

Archives in the news: portrayal of archives in the New Zealand press.

by

Samuel Gruschow

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ABSTRACT

RESEARCH PROBLEM

There is little recent analysis of press articles specifically focusing on archives, especially those in New Zealand, and archives are underrepresented in news media analysis in comparison to libraries and museums. There is a need to identify the themes, topics, and coverage of archival institutions in written news articles, and the general sentiment of press coverage.

METHODOLOGY

Research was undertaken in the form of a qualitative content analysis of press articles published in New Zealand over the past ten years, which were chosen to be representative of media communications around archives. Articles were coded based on the themes present in the text, and the overall sentiment of each article.

RESULTS

Portrayal of archives by the New Zealand press is generally positive, and any negative sentiment tends to align with constructive critique, rather than cynicism or promotion of stereotypes. Topical themes including digitisation, funding concerns, and access to collections are commonly presented by the press, which in turn may influence the perception of archives by the public.

IMPLICATIONS

Archives can benefit from a relatively free and trusted press, using the press to promote their activities to a wide audience, but must balance this with the press holding them to account for their management of resources, and provision of access to the public. The press is influential on public perception and effective press coverage of archives could lead to higher levels of engagement with their users and the wider community.

DESCRIPTORS/KEYWORDS

Archives, News media, Content analysis, Archival outreach

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1. Introduction

Even though the world seems like it is rapidly being taken over by social media, the written press is still a popular and influential source of news and other information, keeping people informed about the world (Newman et al., 2019, p.49). In this research project, I have investigated the portrayal of archives in the New Zealand press, and the impression and image of archives that is presented to the readers of news articles. I have identified and analysed the themes present in press coverage of archives, and also measured the sentiment of articles, to better understand how news articles are affecting the perception of archives by the public, and how this might influence engagement with archival institutions and their collections.

While archives are a critical part of our collective knowledge framework, they are poorly understood and often ignored by the general public, especially when compared with other knowledge institutions such as museums and libraries, which the public engage with more regularly, whether digitally or in person (Vårheim et al., 2020, p.253-254). It is therefore important for archives to inform the public and other stakeholders of their purpose and activities, as this can lead to better engagement with archival collections, and potentially better support for archives in terms of donations, support from the public, and increased funding (Williams, 2006, p.147).

Newspapers and online news articles are still considered an important and credible source of information for most people in New Zealand (News Publishers' Association, 2021). The written press is still regularly engaged with, and mainstream news media – whether print or audio-visual – commands a much higher level of trust among New Zealanders than social media (Myllylahti & Treadwell, 2022). Due to this high level of trust and the ability to reach large numbers of people, the press is highly influential on the knowledge absorbed by its readers and correspondingly the readers' attitudes to a particular subject. Considering there is already an identified lack of understanding of archives and archival institutions (Patterson, 2016), it is highly important that the press is portraying archives and their activities truthfully and accurately.

I have chosen to use the term “press” to collectively describe the news industry and the written articles they publish, rather than the more inclusive term “news media”, which incorporates text, video, audio, and other media formats and their creators (New Zealand Law Commission, 2011, p.71).

By analysing press articles, I have intended to increase the body of knowledge around the portrayal and image of archives in New Zealand, and presented some insights into the factors that influence public perceptions of archives.

The findings may assist archival institutions in their interactions with the press, whether in a promotional context or as a response to critical reporting. There may be insights into ways the press can be leveraged for community outreach or other purposes to aid engagement with the public and other stakeholders. The findings may also have some relevance to libraries, museums, and other knowledge institutions that are attempting to deal with their portrayal in the press.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Analysis of Media Portrayal

Analysis of media portrayal is a popular area of research across many different disciplines, including healthcare, criminology, and the social sciences. There are a number of studies analysing portrayal of the information professions in various types of media, both fictional and non-fictional. Robinson (2006) is an example of a media analysis focusing on the information professions, and how they are portrayed by the Australian press. The objective of the study was to compare the representation of information professionals with common stereotypes, via a content analysis of two newspapers – one national and one regional. The findings were summarised and reported as a series of statistics in percentage form, followed by a discussion around whether various identified aspects were positive or negative. In this case the study found that media portrayals were more positive, and also more diverse than

hypothesised, and did not lean on stereotypes as much as anticipated. One item of note is that archivists were portrayed more favourably than librarians, which was consistent with previous research, however there was not much investigation as to why this was the case, and the small number of articles about archivists – compared to librarians – makes it difficult to read much into this finding.

2.2. Portrayal of Archivists in Media

There are few, if any, recent studies specifically investigating archives or archivists in an analysis of press portrayal, but there are studies that discuss archives – or archivists – in other forms of media. Oliver and Daniel (2015) focused on the portrayal of archivists specifically, continuing the trend of analysis of the professional, rather than the institution itself. They investigated how archives are portrayed in feature films, basing this on the idea that the public is generally uninformed about the archival profession, and that films commonly create and reinforce stereotypes that are then picked up by the public, in a similar way to news media and other sources. They identified films featuring archivists, and then analysed these based on a checklist of stereotypes and themes from existing literature. The frequency of these themes and any identified variables was recorded, alongside other observations. One key finding was the representation of the “power” of archivists – often seen as gatekeepers of information and used as a plot point in films when access to information needs to be restricted in some way. This concept of archival “power” is expanded on by Greene (2009), noting that although archivists wield considerable power by the nature of their roles and responsibilities, they often do themselves no favours in terms of promoting their profession, arguing that archivists have a responsibility to communicate who they are and what they do with the communities they are part of. In the context of my research, it is important for archivists, and by extension archival institutions, to be aware of how they are portrayed as a starting point for effective communication.

2.3. Stereotypes of Information Professionals

One common theme in the literature is the concept of an “image problem” in the information professions. A mixed-methods study of the portrayal of the information professions in a major Slovenian newspaper discussed whether this image problem is reflected in the press, and whether this portrayal shifted over time when considering changes in the political environment and in the education of information professionals over the period that was analysed (Badovinac and Južnič, 2011). As in other literature the concept of stereotypes and whether they are being promoted or deconstructed was discussed, but this article more clearly connects the perceptions to the socio-cultural factors that influence them, something that is relevant to the New Zealand context that I am studying. It also presented a conceptual framework for print media analysis of the information professions, tying it back to established theory, again including the relationship between knowledge and power. Shaw (2010) continued the theme of concern about negative stereotypes of the information professions being promoted in the media, in this case in relation to librarians in the United Kingdom. Focusing on the person rather than the institution, the article attempted to define information professionals and their roles and noted a lack of understanding from the public of what librarians actually do. Similar to Robinson (2006) the results of the analysis were more positive towards librarians than expected by those in the profession, with a caveat that negative stereotypes do still exist and may have a detrimental effect on public perception.

To understand how people perceive archives, a survey of students from an American university was undertaken, with questions on topics including the understanding of the word “archive”, perceptions of archives as physical spaces, archival materials, and archivists themselves (Patterson, 2016). Although not representative of the public at large, there are some insights in this study that are relevant to my research project. Firstly, it looked at why people perceive and define archives in the way they do, aligning this perception with the definition and nature of archives, and comparing it with the students’ general attitudes to information. The study also explored any correlation between these perceptions and the use of digital technology. Patterson discussed the difficulty in defining “archives” and the

wide range of public knowledge and opinion. Finally, stereotypes and descriptions were suggested by the survey respondents, which could be compared with other literature to build a set of terms and phrases as a starting point for content analysis.

