

The University of Southern California Journal of Film and Television Criticism

SPECTATOR

Transgender Media

Roxanne Samer, Special Issue Editor

The University of Southern California Journal of Film and Television Criticism

SPECTATOR

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Quinlan Miller and Erica Rand

Hot for TV, Hot for Ann B.: Ann B. Davis, Queer Attractions, and Trans Media

Abstract

This piece presents an interpersonal archive in tribute to the actor Ann B. Davis (1926-2014), an archive located on YouTube, in memory, and in the more traditional document repositories of institutionalized archives. While Davis was gender-conforming enough, by racialized, white supremacist standards, to find employment, notably as a cast member of television sitcoms *The Bob Cummings Show* (NBC/CBS 1955-59) and *The Brady Bunch* (ABC 1969-1974), Davis generally appeared as gender-nonconforming against the particular ideals of desirability represented by other characters and media personalities. The authors use a dialogue format to think about how histories of watching, listening, repurposing, and fandom work to identify, create, and shape trans media and a trans media archive. Considering their distinct but overlapping attractions to Davis as circuits of queer desire, the authors suggest that the trans dynamics of these circuits include not simply the fictional narratives of transgender characters but also the performances of characters, like those played by Davis, whose gender nonconformity in context draws out the structures and dimensions of gender normativities and cisnormativities.

The archive is often conceived as a physical site where people find materials already acquired, categorized, and managed by others. We share a different kind of archive: an interpersonal archive in tribute to Ann B. Davis (1926-2014), an actor we had separately found integral to our critical lives and enticing to our erotic lives. Davis is best known today for playing Alice Nelson, the live-in housekeeper to the blended family of the ABC sitcom *The Brady Bunch* (1969-1974). But she had achieved success in series television long before, receiving a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in 1960. That concrete honorific followed two Emmys from four nominations for her role as Schultzy, a core character in *The Bob Cummings Show* (NBC/CBS 1955-59), a series known in syndication and re-released commercially as *Love that Bob*.¹ Clearly, Davis was gender-conforming enough, in terms of racialized normativities, to find employment.² Yet on both *Bob Cummings* and *The Brady Bunch*, as well as in other contexts, Davis appeared as gender-nonconforming against the particular ideals of desirability represented by other characters and media personalities.

Gender nonconformity and our attraction to it is the basis of our archive, which grew out of love, lust, fandom, and research. Located on YouTube,

in memory, and in the more traditional document repositories of institutionalized archives, this is an archive as queerly formed as we are: a trans fag on the Gen X-Millennial cusp and a non-trans femme in her fifties who fell for each other at a TV conference eight years ago.³ Erica first encountered Davis on *The Brady Bunch*, which she began watching in middle school during its first run and repeatedly in reruns. In the show, a blonde white widow and brunette white widower “somehow form a family,” as the theme song recounts, each bringing to the union three children matched to them by gender and hair color.⁴ From this repetitive audio and visual reinforcement of binary gender, the show rehearses the white hetero norms of agency and



Screenshots from the end of *The Brady Bunch*'s opening theme song (Season 1), showing Davis inserted into the editors' choreography of Brady gazes, in which, looking straight out instead of at any of the others, does not participate. For recent viewers familiar with tidbits publicized from cast memoirs, some of these gazes, especially across the top row, might seem to prefigure sexual interest among the actors. Barry Williams (Greg) famously had a crush on TV mom Florence Henderson and hooked up with TV sister Maureen McCormick (Marcia).

attraction at work in the US television industry and its texts.⁵ Quinn, who had also seen *Brady Bunch* reruns and especially liked the Beastie Boys lyric about “Sam the butcher bringing Alice the meat” on the album “Paul’s Boutique,”⁶ became a Davis devotee with *Bob Cummings*, which he introduced Erica to almost sixty years after its debut, first through novelty DVDs and then YouTube, as the series migrated, but mostly in intimate conversation. In that program Davis’s character has a field day with gender and sexual conventions. Still, she is often similarly stranded, marked as an outsider amid the myth of femininity and masculinity as complementary opposites.

