

**A QUALITATIVE STUDY
EXAMINING THE
CHALLENGING EMOTIONAL
RESPONSES OF ARCHIVAL
DONORS**

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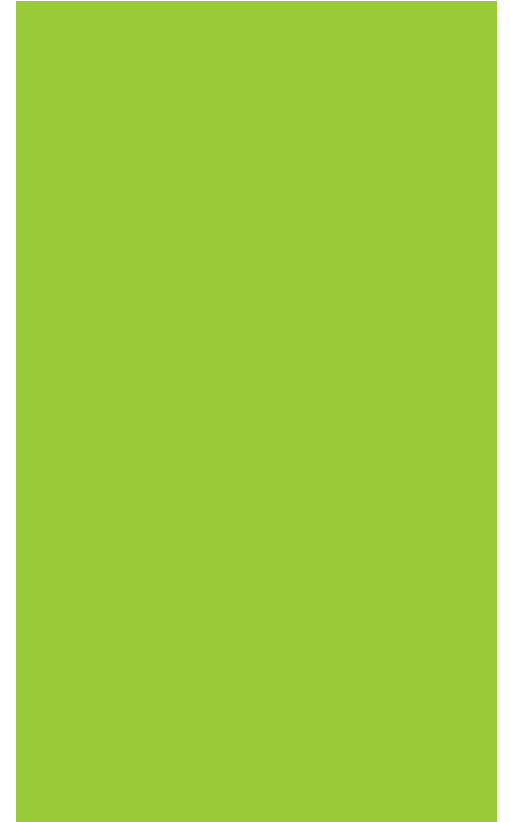
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- Problem Statement
- Literature Review
- Methods
- Strengths/Weaknesses



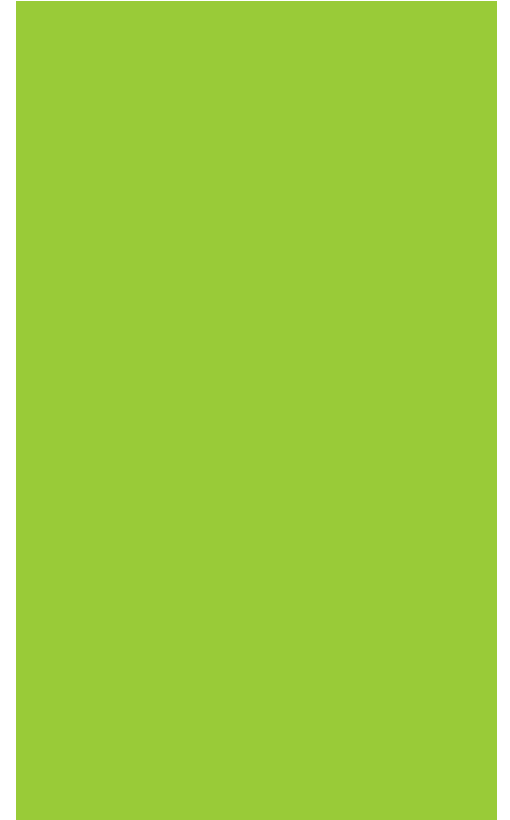
FEEDBACK

- How to improve methods?
- Other weaknesses?
- What to consider?
- Questions?
- Comments?