2.4. The New Zealand Press as an Information Source

To analyse the portrayal of archives in the New Zealand press, it is important to understand both the nature of the press, and the reasons it is an influential source of information for the public. In the context of the rise of social media as a news source, and the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on information, Myllylahti and Treadwell (2022) investigated the level of trust that the New Zealand public has in the news media, compared with levels of trust overseas. The study used a comparative data analysis, where a survey of New Zealanders was undertaken in 2020 using the same methodology and questions as a 2019 survey by Reuters across 38 other countries (Newman, et al., 2019). Although the comparisons between New Zealand and overseas are interesting, the real value for my research is to provide a baseline description of the media landscape, and how the media is trusted by the public to a greater or lesser degree. This level of trust – which in New Zealand is relatively high – affects how the public will interact with media articles, including those relevant to the archival institutions that are the focus of my research project.

The *News media meets “new media”* report from the New Zealand Law Commission (2011) discusses the effects of the digital environment on the news media in New Zealand, considering changes in how news media is defined and structured in the face of increasing use of the internet and social media. It summarises the major entities involved in the news media and discusses the role of media in New Zealand’s democracy, and how it should be regulated – explaining how the media can be trusted as a source of information for the public.

2.5. Archives in the Press

Discussing how members of the public receive their information and which sources they trust, and placing this in the context of the archival profession, is a series of three relatively old North American articles. As far as I am aware, there are no recent peer-reviewed articles specifically analysing the media portrayal of archives – and none in the New Zealand context at all.

The first of these articles analysed 300 newspaper articles from a three-year period in the mid 1980's (Boylan, 1985). In parallel with the broader studies of the information professions mentioned earlier (Badovinac and Južnič, 2011; Robinson, 2006), Boylan focused on stereotypes and image, but the tone of the findings is generally much more negative, mentioning “cynical” media coverage and the “oppressive” stereotype of the archival environment, noting that news media and the public have a lack of trust in any government institutions, including archives, which manifests itself in contempt even though they are largely unfamiliar with archival institutions. Similar in scope to Boylan (1985), but instead analysing Canadian newspapers over a time period around 8-12 years later, Craig (1995) again discussed stereotypes and “cynical” media coverage of archives, but also wrote of archives as an important source of truth for the press – the concept of “archives as cultural memory” – and as a rich source of historical material for journalists, especially when reflecting on the context of current events. The article concludes by attempting to match up the respect for this rich cultural memory and source of truth, with the sometimes less than accurate imagery portrayed of the archives themselves. Rounding up this trio of analysis of newspaper portrayal of archives, Cox (1993) undertook a review of the *New York Times* over an eight-month period, mentioning archives as an “authority” called upon for information, mirroring the concept of archives as a source of truth for the press (Craig, 1995).

The only literature I was able to locate describing an investigation into the portrayal of information professions – not archives specifically – in New Zealand was a *Master of Library and Information Studies* research report, focusing on public libraries (Lander, 1998). This study mirrored that of Boylan (1985), presenting a more negative portrayal, however the

analysis does not go especially deep into the reasons for this. The study did however attempt to connect the portrayal to a theoretical framework describing the dependency of individuals on media information sources (p.8) and discussed the importance of institutions cultivating their public profile. In an unpublished dissertation, Bull (2015) studied newspaper articles about public libraries in the United Kingdom, arguing that press articles often take a nostalgic view of libraries which does not reflect the modern reality, and ongoing changes in technology and function perhaps turn people away from using libraries based on outdated information and experiences. It is worth investigating whether this nostalgic portrayal also holds true for archives.

2.6. Press Portrayal in Other Contexts and Disciplines

Due to the lack of articles on my topic in a New Zealand context, I looked outside the information professions for insight on whether the New Zealand media is generally accurate in its portrayal of subjects. Deckert (2020) investigated the portrayal of women offenders, discussing the media environment and the tone of the information presented in articles, and matching this with the ethnic background of the offenders mentioned in the articles, where possible. Deckert made Māori culture central to the discussion – this indigenous lens does not occur in any of the other articles yet is an important part of the New Zealand context. As archival institutions are bound by Te Tiriti o Waitangi, as well as the expectations of the wider community, the way archives are portrayed may influence engagement with Māori.

2.7. Archives in the Community

Archival institutions need to know what effects their portrayal – whether positive or negative – will have on their image, as well as their ability to promote themselves and interact with their users and the wider community. Mukwevho and Ngulube (2022) investigated the use of “soft power” to provide a framework for increasing public

knowledge, awareness, and eventual use of archives. They define soft power as including persuasion, mutual understanding, and cooperation, contrasting it with “hard power” – using force or payment. They focused on the leadership of the institutions and their willingness to engage with the public, then followed this with the development of a framework to assist archival institutions in their use of soft power to engage with the public. The research only evaluated South African institutions, but discussed low levels of public engagement, which could also be an issue in New Zealand – no literature on this was forthcoming. The framework may assist in understanding the mechanisms by which archival institutions can engage the public, which in New Zealand could include the use of press articles.

Archives have an important role to play in their community, reflecting and describing the community and its people, and storing their collective memory. Battley (2019) gives context to this role and discusses the importance of community access to, and involvement with archives. This is based on the concept that once items are placed into an archive, they are removed from their original context in the community, and effort must be made to minimise this disruption. Relating this to the Records Continuum model, archivists must consider the impact of “place” on how people experience records, throughout the life of the record (Battley, 2019). In terms of my research objectives, this level of community access and engagement requires open dialogue and communication between the archive and its community, with the press potentially providing a reliable and practical means for this to occur – the community cannot access its archives if they are unaware of how to go about it, or what is contained within.

2.8. Literature Review Summary

In summary, archives are important guardians of cultural memory, with a duty to engage with their users and wider communities. The press is a common and trusted source of information for the public, with the potential to affect engagement with, and perception of archival institutions. There is little recent analysis of press articles specifically focussing on

archives, especially those in New Zealand, and archives are underrepresented in news media analysis in comparison to libraries and museums. Analysis of press articles will increase the body of knowledge in this area, providing information on how archives are portrayed, and potentially guiding archival institutions in their future interactions with the press.

3. Research Objective and Research Questions

Based on my research topic and the literature review undertaken, the objective of my research is to investigate and analyse how archives are represented in the press in New Zealand, identifying the themes, topics, and coverage of archives and archival institutions in written news articles, and the overall sentiment of press coverage. This analysis aims to increase understanding of the portrayal of archives, and potentially inform the strategies of archival institutions when promoting their interests and engaging with their communities via the press.

This objective leads to the following research questions:

Q1. How have archives been portrayed in the New Zealand press over the past ten years?

- a) What is the sentiment (positive or negative) of press portrayal of archives?
- b) What are the recurring themes in the press portrayal of archives?

