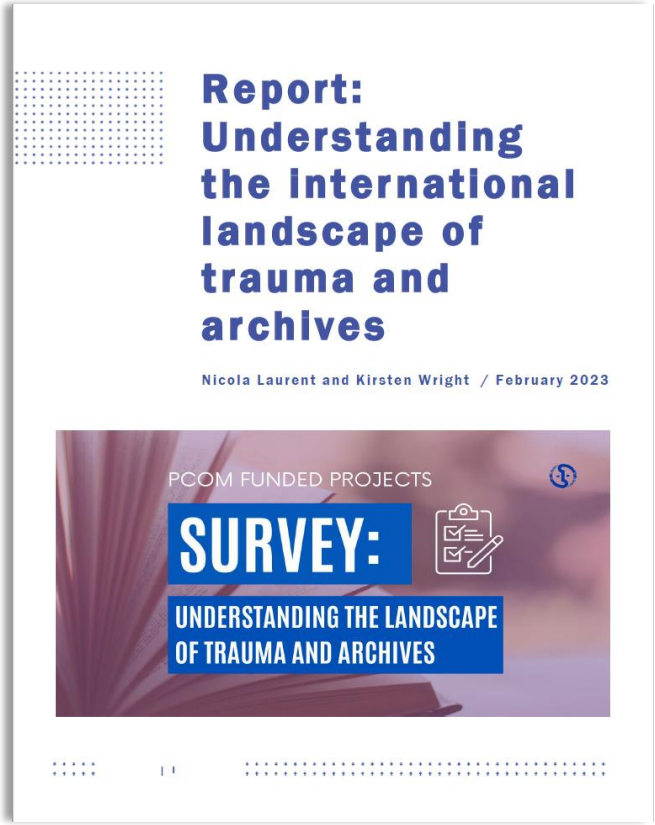
68 % der Befragten gaben an, mit **traumatischen oder belastenden Inhalten** konfrontiert gewesen zu sein

51 % berichteten von einer **sekundären Traumatisierung**

44 % gaben an, eine **Traumareaktion** bei Nutzer*innen erlebt zu haben

74 % wünschen sich eine **Weiterbildung** zum Thema Trauma

“All in the archival profession need to be aware of the potential for trauma in archives.”



Nicola Laurent / Kirsten Wright (Februar 2023)

„Understanding the international landscape of trauma and archives“

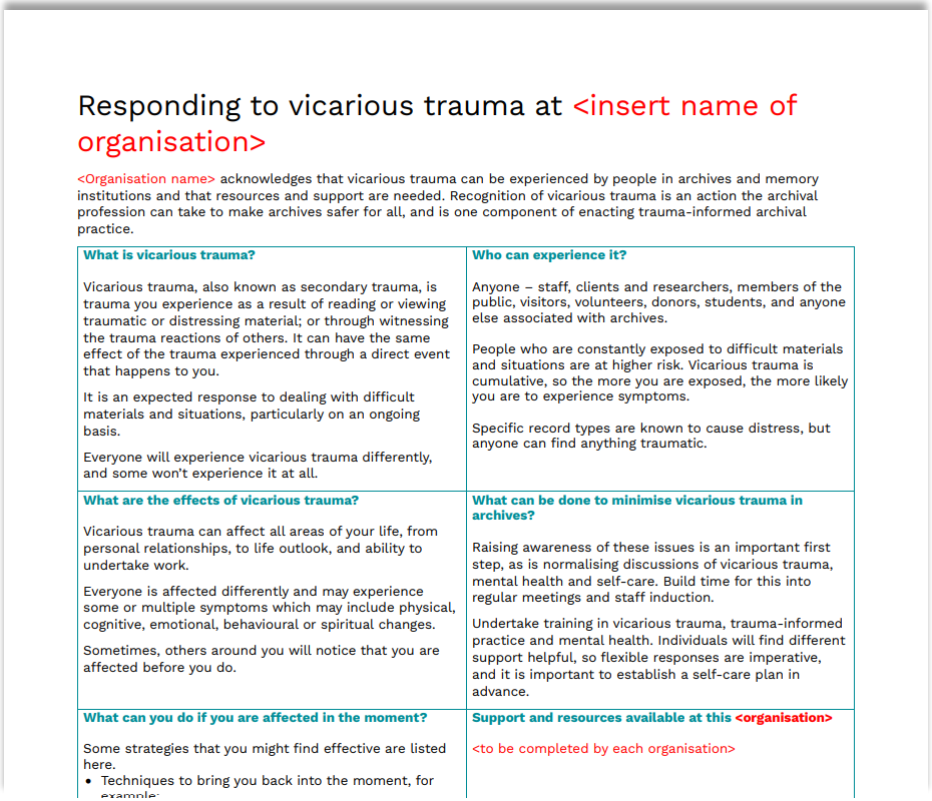
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Recommendations

1. **Raise awareness** of trauma, trauma-informed practice and vicarious trauma

2. **Promote the inclusion** of trauma, trauma-informed practice and vicarious trauma as topics in **archival education programmes**

3. **Develop and provide training and professional development materials** on trauma, trauma-informed practice and vicarious trauma



Responding to vicarious trauma at <insert name of organisation>

<Organisation name> acknowledges that vicarious trauma can be experienced by people in archives and memory institutions and that resources and support are needed. Recognition of vicarious trauma is an action the archival profession can take to make archives safer for all, and is one component of enacting trauma-informed archival practice.