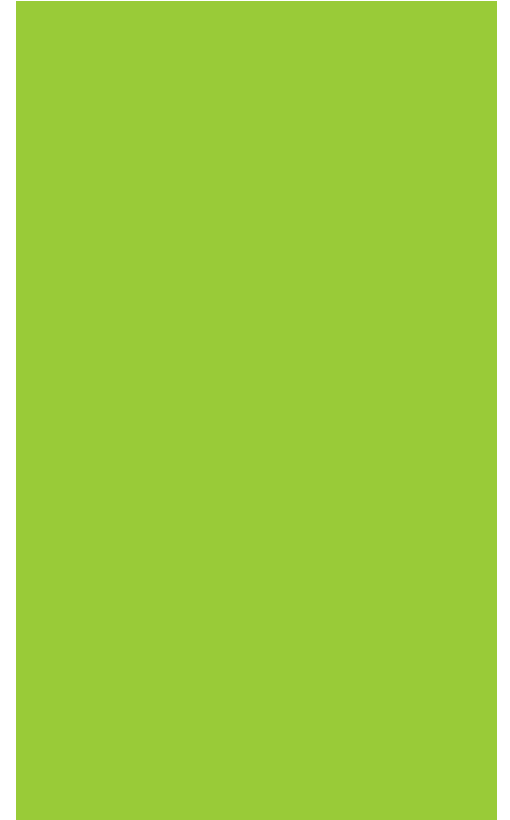
STUDY ORIGIN

- Sloan et al (2019): archivists and people who work with sensitive material are similar to police officers, fire fighters, paramedics, nurses, and social workers
 - Repeatedly exposed to trauma



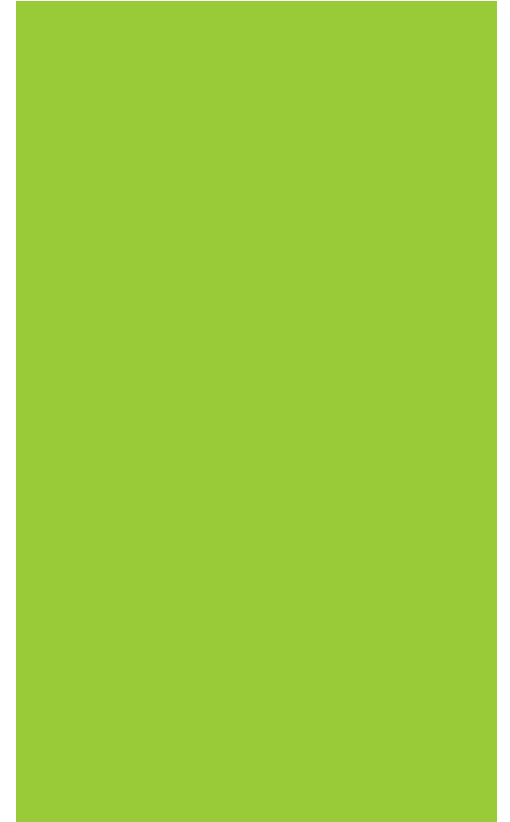
PROBLEM STATEMENT

- What kinds of challenging emotional responses do donors experience when they are accessioning their collections to archives, and why are they experiencing them?
 - Trauma?
 - Memory ?
 - Number of people?
 - Identifying and defining the challenging emotions?



WHY?

- Improve archival work
 - Education
 - Preparation
 - Support
- Gap in literature
- Emotion and trauma in archives



LITERATURE REVIEW

- 2006-2021
 - No seminal sources
- Studies
 - accessibility (Greene, 2006; Kaiser, 1969)
 - legal issues (Behrnd-Klodt, 2008)
 - obligation (Cline, 2012)
 - general relations (Garbett-Styger, 2014; Purcell, 2015)
- Donor relations focus on the archivist and not the donor
- Previous scholarship raises opportunity to discuss, but no explicit focus

LITERATURE REVIEW

Acknowledges gaps in literature; no direct investigations	Acknowledges donor emotions; no further discussions
Greene (2006) Wexler and Long (2009) Cline (2012) Carbajal (2021)	Garbett-Styger (2014) Purcell (2015) Harrington (2016) Ruschiensky (2017) Skeem (2018) Douglas et al. (2019)



METHODS-TERMINOLOGY

- “Challenging emotional responses”
 - Emotions experienced by the donors during accessioning process
 - *not archivists*
- Depression, anxiety, trauma, grief, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

METHODS-TERMINOLOGY

- Secondary or vicarious trauma (Baird & Kracen, 2006; Baker et al., 2020)
- Feminist ethics of care and radical empathy (Caswell & Cifor, 2016)
- Difficulties with collection traumatic materials (Nathan et al., 2015; Sloan et al., 2019)
- Baird & Kracen (2006) and Baker et al. (2020) observe physiological responses
 - Shaking, crying, screaming, sobbing, pacing