Q2. Which recurring themes in the coverage of archives in the New Zealand press could influence the perception of archival institutions by the public?

4. Research Scope – Defining “Archives”

In order to accurately gather and analyse articles, it is important to define what “archives” are, and which related areas and subjects are to be included. Archives can be the collections

of permanent records held in a repository, the organisation that manages the records and preserves documentary heritage, and finally the buildings or repositories that house the records (Society of American Archivists, n.d.). I have chosen to include articles relevant to all three definitions in my research, covering national and regional public archives, collecting archives, community archives, and the archives of corporations and families. I have included digital, physical and hybrid repositories. In addition, I have also included articles focussing on “archivists” – the people and the profession. I have used a relatively inclusive definition in the interests of capturing a complete picture of the portrayal of archival institutions and their constituent parts.

5. Research Design

I have used a qualitative research strategy for my project. As the intent of the research was to analyse the subjects, themes, and sentiment – or tone – of press articles, a qualitative analysis allowed me to achieve this more effectively than a quantitative study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2020, pp.265), letting me focus on the underlying meaning of the articles. In addition, qualitative research is a flexible and iterative process, allowing me to clarify, compare, and find meaning in my data (Drisko & Maschi, 2015, p.93). It could be possible to undertake some basic quantitative analysis on my data, but this is outside the scope of the project, and may be of limited effectiveness due to the relatively small number of articles (n=177) included in my final analysis. The use of qualitative analysis to investigate press portrayal of various subjects is common in the existing literature, and qualitative content analysis is an accepted and effective strategy for description of textual data (Drisko & Maschi, 2015, p.82).

6. Research Methodology

My chosen research methodology was a qualitative content analysis of a selection of written news articles, which were chosen to be representative of media communications around archives. Qualitative content analysis allows the identification of themes, patterns, and biases in the articles, by comparing them with a defined list of characteristics (Leedy & Ormrod, 2020, pp.265-266), the results of which was analysed and interpreted to answer my research questions. Content analysis is a method frequently used for analysis of media coverage in the Galleries, Libraries, Archives, and Museums (GLAM) sector, with a few – mostly older – articles analysing archives or archivists via content analysis of newspapers (e.g. Craig, 1995; Cox, 1993), or other media (e.g. Oliver & Daniel, 2015). Studies using similar techniques to investigate the press portrayal of libraries (e.g. Shaw, 2010), and the GLAM sector in general (e.g. Badovinac and Južnič, 2011; Robinson, 2006) are more common than those focussing specifically on archives. Due to the relatively low number of identified relevant articles, and the wide variation of subject matter, a qualitative content analysis was most appropriate for my data set.

6.1. Scope of Analysis

The analysis included press articles published in the past ten years, spanning the period from January 1, 2013 to January 31, 2023 inclusive – this allowed the collection of enough meaningful data, considering the Covid-19 pandemic and the number of articles that have been published on the topics I am analysing. I chose to focus on recent articles due to the swift changes in the media landscape in recent times, including the rise of social media as a primary news source for many people, and the rising topicality of misinformation around contentious topics (Myllylahti & Treadwell, 2022). There is also very little recent analysis of archives-related press articles in the literature, particularly in New Zealand, so it makes sense to focus on this period. I also considered the limited time and resources available for

the completion of this project, and the chosen time range limited my data inputs to a manageable level, while still generating enough data to draw valid conclusions.

I included in my analysis articles published in the three major national and regional press sources in New Zealand over the specified period – *Stuff* (owned by Stuff Limited), *New Zealand Herald* (owned by New Zealand Media and Entertainment), and *Otago Daily Times* (owned by Allied Press). These three sources cover the majority of New Zealand's population (Roy Morgan, 2022), and include a mixture of national, regional, and local news articles. Each press source publishes its articles online and can be searched with common search engines.

I considered including independent local and community newspapers to potentially add a different perspective from the large media organisations, but did not have the time and resources available to include these as they do not always have the same online availability of articles. Further to this, there is a large amount of local and regional content published by the large media organisations that I have already included. I have also chosen not to include industry-focused publications or those with a narrow scope or readership, rather I have chosen the general publications most likely to be read and trusted by the public.

6.2. Data Collection

Searching for articles was completed in two phases – the first via an online search, using *Google*, and secondly using the *Newztext Plus* database, which indexes and aggregates the content of New Zealand newspapers and publications. Using two different search systems ensured I was capturing as many relevant articles as possible. I searched for simple keywords, starting with “archive”, “archives”, and “archivist”. This method of gathering content via an online search with simple keywords has been used in recent content analysis studies of the press, such as those focussing on “populist” online content and political unrest (Blassnig et al., 2019; Zhang, 2021), and media bias (Hameleers, 2019). After these three search terms, I found that other similar terms – “archival”, “Archives New Zealand”,

even “records management”, did not return any additional relevant articles. I chose not to continue trying with any further search terms as no new articles were emerging.

All searching was undertaken in *Mozilla Firefox*, in private mode with no *Google* account signed in. This was to prevent – as much as possible – the searches being influenced by my personal search history, or any other data held by *Google*. They would still have access to my digital footprint including Internet Protocol (IP) address and system data, which may be used to tailor search results (Farrier, 2022), but this was unavoidable and unlikely to influence the completeness of my results.

For each search term, searches were entered into *Google* in the format: *site:<siteURL> “keyword”*, e.g. *site:stuff.co.nz “archives”* would return results for the keyword “archives” from *Stuff*. To make the results more manageable, I specified a date range, searching one year at a time. I ran a final search for each site and search term with no date range, to discover any articles that were not returned by the date-filtered searches. For each search, I scanned through the results manually, either to the end of the search results, or stopping after a few pages with no relevant articles returned. This was usually in the range of 15-20 pages for each search term, each year. Potentially relevant articles were selected based on headline and description from the search results.

I skim read each potentially relevant article and immediately discarded any that:

- Were not at all related to archives in the context of my research and specified definitions – for example relating to soil archives, non-archival museum collections, and similar.
- Were not related to New Zealand at all.
- Were not in English – e.g., written in te reo Māori – as I was generally able to find an English language equivalent or translated version which could be included instead, and if not I was unable to read and analyse them anyway. There were very few articles in this category.
- Had only a “fleeting” reference to archives – e.g., a brief mention of finding a document in an archive, in an otherwise unrelated article. This also included articles using archives in the non-literal sense – “trawling through the archives” and similar

phrases often referred literally or figuratively to miscellaneous collections that were not related to archives in the context of this project.

- Were exclusively video or audio content, or other forms of multimedia article that could not easily be extracted to a text file.
- Did not have a publication date, and I was unable to find one from other sources.

For each identified article I recorded the following metadata in a spreadsheet, using *Microsoft Excel*.

- A unique identifier number assigned by me.
- Article headline (title)
- Publishing website
- Publication date
- Retrieval date
- Author (if known)
- Uniform Resource Locator (URL) in the form of a hyperlink
- Search engine or method
- Any notes that I thought were necessary, including the presence of paywalls, duplicate articles, or alternative headlines.

I also recorded any new search terms that came to light – as mentioned earlier, these did not help to identify many new articles.