Our histories of being hot for TV and hot for Ann B. are distinct, and we made our Ann B. archives from different histories with archival work as well.⁷ Erica, whose early scholarly identity included “not an archivist,” had done some work in brick-and-mortar archives documenting the presence and subsequent classification of trans people at migration sites. Quinn, taught in graduate school that archival work could legitimate television scholarship, loves spending time in them, and revels in conventional archival work repurposed for genderqueer TV history. He is also acutely aware, however, of the barriers to doing that historical work, which may often include, for example, checking “male” or “female” on the access form and appealing to gatekeepers who lack basic facility, openness, or interest to work with queer and trans people and topics.⁸ Our linked but distinct collection practices related to Davis are responses to this situation. Common practices of categorization—including those that solidify trans archives—often function to obscure, erase, minimize, or misrepresent the queer gender in and in engagement with popular media. For example, documents of queer gender may be nestled in collections devoted to people or productions tacitly presumed to be and presented as (or not presumed to be but presented as) cisnormative or heteronormative. These aspects of trans culture are difficult but also a pleasure to document and maintain in intimate interaction and attraction.

This piece uses the dialogue that follows to think about how histories of watching, listening, repurposing, and fandom work to identify, create, and shape trans media and a trans media archive.

Scholars including Harry Benshoff, Judith Roof, and Patricia White have written of actors’ contributions to circuits of queer desire.⁹ We are interested in the trans dynamics of these circuits, thinking that trans dynamics include not simply the fictional narratives of transgender characters but also the performances of characters, like those played by Davis, whose gender nonconformity in context draws out the structures and dimensions of gender normativities and cisnormativities.¹⁰

We bring to this project an understanding that all who use and make archives bring embodied meaning to their projects. As Jamie A. Lee writes, “bodies are connected to archival bodies in distinct and meaningful ways that might, for example, transform understandings of evidential quality from ‘enduring’ to also ‘endearing.’”¹¹ We share the excitement of people who have encountered all manner of evidence of queer and trans lives and ways of being, including through some unexpected finds: the vibrator that Julie R. Enszer found in the Minnie Bruce Pratt Papers at Duke, calling forth “lesbian-feminism as a vital and vibrant theory and practice” embodied in Pratt as a poet, lover, and femme; the “lock of human hair...silver engraved baby cup...and other assorted artifacts” Zackary Drucker enumerates in “Bring Your Own Body: The Story of Lynn Harris”; and the single hair that Marika Cifor found attached to lipstick in a box of items belonging to Victoria Schneider, “a transgender woman, sex worker, lover of velvet jumpsuits, and sex workers’ rights advocate.”¹² For Cifor, “archival touches should be unavoidably intimate, provoking difficult and celebratory experiences and feelings reflective of the intimate and sometimes painful history and memory that made us who we are.”¹³ We agree.

We are also mindful, however, that who we are makes for desires and collection practices that present Davis differently than she presented herself professionally. Numerous articles drawing on the AP story announcing her death do cite a 1955 *LA Times* piece indicating Davis’s description and embrace of her distance from heteronormative feminine ideals. “I know at least a couple hundred glamour gals who are starving in this town. . . . I’d rather be myself and eating,” Davis said, adding that NBC “gave [her] eyebrows” despite her request that photographs of her not be retouched.¹⁴ We have

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also found occasional snippets that remind us not to presume what the absence of named sexual or romantic partners indicates.¹⁵ While presenting our own engagement with Davis's vibrant erotic charms and the interpretive connections that we make of her gender nonconformity in context, we work to avoid imposing nonconsensual sexuality and gender. We enlist her in the preservation of her legacy of queer gender from our own amalgamated perspectives, without knowing much about how she understood her own sexuality or gender. In the absence of self-declared identity categorization, our imposition of our own impressions means we likely stretch, reaching in our fondness for this unique comic genius, not only out of attraction but also perhaps in a desire to give back, to touch in return.

ERICA: I have long used *The Brady Bunch* to narrate my TV generation and the beginning of my life as a cultural critic. I was the character Marcia's age during the show's first run and knew that she shouldn't have come home with braces when she went to the dentist for a check-up.¹⁶ I was outraged. But instead of walking away, I continued to watch the Bradys with a mix of hostility, misery, relief, and pleasure in my (almost) distance—all of that magnified, a few seasons in, after I came to live in a household that people kept comparing to the Bradys' because in ours, too, a marriage had brought to the dinner table a lot of white kids biologically sorted by hair color.

Were we like the Bradys? Hardly. Things happened in my life that you would never find on *The Brady Bunch*. Can you imagine, I used to ask people, a synopsis in *TV Guide* for a *Brady Bunch* episode where "All the kids are grounded until someone returns grandma's prescription drugs"? Or the scene such an episode would have included, if it were true to my life, where the kids learn that the culprit, likely on the hunt for something like Valium, had actually stolen grandma's estrogen? Taking, sharing, discussing, or trading in either mind- or body-altering substances did not figure into Brady episodes. Nor did the Bradys seem to be people who might have (known that they) had friends searching for hormones.