METHODS-RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

- Dying and experiencing end-of-life coping issues
- Donor is a survivor of the author of the collection and is grieving
- Donor has emotional attachments to the collection and is having trouble relinquishing it
- Donor is forced to get rid of the collection because of external pressures such as family, lack of space, financial issues, or retirement

METHODS-SAMPLING

- Population: donors → archival institutions in NYS
- Sample: 10-15 donors
 - Special collections and archives in academic institutions in Albany, NY area
- Radius parameters extended to 35-mile radius
 - Extend to all over NYS?
- No restrictions on demographic or donation material

METHODS-SAMPLING

- Brian Keough, Head of Special Collections and Archives, University at Albany, SUNY
 - 10 possible donors to contact



METHODS-DATA COLLECTION/ANALYSIS

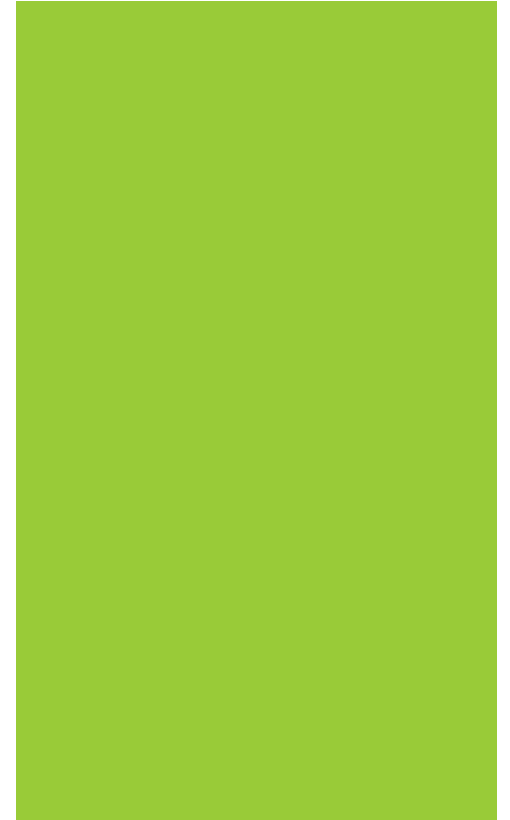
- In-depth, in-person interviews
 - SUNY Albany campus or remotely if needed
- No phone or email interviews as we need to observe participants
- Informed consent form?
- 30 min – 2 hours?
- Field notes, audio and/or video recording, transcripts
- Potential data analysis with NVivo software?

METHODS-DATA COLLECTION/ANALYSIS

1. What is your connection to the collection?
2. Please describe your reason for donating the collection.
 1. If you felt external pressure to donate the collection, can you please explain those pressures?
3. Did you donate the collection alone, or did you have partners, co-workers, family members, or anyone else assisting you?
 1. If any of these co-donators had emotional difficulties letting go of the collection, can you describe their reactions?
 2. Why do you think they became upset?
4. Can you share what emotional difficulties you experienced during the donation process?
5. What made you emotional about the collection during the donation process?