I repeated all the above searches, using *NewzText Plus*, following the same process and strategy. This returned a good number of articles that were not returned by the *Google* search, however it also missed a number of articles that *Google* included. I am confident that between these two search indexes, almost all relevant articles from the period have been detected. A total of 241 potentially relevant articles were collected by this search strategy.

The text from each article was copied into a plain text (.txt) file using *Notepad++* text editor software. I stripped out any elements that were not required for my analysis, with the intention of only using the raw content of the article. I removed advertising and

promotional material, image captions – these almost always repeated information from the main article text, and any “read more”, or “related article” links. This left just the headline, byline or author (when specified), publication date and body text. I saved each article using the unique identifier number from the collection spreadsheet as a file name. I included paywalled articles in my analysis, using a subscription to the relevant publication, and processing these in the same way as openly available articles. I excluded any articles which were exact textual duplicates of articles already included in the collection.

This thorough approach to searching and data collection resulted in an accurate and reliable data set, which was consistently arranged, and in an appropriate format, ready for analysis. The search process captured as many relevant articles as possible with the resources available, and obvious non-relevant articles were discarded. This was further refined in the coding phases. I took care to thoroughly document my searching and data collection processes, to support the validity of my data.

6.3. Data Analysis

I matched sections of the text in each article against a coding scheme which categorised the various themes and topics present in the articles. I used an inductive approach to coding – creating and assigning categories and sub-categories based on the articles being analysed, allowing the categories to “emerge” – rather than a deductive approach using pre-existing coding categories from the literature. The intention of this strategy of emergent coding is to ground the coding framework in the article data, reflecting the themes present (Drisko & Maschi, 2015, p.103). In a more practical sense, there was not a recent coding framework available that would closely fit my data, especially not in the New Zealand context. As inductive coding is a fluid process, the coding framework was modified and updated as coding progressed through the articles (Drisko & Maschi, 2015, p.105). I undertook two coding passes of all articles, with a phase of reflection and adjustment after the first phase of coding. This ensured the coding was an iterative process, providing accurate results, and new insights with each pass.

The coding of articles was completed using *NVivo* – a commonly used software application for qualitative content analysis, which enables the creation of flexible coding frameworks, querying and visualisation of results, and logging of all actions undertaken on the data, to increase transparency and reproducibility of results (Kaefer et. al, 2015). I imported all articles into *NVivo*, then one-by-one read each article, assigning relevant passages to a code – or multiple codes. Some articles covered multiple themes, while others were more specific. The codes were refined, merged, and adjusted as the process went on. To make the process manageable, I tried to keep to a small number of broad top-level codes, with child codes under each as required. I separated out any articles that – in my opinion – did not meet the threshold for inclusion in my analysis. The reasons for this included having only a “brief” mention of archives in an otherwise irrelevant article, or being more concerned with library materials, or current (non-archival) public records. I also chose not to include several articles about Fairfax media – former owners of *Stuff* – and their issues with an American digitisation service, as these were only tenuously linked to “archives” in my chosen context. Once all non-relevant articles were excluded there was a total of 177 articles included in the analysis.

In addition to identifying themes, I also coded the general sentiment – or tone – of each article on a scale (*very positive/moderately positive/moderately negative/very negative*), based on my impression when reading the article.

Finally, I coded the types of archival institution discussed in each article, from a list of *Collecting Archive, Community or Regional Archive, Corporate or Organisation Archive, National Archive, and Personal Archive*.

After the first coding round was completed, I reviewed the results, and modified several of the codes to better reflect the operation and use of archives, and how they interact and engage with the public and other organisations. I added codes for two topical events – the Covid-19 pandemic, and the Royal Commission of Enquiry into Abuse in Care. I decided not to cut down the number of articles any further, there was now a good number of relevant articles, but still a manageable amount for the time and resources available for analysis.

The second round of coding was similar to the first. Each article was opened and re-read, and all existing coded passages of text were checked to ensure they still made sense after the changes that were made to the coding framework after round one was complete. Additional passages of text were added to any new or modified codes that were now relevant. I also checked that sentiment was coded correctly for each article. The result of this process or iteration was a clear coding framework which reflected the portrayal of archives by the press. At this point the coding framework was settled, and no further rounds of coding were necessary.

I used *NVivo* to create and export reports of the raw code data and details of associated articles, as well as creating coding matrixes comparing different codes with each other, and comparing codes with sentiment. I exported these matrixes and reports and used *Microsoft Excel* to manipulate them as necessary, ensuring the output was an accurate reflection of the themes present in the articles.

6.4. Limitations of the Methodology

My research approach does have several limitations. Firstly, qualitative content analysis can identify the themes and sentiments present in the data, but is primarily descriptive – summarising and contextualising data, but unlikely to identify what causes the themes and sentiments to occur (Drisko & Maschi, 2015, p.90). In a practical sense, there is a possibility that relevant articles may exist that are not indexed by search engines or media databases, which is a potential risk to the completeness of the data set. These articles, should they exist, would not be accessible to the public in any case, therefore would have minimal impact on findings regarding portrayal. I also noticed a “recency bias” in my collected articles – there appears to be more articles available via search from recent years when compared with the earlier years of my search period. I am unable to tell what causes this – there could be more articles published recently due to the majority of press publishing now being presented online, meaning less consideration for space on newspaper pages. It could also be due to increased interest in archives and subsequently increased press coverage. It is

possible there are gaps in the search indexes, or simply that not all articles from previous years are available in an online digital form, although there is nothing to suggest that the press databases are incomplete.

Finally, as I was the sole person responsible for the collection, coding, and analysis of data, there was the potential for unconscious bias in the selection and categorising of articles and their associated themes. I have attempted to mitigate this as far as possible by having a robust and well supported search strategy, consistent and specific conditions for article inclusion, and including detailed process documentation. Although it was not possible to use some of the accepted strategies to increase the reliability and validity of my qualitative data – such as using multiple people to code text, or triangulation with other data (Drisko & Maschi, 2015, p.108), I have followed good research practice as far as possible.

7. Results and Findings of Analysis

Once articles are coded, their themes and characteristics can be analysed and any patterns identified, however simply identifying themes in qualitative data does not necessarily lead to any meaningful output, and what matters is the interpretation of these themes and their connection into logical theories (Bazeley, 2009).

My final coding framework consisted of four primary codes – or pillars – each with several subcodes covering the full range of media portrayal:

- Collection Management
- Community Relations
- Organisation Functions and Resources
- User Experience and Access

These pillars summarize the types of activities undertaken by archival institutions, and the ways they communicate about these activities with the public and other entities.

In addition to these archival pillars, there were three further top-level codes, each covering an overriding characteristic of the articles, but not necessarily describing the article content directly:

- Topical Events
- Institution Type
- Article Sentiment

The full coding framework is included in *Appendix 1*.

7.1. Collection Management

Management of collections was a theme present in over 60% of the articles (n=111). This included sub-themes consistent with the core functions of archival management, especially the acquisition, storage, and maintenance of physical and digital collections (Williams, 2006, p.19). *Acquisition and Accession*, *Digitisation*, and *Preservation* (both *Physical* and *Digital*) were popular topics. *Arrangement and Description* was a theme only mentioned in a single article – this perhaps reflects its nature as more of an internal process, compared with the other external services where there could be more of an intersection with the public interest.