QUINN: Are you sure they were so oblivious? And

what is people's stake in allowing them to remain so, in retrospective narration of the period? Trans people led public lives and trans characters appeared on TV. In fact, Robert Reed, who played Brady dad Mike, received an Emmy nomination in 1976, the year after *The Brady Bunch* ended, for a 1975 appearance in the role of trans woman Pat Caddison, a doctor on *Medical Center* (CBS, 1969-76).¹⁷ In the two-part episode Reed's character transitions on the job, and attempts to forge a relationship with her teenage child.

ERICA: You're right, and even on *The Brady Bunch*, queer gender recurs. What's more, it runs in the family. This is the premise of "Jan's Aunt Jenny," a 1972 episode from the third season. In this episode, Imogene Coca, another in the network of gender-nonconforming character actors in TV comedy, plays Jenny, the unconventional aunt of mom Carol (Florence Henderson). Marked as unconventional partly by her purported distance from feminine beauty, according to hierarchies presented as self-evident, Aunt Jenny looked as a child, an old photo reveals, just like beleaguered and bespectacled Brady middle-daughter Jan (Eve Plumb). Like Alice and Jenny, Jan is characterized by her own distance from heteronormative glory, represented within the sister trio by popular and talented older sister Marcia. Psychologically paralyzed by seeing the photograph, Jan dreads growing up to look like Aunt Jenny until she learns about the exciting life Aunt Jenny leads—complete with celebrity connections, world travel, a past in vaudeville, and a wealth of rejected marriage proposals (she's "too young to settle down")—and Aunt Jenny's decision to hang onto her looks rather than pursue the white Hollywood standards of appearance represented for her by Raquel Welch, who, she tells Jan, she'd rather look like, continuing: "Of course, I could have been beautiful if I'd wanted to," since plastic surgery "does wonders": "Noses, chins, they even can put in curves where there is nothing but straight highway."¹⁸ (Straight highway to curves: I'm taken by the way that Aunt Jenny's turn of phrase might apply to many gender journeys, to invoke the common troublesome metaphor, toward or away from cisnormativity.) The episode ends when Jan—whose most well known boyfriend until then had been George Glass, the imaginary boyfriend Jan invents to avoid looking like a loser—accepts a date for Saturday night on the condition



Davis (Schultzzy, right) reacts to Jennifer Elise Cox's Jan Brady in *The Brady Bunch Movie* (Thomas, 1995).

that Stevie realizes she isn't planning to settle down until at least 60.¹⁹

QUINN: We caught this episode entirely by chance, yet Coca's turn on *The Brady Bunch* tied so many of our distinct interests together, especially after we talked through our own takes on the details.

ERICA: Thanks to the expansive digital package we justify as necessary for work, we had come to expect insight from channel surfing, but what we gained from catching "Jan's Aunt Jenny" was huge. Watching that episode was the moment we realized that our different sensibilities and attractions met over Davis.

I was gripped by *The Brady Bunch*, but it didn't make me a Davis fan. I first fell for Davis when I saw her in *The Brady Bunch Movie*, a 1995 parody of the series that, like Faith A. and Jill Soloway's 1991 *Real Live Brady Bunch* cabaret, rewards precisely the mental archive that I solidified through two decades of watching reruns.²⁰ In the movie, Davis, named after the character Schultzzy from *Love that Bob*, appears as a truck driver who picks up the runaway Jan. As soon as I saw Davis behind the wheel, I figured that I was looking at a wonderful queer inside joke among the writers and the actor.

QUINN: That truck driver who effectively picked you up when she picked up Jan hooked you into a conversation that connects television creators and their audiences through collective self-reference to an archive of trans dynamics that are not entirely commensurate with trans people.

ERICA: A recurring plot in the *Brady Bunch* series is that Alice the maid couldn't get her boyfriend

Sam the Butcher to commit. In my fantasy, which mixed up Davis and her character, Alice doesn't want a guy anyway because Davis doesn't want a guy anyway.