What is vicarious trauma?	Who can experience it?
Vicarious trauma, also known as secondary trauma, is trauma you experience as a result of reading or viewing traumatic or distressing material; or through witnessing the trauma reactions of others. It can have the same effect of the trauma experienced through a direct event that happens to you. It is an expected response to dealing with difficult materials and situations, particularly on an ongoing basis. Everyone will experience vicarious trauma differently, and some won't experience it at all.	Anyone – staff, clients and researchers, members of the public, visitors, volunteers, donors, students, and anyone else associated with archives. People who are constantly exposed to difficult materials and situations are at higher risk. Vicarious trauma is cumulative, so the more you are exposed, the more likely you are to experience symptoms. Specific record types are known to cause distress, but anyone can find anything traumatic.
What are the effects of vicarious trauma?	**What can be done to minimise vicarious trauma in archives?**
Vicarious trauma can affect all areas of your life, from personal relationships, to life outlook, and ability to undertake work. Everyone is affected differently and may experience some or multiple symptoms which may include physical, cognitive, emotional, behavioural or spiritual changes. Sometimes, others around you will notice that you are affected before you do.	Raising awareness of these issues is an important first step, as is normalising discussions of vicarious trauma, mental health and self-care. Build time for this into regular meetings and staff induction. Undertake training in vicarious trauma, trauma-informed practice and mental health. Individuals will find different support helpful, so flexible responses are imperative, and it is important to establish a self-care plan in advance.
What can you do if you are affected in the moment?	**Support and resources available at this <organisation>**
Some strategies that you might find effective are listed here. • Techniques to bring you back into the moment, for example:	<to be completed by each organisation>

Nicola Laurent / Kirsten Wright

ICA Template: Responding to vicarious trauma

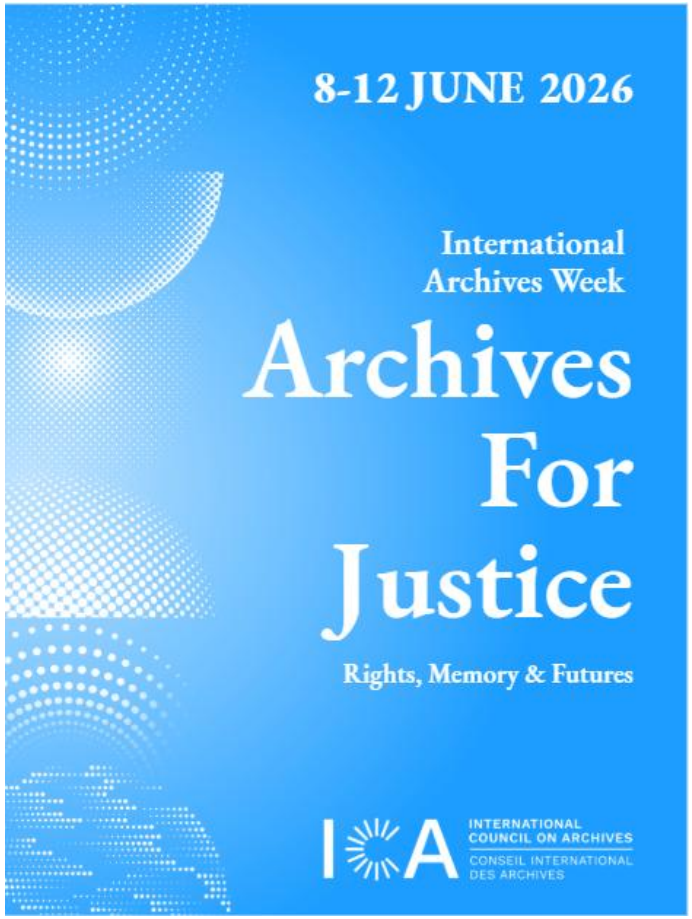
https://www.ica.org/resource/template-responding-to-vicarious-trauma/



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Social Justice und Archivethik

„Archival social justice“



#ArchivesForJustice: Rights, Memory & Futures #IAW2026

“archival turn toward social justice”
Anne Gilliland (2016)

“records and archives contribute to social justice by holding accountable those responsible for abuses of trust and power”
Randall C. Jimerson (2007)

Anerkennung und Sichtbarmachung **traumatischer Erfahrungen**



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Care-Ethik und „radikale Empathie“

Personenbezogene archivethische Überlegungen

Personenbezogener Ansatz im Archiv

“Trauma-informed archives are people-centred archives.”
Kirsten Wright und Nicola Laurent (2021)

- Archivarbeit ist **personenzentriert**
- Fokus auf **Emotionsarbeit** (“emotional labour”) als Teil von Archivarbeit
- **„Dignity by design“:** Menschenwürde bei der Gestaltung von Records-Management- und Archivsystemen berücksichtigen