Code	Number of Articles*
Collection Management	111
Acquisition and Accession	33
Arrangement and Description	1
Digitisation	45
Handling Iwi Collections	6
Preservation	46
<i>Digital Preservation</i>	<i>19</i>
Public Recordkeeping	11
Security	15
<i>Data and/or Privacy Breach</i>	<i>12</i>

Table 7.1 – Collection Management code results (*some articles feature multiple codes).

Digitisation was discussed or mentioned in a quarter (n=45) of all articles analysed and is a major topical theme with considerable interest from the media. Articles regarding digitisation intersected with many other coded themes, across different types of archival institutions. The most common of these intersections were with *Online Access* (by collection users), *Outreach*, and *Digital Preservation*.

Articles on *Preservation* (n=46) included 19 articles discussion or mentioning digital preservation, meaning the majority of preservation articles were concerned with preservation actions on physical collections. Although it seems like we live and work in a digital world, archives still hold vast physical collections and the number of press articles covering physical preservation appear to reflect that. Most of the digital preservation articles were published from 2019 onwards, suggesting that this is a growing area of interest.

Security of collections also appears to be a growing concern, with only a single article mentioning it prior to 2019, and then 14 articles since, reflecting a number of high-profile data breaches and security incidents affecting archival institutions. Whether this is the beginning of a long-term escalation of security concerns is yet to be seen.

7.2. Community Relations

Unsurprisingly, many articles (n=85) discussed how archives interact with their surrounding community, whether the general public, other institutions, or particular groups. Sub-themes include *Outreach* (n=46), *Using Collections for Research* (n=26), and *Collaboration Between Institutions* (n=20).

There were many examples of archival institutions utilizing press articles for outreach to the community – including promotion of events, exhibitions, and collection items, and requesting content for their collections. This demonstrates a fairly large use of the press as a communication channel, at least for some institutions. Outreach articles covered both digital and physical collections, and spanned the different types of archives.

Code	Number of Articles*
Community Relations	85
Collaboration between Institutions	20
Gaps in Archival Knowledge	10
Māori	9
Outreach	46
<i>Display and Use of Collections</i>	24
<i>Public Events</i>	18
<i>Request for Content</i>	12
Using Collections for Research	26

Table 7.2 – Community Relations code results (*some articles feature multiple codes).

The use of collections for research is also a relatively common theme in articles, often as part of a larger article where a researcher has called on the services of an archive, reflecting the importance of access to archives as a research tool. These researchers are often a primary source of feedback (both positive and negative) on the user experience.

Finally, collaboration articles mostly focus on a small number of critical projects, especially those involving public funding and large public institutions. Several articles discuss collaboration between these larger institutions and regional libraries or museums. There is little discussion in the press of collaboration between smaller institutions, outside of those which share the same premises or parent organisation.

7.3. Organisation Functions and Resources

This theme (n=95) includes the functions of institutions that do not involve the direct management of archival material, although they of course influence its effectiveness. The largest sub-theme is *Buildings and Physical Repositories* (n=43), closely followed by – and with a lot of crossover between – *Financial* (n=35). Articles mentioning *Personnel* (n=23) – covering both paid staff and volunteers – are also common. Less common is discussion of *Political Relations*, and *Vendor Relations* (regarding provision of services by third parties).

Articles around buildings and physical repositories are another example of press interest, potentially due to the use of public funding and a desire for public institutions to achieve

good value for money in their investments. There is also a promotional element to these articles, with archives advertising the intention to build, upgrade, or modify their physical spaces, and celebrating when work is complete. On a less positive note, there are also articles bemoaning the poor condition of physical repositories, sometimes repeatedly over several years.

Code	Number of Articles*
Organisation Functions and Resources	95
Buildings and Physical Repositories	43
Financial	35
History of Archives	9
Personnel	34
<i>Volunteers</i>	<i>11</i>
Political Relations	10
Vendor Relations	8

Table 7.3 – Organisation Functions and Resources code results (*some articles feature multiple codes).

This leads into the sub-theme of *Finances*, with funding of archival institutions being a regular source of concern for the press, and archives themselves. Funding is also celebrated by archives when approved or received, whether from public funds or private donations.

Personnel articles focus in most cases on the achievements and hard work of both paid staff and volunteers, as well as their experiences in the world of archives. Some articles profile archivists and other repository staff, either introducing them to the community when new in a particular role, or recognising a long career.

7.4. User Experience

The theme of *User Experience* – whether positive or negative – was present in around 30% of articles (n=54). These articles can be important for archival institutions, as access to collections is a driving principle of archives, with all other archival management functions arguably contributing to the goal of making archival materials available for use (Wilson, 2006, p.117). Press articles on user experience are an actual expression of how users

interact with the archive, and how satisfied they are with their interactions, providing a measure of whether access to collections is meeting the expectations of the users.

Code	Number of Articles*
User Experience	54
Frustration	9
Online Access	20
Physical Access	17
Restrictions	15
Searching and Finding Aids	10

Table 7.4 – User Experience code results (*some articles feature multiple codes).

There were similar levels of coverage of *Online Access* (n=20), and *Physical Access* (n=17), with both being important. Some articles talked of users hitting *Restrictions* on access (n=15) whether justified – as in restricted collection items, or not – such as technical problems with systems. While access issues can be a source of frustration, there is also a positivity around the relatively open access to collections in New Zealand, especially digital collections.

7.5. Topical Events

Topical events outside of archives did not have a massive impact on press coverage, something that was somewhat unexpected. The Covid-19 pandemic was only mentioned in seven articles, either discussing institutions collecting data about the pandemic response and peoples' experiences, or information about physical access restrictions. The effects of the pandemic on archives appeared to be minimal when compared with the disruption faced by wider society.

The only other topical issue that has some impact on archives is the ongoing Abuse in Care Royal Commission of Inquiry (n=6). All these articles were concerned with privacy or data breaches, however the Commission of Inquiry is still ongoing.

7.6. Sentiment Analysis

All articles were coded to a sentiment, based on the overall tone of the article. For most articles this was clear, but for articles containing both positive and negative sentiments, a judgement was made on which sentiment was more prevalent. The results of the sentiment coding by number of articles and percentage of total articles is shown in *Table 7.5*.

Sentiment	Number of articles	Percentage with sentiment (%)
Very Positive	60	33.90
Mostly Positive	73	41.24
Positive (Total)	133	75.14
Very Negative	11	6.21
Moderately Negative	33	18.65
Negative (Total)	44	24.86

Table 7.5. Sentiment coding summary.

7.6.1. Overall Sentiment

Overall sentiment or tone of articles was 75.14% positive and 24.86% negative. This suggests that the press is generally publishing articles that positively portray archives, but around one in four articles are negative in tone. When the sentiment data for each article is compared with the type of archival institution discussed in the article, or the themes explored by each article, the picture is a little more complex.