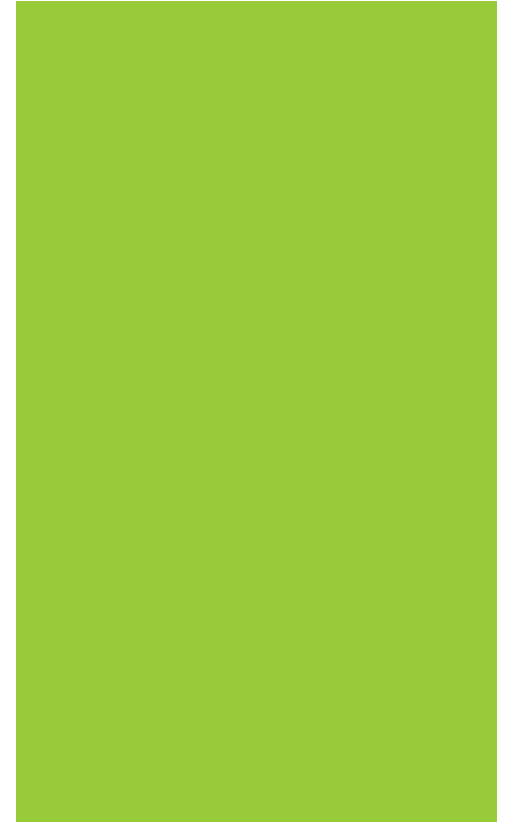
STRENGTHS

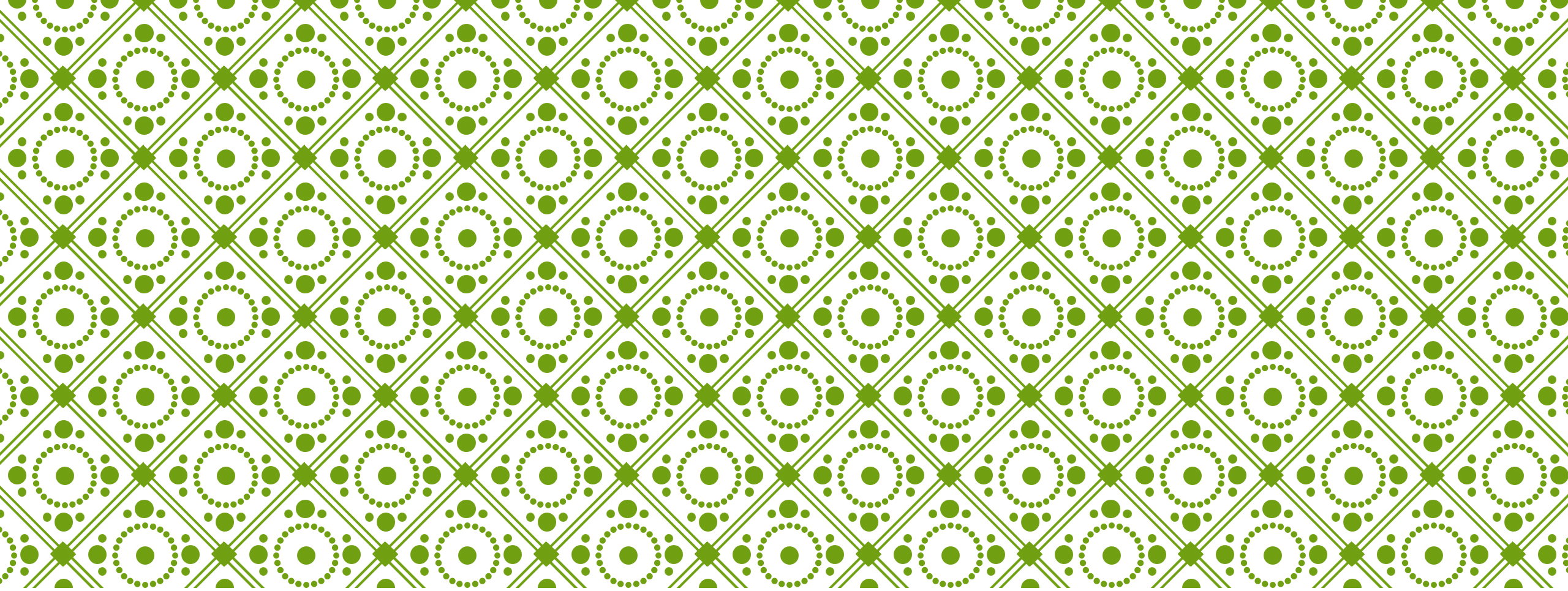
- Instrument design is appropriate
 - Transmittable results for conducting further research
- Interview method yield positive results
 - Questions are general to get clear and specific answers
 - Flexible and adjustable
 - Open-ended questions allow for discourse
- Potential ethical problems considered
 - Voluntary participation



WEAKNESSES

- Interview process is time-consuming
- Participants' memories about donor experience
- Population diversity problems with location of sample size





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