“We define **person-centred approaches** […] as those that shift attention from the record, where it has traditionally been almost exclusively focused, to the **people who create, keep, use, and are represented in records.”**

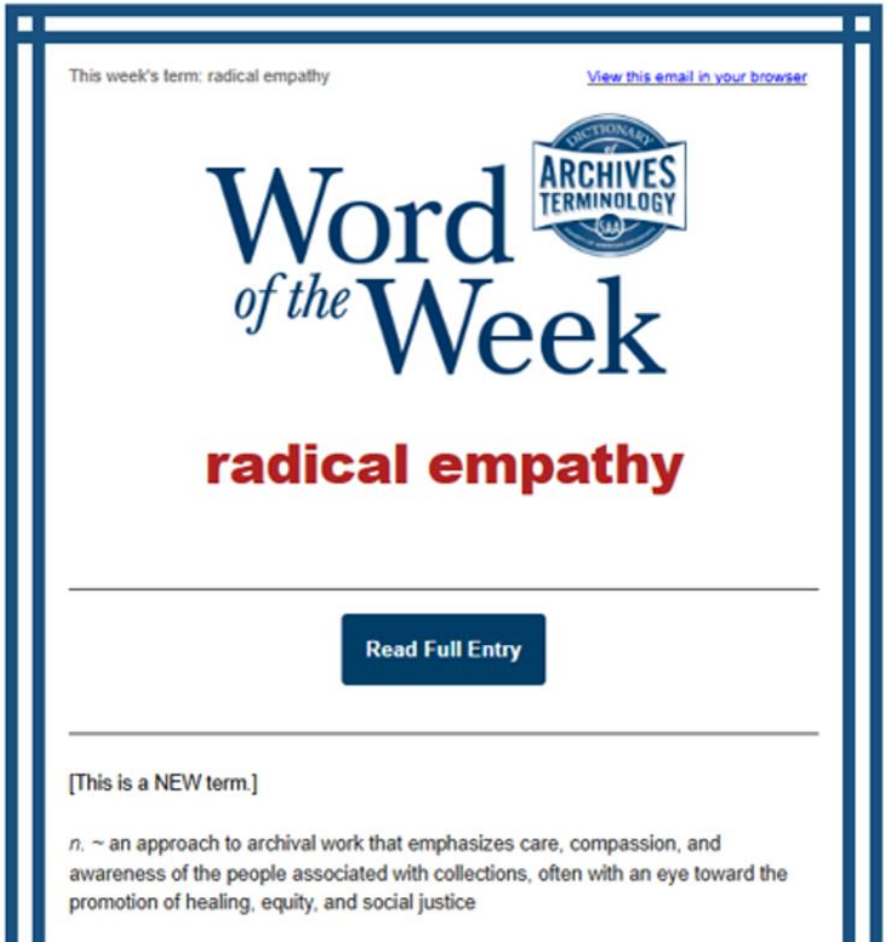
Jennifer Douglas/Mya Ballin/Jessica Lapp (2022)

Care-Ethik und „radikale Empathie“

„Ethics of care“ und „radical empathy“

“… **archivists** are seen as **caregivers**, bound to **records creators**, **subjects**, **users**, and **communities** through a web of mutual **affective responsibility.**” *Michelle Caswell, Marika Cifor: From Human Rights to Feminist Ethics: Radical Empathy in the Archives (2016)*

“radical empathy”: “approach to archival work that emphasizes care, compassion, and **awareness of the people associated with collections**, often with an eye toward the promotion of **healing, equity, and social justice**”, *SAA Dictionary of Archives Terminology*



12.05.2026 – Society of American Archivists (SAA) Word of the Week



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Exkurs

Josef Henke „Quellenschicksale und Bewertungsfragen“ (1993)

„Quellenschicksale und Bewertungsfragen“ Josef Henke (1993)

„die Perspektive der damals Leidenden, Gedemütigten und Ausgegrenzten, also die Perspektive der damaligen Opfer“
Josef Henke, Quellenschicksale und Bewertungsfragen. Archivische Probleme bei der Überlieferungsbildung zur Verfolgung der Sinti und Roma im Dritten Reich (1993)

“survivor centered approach”
Michelle Caswell, Toward a Survivor-Centered Approach to Records Documenting Human Rights Abuse (2014)





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Impulse für eine archivische Ethik

Fazit

Impulse für eine archivische Ethik

Was zeichnet trauma-informierte Archivarbeit aus?

- Bewusstsein für das Thema Trauma und Archiv
- personenzentriert
- Care-Ethik und *Social Justice* als ethische Grundlagen des Archivauftrags
- **Nicht die Aufgaben des Archivs verändern sich, sondern die Art und Weise, wie diese wahrgenommen werden.**

Was sind mögliche Schritte zur Umsetzung?

- **Vernetzung von Archivverbänden und am Thema Interessierten aus Archiven zum Erfahrungs- und Wissensaustausch und zur Entwicklung von Strategien zur Bewusstseinsbildung und für Fortbildungsmöglichkeiten**
- **Community-Building: “trauma-informed archives community of practice” im DACH-Raum**

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Vielen Dank für Ihre Aufmerksamkeit!

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