7.6.2. Sentiment vs. Type of Institution

Articles discussing *Regional or Community Archives*, *Collecting Archives* and *Corporate or Organisation Archives* were primarily positive, with negative articles mostly restricted to

national-level institutions, and to a lesser extent regional (public) archives. This does reflect the type of articles published about different archive types, with public institutions receiving more scrutiny of their operations.

Archive Type	n Positive	% Positive	n Negative	% Negative
Collecting	30	93.75	2	6.25
Community or Regional	58	85.29	10	14.71
Corporate or Organisation	14	82.35	3	17.65
National	37	56.06	29	43.94
Personal	3	100	0	0.00

Table 7.6 – Archive Type vs. Sentiment.

Although national-level archives were portrayed a lot less positively, there were still more positive articles than negative ones overall.

7.6.3. Sentiment vs. Theme

Again reflecting the overall positivity of the press portrayal, the aggregate sentiment of most identified themes in the articles tends to the positive. Themes that were portrayed particularly positively included *Collection Management* themes like *Acquisition*, *Digitisation* and *Preservation* (both *Physical* and *Digital*). *Community Relations* (*Outreach*, *Events*, *Use of Collections*, etc.) also scored as highly positive. Articles about the *User Experience* of online collections were also highly correlated with positive sentiment.

The main article themes with a strong correlation to negative sentiment, or primarily negative in tone were topics of *Public Recordkeeping* and *Security* – including *Data or Privacy Breaches*, as well as *Frustrations* with the experience of using the collections, both generally and in the context of access restrictions, whether these are justified or not. Often this negative sentiment was related to large and complex projects, or notable events such as data breaches or system outages.

7.7. Intersection of Themes

Identifying and analysing the intersections and commonalities between themes can lead to further insights and a substantial picture of the data being analysed (Bazeley, 2009). It is beyond the scope of this project to consider every possible connection between every identified theme or sub-theme, but there are times where connections and commonalities between themes stand out – whether between the four primary pillars, or between otherwise unrelated sub-themes, or a combination of both.

7.7.1. Buildings and Physical Repositories vs. Finances

As briefly noted in *Section 7.3*, articles discussing physical repositories and other archive buildings often also discussed finances. These articles tended to focus on building projects – either new or upgraded facilities – and the use of public funds for these projects, as well as individual and corporate donations and sponsorship of institutions and projects. There is some hint of funding difficulties and frustration from the media – on behalf of politicians and the public – over cost overruns and other issues around the allocation of funding.

7.7.2. Digitisation

As one of the most common themes detected in the analysis, digitisation commonly intersected with a number of other themes within the articles. Online access to archival materials often goes hand-in-hand with digitisation projects, with archives promoting the benefits of digitisation in allowing availability of more collection items to a wider range of users, especially those who are unable to access the collections physically. In some cases, there appears to be a genuine joy expressed in this increased level of access both from archivists and users. Similarly, outreach and digitisation are often connected, with archives displaying digitised collections, holding seminars and events around the theme of

digitisation, and providing advice for members of the public who may be looking to digitize their own personal collections.

Digitisation is also mentioned as a digital preservation technique, protecting fragile or valuable materials – both paper-based and born-digital – from further degradation in a kind of race against time. There is a sense of urgency and several large-scale digitisation projects. There is little discussion of the drawbacks or challenges of digitisation at scale. The actual personnel – both paid staff and volunteers – that work with archives are not mentioned in the context of digitisation at all.

Digitisation projects are being undertaken across all types of archival institutions, although collecting archives are the most common to feature in articles on digitisation. Ironically, considering the subject of my research project, many of these digitisation projects involve newspapers, in large part due to the popularity of the National Library's *Papers Past* online collection. Collecting archives also see digitisation as a way to deal with space constraints in their physical repositories.

7.7.3. Acquisition and Accession

Articles concerning acquisition and accession tended to stand on their own with few links to other themes, with the exception of *Outreach*. They were primarily concerned with donations of items from members of the public, institutions, and other sources, and discussion about the circumstances of these acquisitions. These articles tended to be celebratory in nature, with archives promoting and sharing details of their latest acquisitions. The outreach articles were either *Requests for Content*, with explanation of the acquisition process, or promotion of events such as open days and tours, where some details of the internal workings of archives were discussed.

7.7.4. Handling Iwi Collections vs. Relations with Māori

There was little crossover between the few articles that mention Iwi collections – generally held by national or regional archives on behalf of Iwi, and articles discussing the relationship with the Māori community. Almost all articles mentioning Māori were detailing Iwi involvement in the *Tāhuhu* project to upgrade the Archives New Zealand building. There seems to be a recent awareness of the importance of working alongside Iwi, at least at the level of national projects.

8. Discussion

Articles relating to archives have been regularly and consistently published by the press in Aotearoa New Zealand over the past ten years. These articles cover a variety of themes, including both internal and external factors that affect the management and use of archives, and are used as a tool of promotion and outreach for archival institutions. The sentiment of press articles varies from very positive to very negative, although overall the majority of articles are positive in tone.

Some of the themes identified in the analysis have the potential to affect how the public perceives archives, so awareness of these themes and how they are portrayed could be a useful for archival institutions when planning engagement with the public, or interacting with the press, whether in favourable or unfavourable circumstances.

8.1. Sentiment of Press Portrayal

The earlier literature presented a portrayal of archives that relied on outdated stereotypes, and covered archives in a cynical way (Boylan, 1985; Craig, 1995; Badovinac and Južnič, 2011), suggesting a distrust of archivists and archival institutions by the news media which was largely based on a lack of understanding of archives and general frustration with

governmental authority. In contrast, the sentiment of press articles in New Zealand appears to be generally positive in nature with negative sentiment often restricted to frustrations around access to collections, concerns over public funding, and high-profile security incidents where public data is at risk. Any literature on press portrayal of archives is quite old, so the change in perception could be due to increased understanding of archives by the press, or other factors specific to the press – such as a change in approach, funding, or readership demographics – that may have also changed the portrayal of other sectors in parallel with archives. Geographical and cultural factors might also be at play, with little literature on the New Zealand context available, suggesting New Zealand could have always been different to countries like the United States of America or United Kingdom.

The media presented a very positive image of regional and community archives, with local press championing and promoting their local archival institutions, and celebrating new additions to the collections, promoting events and other types of outreach, and supporting the staff and volunteers who kept the archives running. The regional press appear to value their local archives and work in partnership to promote and support them.

National Institutions were still the subject of more positive articles than negative, but the balance was much closer to neutral. National archives and large collecting institutions absorb a lot more public funding, and are involved in larger and more ambitious projects, so appear to have a lot more scrutiny from the press. It appears this increased scrutiny is largely justified, and even negative articles rarely attacked institutions or attempted to spread misinformation, instead reporting on public and political concerns with funding, governance, and user access to collections. These articles were balanced to an extent with positivity around collection management and community outreach, portraying a curiosity around new or interesting collection items, and the embracing of technology – especially in the digital space – to manage and preserve collections in the future, while providing new forms of access and increasing the availability and awareness of archival collections to researchers and the general public.

