

ABSTRACT

Exploring Aotearoa Queer History through X Museum Objects

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How might taonga held by Aotearoa museums be used to construct historical narratives of Rainbow Communities (in Aotearoa) to recognise the legacy and stories of Queer people for future generations? This practice-led thesis uses taonga in Aotearoa museums to construct historical narratives of Aotearoa Rainbow Communities, recognizing Queer legacies and stories for future generations. The twentieth century saw significant milestones for Rainbow Communities globally and in Aotearoa, including the removal of the death penalty, protests for rights, homosexual law reform, the AIDS epidemic, and partial recognition under the Human Rights Act. Queer and Aotearoa histories have been understudied, leading to a perceived loss of Queer communities and elders, and a fear of losing their stories. This research, situated within queer museums and Aotearoa histories, aims to preserve these histories for future generations. It serves Queer researchers and Rainbow Communities, helping to tell our stories. The research utilizes post-positivist theories (Contextual, Feminist, Queer, and Social Identity) and explores these histories through museum objects, employing curatorial, queer, object history, and chronological practices. This is a multi-year project which several phases. As a practice-based project within design and history, it will also cover artefact writing, critical writing, and making practices. This presentation will introduce the project, discuss limitations and practical boundaries, researcher safety, and working with vulnerable communities. It will then cover the project phase and introduce a network of community practice.