But it wasn't just, or primarily, the implication through big rig outerwear that Alice or Davis is a lesbian, conventionally signaled by departure from femininity, that got me. (I liked that, too, and I enjoy that kind of signaling, although the femme erasure in its dominance bugs me.) What really pleased me was the notion that Davis finally got to present a gender expression in line with what I imagined her gender identity to be. In my story Alice's waist-cinching maid's uniform, like many required outfits, had shaped non-consensual gender—previously relieved only in the episode where Davis plays Alice's drill sergeant cousin, donning sweats to discipline the Bradys when Alice is out of town.²¹ It was the glorious butch shirt and trucker occupation that suited the real Ann B. I'm hot for scenes where people seem to be grooving on their gender presentation. But also, conveniently, I had imagined an authentic gender for Davis that matches my own taste for butch people.

Not that I thought about it, but I had no idea how this production of gender-queering roles for actors suited to those genders might work, until you introduced me to the 1950s Schultzzy on *The Bob Cummings Show*. You also taught me that I shouldn't take the pathetic-spinster interpretation that shows often feed us most overtly as the only intention of those shows' makers or the only way to interpret gender-nonconforming characters like those Davis played. Your take on Imogene Coca as Aunt Jenny made me think I'd been onto something about Schultzzy the trucker as a product of friendly queer conspiracy.

QUINN: I first fell for Davis as Schultzzy, the smart and witty troublemaker that initially made Davis famous. Schultzzy is assistant to Bob Collins (Bob Cummings), a Los Angeles icon with an inflated reputation as a hetero playboy. It happened the instant the returns of an internet search for *The Bob Cummings Show* brought up a photograph of Davis in a trench coat, gumshoe hat, glasses, and perfectly steeled seductive expression. In the photo, Davis looks over beyond Bob, who, while surreptitiously

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Result of Google image search for “Love that Bob Schultzzy” including, besides images from the show, Davis advertising Miracle White detergent dressed as Alice the Brady housekeeper and a picture of Davis long after she had retired from acting. In the trans triangle from *Love that Bob* (second row, third from the left), as Schultzzy’s wardrobe choices align Davis with Cummings, flexible gender contributes to a queer circuit of desiring looks.

handing Schultzzy a note, appears to flirt with someone who is actually making eyes at Schultzzy. I remember showing you the episode “Bob Plays Margaret’s Game” and waiting for your reaction to the scene in which Schultzzy, presenting as Pierre, picks up Margaret, Bob’s sister, for a night on the town.²² I like Davis in butchwear, too. But I don’t think she seems less “at home” in more typically feminine outfits. Her dresses, and blouses in busy graphic prints, worn with skirts, in *The Bob Cummings Show*, are the best: sharp but soft, and distinct; flashy, confident, witty, and fun. I see the at-homeness more in terms of performance. To me, Davis’s talents shine when she plays Schultzzy taking on another character. This is where the “conspiracy” you mentioned starts to get really interesting.

ERICA: Sometimes an archive is useful as you find it; sometimes a useful archive is made by sorting or classifying the materials you have. We can group Davis with Coca and other actors gender-nonconforming in context, including many who had recurring roles on *The Bob Cummings Show* and subsequent regular roles in other well-known sitcoms as part of prolific careers. They include Nancy Kulp (Pamela Livingston), later Jane Hathaway on the *Beverly Hillbillies* (1962-1971); and Rose Marie (Martha Randolph), later Sally Rogers on *The Dick Van Dyke Show* (1961-1966).

QUINN: And Schultzzy’s characters, variously gendered, also make for an illuminating collection.

ERICA: Yes.

I found new evidence for Davis being more at home as the Schultzzy than as Alice when I followed YouTube suggestions for what to watch after the Schultzzy the trucker scene, via a nostalgic detour to clips of the Brady kids singing on the *Brady Bunch* series.

QUINN: I remember hearing music from the next room and asking if Peter’s voice was changing again because I’d already seen the number “Time to Change” from “Dough Re Mi,” a third season episode in which Greg Brady accommodates middle-brother Peter’s voice changing by putting it front and center.²³ You’d showed it to me a few years earlier when I was in Peter’s situation past the age when people expect “puberty.” In one of those moments in which people make meaning from ephemeral television recirculating on YouTube, we had repurposed for queer courage and condolences the rhetoric of a song naturalizing the body, sex categorization, and gender roles.