Overall, the sentiment analysis outlined above suggests that outdated stereotypes and a lack of understanding are no longer contributing factors to the portrayal of archives by the

press, and consequently the perception of these institutions by the public in New Zealand. These stereotypes and a lack of understanding from the media were often found in press portrayal of other types of knowledge institutions, so it may be that there has been a shift in portrayal across the sector which may warrant further investigation. Instead, the sentiment expressed by the press appears to be relatively fair and supportive of archives while still being willing to identify and report on issues and failings when necessary.

8.2. Recurring Themes of Press Portrayal

Archives provide a collective memory for their associated community, whether on a local scale or across society. They must strive as far as possible to maintain their collections in the context of the community that created them – not just via archival description with metadata and documentation, but by keeping an open dialogue with the public (Battley, 2019). The written press remains an important way to maintain this dialogue, even while considering the changes in the media landscape, and wider disruption in communications technology in recent years.

As noted in *Sections 7.1-7.4*, the most common themes identified in press articles concerning archives included digitisation of collections, acquisition of collection items, information and concerns around buildings and physical repositories, public and private finance, access to collections, and outreach to – and interaction with – the wider community. The presence of these themes, in conjunction with the sentiment of the articles can shed some light on how the media sees archives.

Digitisation of collections is covered regularly in articles, and coverage of digitisation commonly intersects with a range of other themes. The prevalence of these articles appears to aptly parallel the changing nature of media of all kinds, with archival institutions of all types and sizes rushing to digitise collection items, with the dual objectives of ongoing preservation in the face of technical obsolescence, and provision of faster and broader access to collections for a demanding and connected public. The portrayal of digitisation – both as a preservation action and to improve access – is almost unanimously positive, which

may influence the perception that digitisation is a “win-win”, glossing over the considerable resource costs – both financially and in terms of staff or volunteers, and the ongoing and complex considerations of maintaining and preserving digital collections in the long term, including data storage, maintaining integrity of files, and managing obsolete formats and platforms. These considerations are well documented and understood within digital preservation circles (Digital Preservation Coalition, 2015) but may not be familiar to collection users and the public. Provision of access to digital objects also has a cost to institutions and requires a degree of technical expertise to implement and maintain. Again, those interacting with online collections may not be aware of the technical complexity required to make it all work safely and effectively.

Articles discussing acquisition of collection items are relatively common, and almost all positive – the few relevant articles with negative sentiment bemoaned the lack of space for further collection storage. These articles can often read like advertisements for archives, with details of the latest acquisitions giving a peek into the collection. Some are likely pushed to the media as press releases, and often also have themes of outreach to the community, requesting content or advertising various events. Outreach is critical for most archives – again building the relationship with the community, and in the case of collecting archives, leading to the donation of further collection items. There does not seem to be any obvious negatives or risks to archives from the publishing of these kind of articles, and in fact there may be positive effects on the perception of archival institutions.

The media – likely on behalf of the public – appear to have an ongoing concern around the allocation and subsequent use of public funds to fund archive projects, especially those regarding physical repository buildings and other major construction projects. These projects are often undertaken in combination with other institutions, especially libraries – the concept of convergence of different institutions in the GLAM sector has been a talking point in recent years (Kann-Rasmussen et al., 2019), see also *Section 8.3*. As one of the primary ideals of the press – at least in theory – is to hold the public service to account (Myllylahti & Treadwell, 2022), it is understandable that there is such a focus on these large projects, and a willingness on the part of the media to investigate and report on any cost overruns, delays, or other circumstances where use of public resources is less than optimal.

In some articles, researchers, professional associations, and other members of the community have used press articles to call out the poor condition of certain physical repositories, and pushed for resolution, in one case in multiple articles over several years. Having said this, there are still more positive articles than negative on the subject of buildings and physical repositories. Archives have celebrated milestones in the construction and refurbishment of new facilities, provided progress updates, and occasionally given the public a peek into their repository operations. These articles may help to allay fears from the public, reassuring them that money is being well spent, and progress is being made.

It makes sense that articles discussing buildings and repositories often mentioned or focused on financial topics as well, both in a positive and negative sense. Outside of this, finances were often mentioned in the context of grants or donations, either already received by an archival institution, or in the process of being requested. Many archives – and other GLAM institutions – may struggle to maintain both public and private funding, so can use the press for advocacy and promotional purposes to increase awareness of financial needs. It is important to advertise what is being achieved to stakeholders, in the interests of maintaining or increasing existing funding levels (Williams, 2006, p.147).

The pillar of *User Experience* had the lowest percentage (58.9%) of positive articles of the four main pillars identified by my analysis. This reflected user frustrations with finding aids, reading rooms, and restrictions on access to collections, some of which were justified by legitimate use restrictions of collections, temporary actions due to security breaches, and in once case acts of vandalism against collection items. Other restrictions and understandable frustrations were due to a lack of resources causing slow response times, and issues with systems and software. Interestingly, articles discussing online access were positive overall, even when considering frustrations with finding aids and systems. As also noted for digitisation, there seems to be a lot of positive interest from both the press and the public around the increased access to collections that new technologies and processes are enabling. This increased availability of collections online provides new ways for users to interact with collections and allows the possibility of much more serendipitous discovery of collection items and related knowledge. Improved access, whether via institutional finding aids, digital repositories, or shared discovery platforms, may be acting as a kind of outreach

to drive engagement with archival institutions, over and above the traditional outreach programs and functions that many institutions undertake.

Outreach in a more traditional sense is already commonly undertaken by archival institutions via the press, at both national and local levels. Outreach articles are almost all positive, advertising and promoting the organisations, their collections, and events they may be running. It is likely most of these articles have been supplied to the press as press releases or other communication, meaning most archives are already aware of the potential uses of news articles for self-promotion, and are engaging with the press at least on some level. The articles mentioning outreach also give insights into the types of outreach activities that are being run and promoted by archival institutions, mostly displays and exhibitions, but also workshops, tours, and talks. Requests for collection items are another type of outreach, intersecting and leading to acquisition of new collection items. It is relatively common for archives – primarily at the local or regional level – to appeal to the public for donations of items that may be suitable for their collections – usually for a specific project, which can involve either physical or digital items, or a combination of both. Clearly the press is seen as an important way for archival institutions to communicate with their current and potential users, as well as the public at large.

8.3. Other Observations

While not directly evident in the content of articles themselves, an observation that arose from the analysis is the crossover between archives and other cultural institutions, especially libraries and museums. Often housed in the same building, arranged as part of the same parent organisation, or even sharing the same staff, it can be a source of confusion when determining the nature of an institution. Examples of this include city libraries which also include a local archive – collecting public records and historic documents. Community archives can be almost museum-like and somewhat flexible in their collecting approach, including objects and ephemera in addition to documents and records. Digital collections and aggregation services seem to blur this distinction even further which could lead to

confusion from the public about the nature of archival institutions and their responsibilities and actions.

8.4. Summary of Findings

One of the prevailing themes in literature on the portrayal of archives in the press and other media is that there is a poor understanding of the role of archives – and archivists – in society, with a generally uninformed and unengaged public. (Vårheim, 2020; Oliver & Daniel, 2015). It seems that press articles in New Zealand are providing some information in this area, with regular publication of articles covering the various ways that archives are interacting with their communities, and discussion around topics that have a direct effect on society – use of public funding, acquisition of collection items that reflect the community, and preservation topics. Areas where there still appears to be a lack of information presented included the inner workings of archives, especially the process of arrangement and description, in many cases archives seem to be presented as a “black box” that takes in items and eventually shares them again, either online or in the physical world. There is little discussion in the press of the unique protocols involved with Māori collections, or those for handling sensitive and restricted information.

In addition to this, the wealth of cultural heritage and knowledge that is held by archives does give them – and the staff that manage the collections – considerable power, making decisions on what is preserved or not preserved, as well as managing access. It is argued that not only do archives have to respect and maintain the context of the collective memory they hold on behalf of society (Battley, 2019), they also have a responsibility to have open dialogue with their community, both steps that can help to alleviate this power imbalance (Greene, 2009). It’s impossible to know from my analysis if there is an open dialogue – in both directions – between archives and their community, but there does appear to be a high level of engagement from the press, and subsequently those who read the articles on archival topics. Positive and informative content is pushed out from archives to the public, informing them at least superficially of some of the actions being undertaken by archives.

Counter to this, there is also a degree of accountability on behalf of the public, with investigative articles exposing failures, cost overruns and other items of public interest, in a generally fair and justified manner.

The dated and inaccurate stereotypes and image problem of archives and the wider GLAM sector that was frequently analysed and discussed (Boylan, 1985; Craig, 1995), and which seemed to already be fading somewhat in later literature (Robinson, 2006; Shaw, 2010; Bull, 2015), are not generally represented in my analysis – the concept of surly “gatekeepers” of information (Oliver & Daniel, 2015) does not register at all in any of the analysed articles, instead there seems to be a respect, and sometimes even admiration for archivists and archival institutions, and plenty of hype and excitement around new technologies such as digitisation and accessible online repositories. Negativity and frustration are more aligned with difficulties in accessing and using collections due to technical problems and inflexible processes, rather than any kind of issue with the staff themselves. The cynical and untrusting media environment noted by Craig (1995), is not one that seems to exist in New Zealand currently, and nothing in my analysis suggests any attempt by the press to mislead the public about the nature or activities of archives, or to perpetuate stereotypes of any kind. Instead, they portray archives as imperfect but highly valuable guardians of cultural heritage, with an eye on the management and preservation of collections into the future, but not always the resources or processes to achieve this aim.

8.5. Implications for Archives and the GLAM Sector

Archives and other GLAM institutions in New Zealand can benefit from a relatively free and trusted press, which appears to present a fair portrayal of their activities, although there may be differences in the portrayal of other parts of the GLAM sector that are outside the scope of this study. Institutions have the ability to use – and in many cases are already using – the press to promote their activities to a wide audience, balanced by the press having the ability to hold archival and GLAM institutions to account for their management of resources, and provision of access to the public. This relationship seems to be more harmonious than

those studied in other countries and different time periods, suggesting that this current state of affairs may not always be present, and it is worth maintaining and nurturing a positive relationship with the press, as they are trusted by the public and therefore are a primary influence on how the public perceives the subjects of press coverage. Positive and engaging press coverage of archives could lead to higher levels of community engagement, and in turn access to greater resources in future, whereas negative coverage could turn things towards an untrusting, uninterested public – ideally the former is maintained.

8.6. Suggestions for Future Research

Accurately confirming whether the portrayal of archives is truthful or reflects the reality of archival institutions is outside the scope of this research project but could be a candidate for further investigation. It would require data collection from within the archives themselves for comparison, either by content analysis of policies and practices, or via survey, interviews, or other investigative methods.

It may also be possible to look deeper into the coding results and findings with further qualitative analysis and connection of themes in addition to those covered in this project, or deeper analysis of the themes and findings that have already been discussed.

Similar research could be conducted in other countries, to ascertain whether the portrayal of archives is different in countries with different media landscapes and different socio-cultural contexts. Similarly, it may be possible to analyse te reo Māori media in New Zealand and note similarities and differences from the portrayal discussed in my analysis. There may also be scope for similar studies across other parts of the GLAM sector, with potential benefits for institutions in those areas.

The findings in this research project could be compared against actual readership data from news media sources, using page views or other metrics to investigate how real-life readers are being exposed to the themes discussed, and what influence this may have.

9. Conclusion

Archives have been portrayed in recent years by the New Zealand press in a generally positive and engaging way, with press coverage balancing promotion with critique, and no sign of deliberate misinformation or cynicism present. Dated stereotypes have largely disappeared, and topical subjects like digitisation, public funding, and collaborative projects are presented in press articles, hopefully engaging and capturing the interest of the public, in turn driving increased knowledge of archival activities. The relationship between archives and the press can have mutual benefits, but like any relationship, requires a degree of nurturing and maintenance to be productive and successful going forward.

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Sam Gruschow

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Appendix 1. Coding Results Summary

<i>Code</i>	<i>Number of Articles*</i>	<i>Total number of References</i>	<i>Percentage of positive articles (%)</i>
Collection Management	111	185	75.54
Acquisition and Accession	33	39	89.74
Arrangement and Description	1	1	100.00
Digitisation	45	52	94.23
Handling Iwi Collections	6	7	57.14
Preservation	46	55	85.45
<i>Digital Preservation</i>	19	22	95.45
Public Recordkeeping	11	11	36.36
Security	15	20	0.00
<i>Data and/or Privacy Breach</i>	12	17	0.00
Community Relations	85	135	89.23
Collaboration between Institutions	20	20	85.00
Gaps in Archival Knowledge	10	13	69.23
Maori	9	11	72.73
Outreach	46	63	93.44
<i>Display and Use of Collections</i>	24	29	89.66
<i>Public Events</i>	18	19	100.00
<i>Request for Content</i>	12	14	92.86
Using Collections for Research	26	28	100.00
Organisation Functions and Resources	95	157	63.01
Buildings and Physical Repositories	43	25	63.46
Financial	35	43	62.79
History of Archives	9	11	81.82
Personnel	34	43	93.02
<i>Volunteers</i>	11	15	93.33
Political Relations	10	13	7.69
Vendor Relations	8	10	20.00
User Experience	54	79	58.90
Frustration	9	9	11.11
Online Access	20	23	95.65
Physical Access	17	22	63.64
Restrictions	15	15	26.67
Searching and Finding Aids	10	10	40.00
Topical Events	-	-	-
Abuse in Care Royal Commission	6	6	0.00
Covid-19 Pandemic	7	8	100.00

continued...

Code	Number of Articles*	Total number of References	Percentage of positive articles (%)
Type of Institution	-		
Collecting Archive	32	-	93.75
Community or Regional Archive	68	-	85.29
Corporate or Organisation Archive	16	-	85.35
National Archive	64	-	56.06
Personal Archive	3	-	100.00
NOT RELEVANT - Article not included in Analysis	63	-	-
Brief mention of "archives"	42	-	-
Current public records	3	-	-
Duplicate article	1	-	-
Fairfax photos	9	-	-
Library materials	7	-	-

**Number of articles per top level code does not necessarily total the sum of child codes as some articles have multiple codes mentioned.*

Key:

Primary Code

Child Code

Sub-Child Code