ERICA: Although Alice didn’t appear in those clips, YouTube algorithms, using crowd-sourced consumer data and optimized for ad profits, led me from the sitcom musical numbers to clips of the *Brady Bunch Hour* (ABC; 1976-77). This was a super-campy variety show from Sid and Marty Krofft Television Productions at Golden West Studios at KTLA on Hollywood Boulevard, which featured guest performers like Tina Turner, Redd Foxx, Paul Williams, and Tony Randall. In it, the *Brady Bunch* actors play their Brady characters in Brady-style wardrobe, but change costumes for musical numbers and skits that, as with the original series, sometimes involve queer and trans gender representation. In one, Milton Berle, popularly known as “Mr. Television,” appears as the program’s new joke writer. As scripted by the series’ actual writing staff (Carl Kleinschmitt and company), Berle assigns un-Brady-like gender to Mike and Carol, including Carmen Miranda and Charlie Chaplin references. Carol unhappily introduces herself as “Mrs. Brady, the mother” while even more grumpily reaffixing a mustache. Reed performs the displeasure about his outfit requisite for the show’s transphobic context, a transphobia that unravels a bit after Mike asks Berle “Wanna buy a dress?”²⁴ as if he’s desperate to get out of the one he’s wearing. Berle replies, “No thank you, I’ve got a closetful,”

alluding to Berle's own history of wearing dresses.

QUINN: Berle wore dresses on TV. In fact, Reed is also in drag as Berle, who, like many others, made use of the racially and culturally ambiguous star—a “swirl of tropical fruit and Technicolor” as Priscilla Peña Ovalle describes Miranda, who participated in cultural appropriation herself—to play with norms of gender and sexuality.²⁵ The skit looked back in other ways, too, with Plumb, for example, resurrecting a “powder puff” gag also broadcast in the 1950s.

Mike, the Brady character, may have looked unhappy in that bit but in researching the variety hour for *Love to Love You Bradys: The Bizarre Story of the Brady Bunch Variety Hour*, author Ted Nichelson found that playing Miranda was one of Reed's fondest memories from the making of the show. Despite phobic snickering in the control booth, and shock at even hearing talk about Reed and dresses, the topic of Reed in a dress also functioned, in Florence Henderson's hands, as a public display of intimate affirmation, with Henderson frequently replying, when receiving compliments on her gowns in the presence of Reed, “Oh, Bob would love to wear it.”²⁶

ERICA: Carol's and Mike's outfits in the Milton Berle skit are played as nonconsensual departures from their ordinary performance of cisgender norms. They act like they have been forced into costumes that they refuse to do more than stand there in, doing nothing to embody the roles that the costumes suggest, or even to inhabit their bodies more than necessary. Davis's departure from female/feminine gender norms on the *Brady Bunch Hour*, interestingly, seems highly consensual. Frequently, after Alice resolves some Brady squabbling at the beginning of an episode while dressed in her blue and white maid's uniform, she later turns up in the middle of a song-and-dance number, clad, for example, in outfits like a caftan or a caftan top with matching pants, presenting herself as a gently self-mocking interloper without much rhythm. Out of place but hardly sad about it, she seems a differently gendered creature from Carol and “the girls,” especially when they perform in hyperfeminine ballroom drag, such as disco wear designed by Bob Mackie!

QUINN: The idea that Davis, or Alice, can't dance as well as the others seems absurd to me or at least based on straight prejudice. But it's also in keeping with queer characterization based on industry gender assignment, which repeatedly put Davis in roles where not being able to dance seems a likely trait, a trait often assigned to white men. Here, the abilities of Davis or Alice are represented as less than those of any of the presumed heteronormative characters. That the characteristic is put on is suggested by Davis's other patently visible skills. Her rhythm onstage, like her facility with choreography and flawless comic timing, show in her work, including in her performance of being “without much rhythm.” (And by the way, I don't see that maid's uniform as so cis-determined. Besides, it's a delicious blue, and I think she looks—is the word *hot*?)

ERICA: Some cast mates and writers attributed Davis's distance from the show's style and raunch factor—provided partly by the actor Rip Taylor, added, to Davis' displeasure, as a love interest for her—to her devout Christianity.²⁷ Semi-covert trans masculinity or religious modesty? It would not be the first time I misinterpreted clothing worn in the interest of religious modesty as something more interesting to me.

But then again, via YouTube algorithms—every time I click on something, there's another treasure—I find Davis as a contestant on *The Dating Game* during her *Brady Bunch* years, sitting in pants



This screen shot of the Game Show Network's programming of Ann B. Davis on *The Dating Game* emphasizes Davis's televisual aura, which stokes our overlapping attractions, through shapes, stances, settings, props, and style.

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with legs apart and feet comfortably planted as if masculine-coded comfort trumped any training in feminine modesty, Christian or otherwise.²⁸ Considering that stance, along with the simple hairdo and earrings betokening white female respectability, I see myself following the artist Anna Campbell's practice of collecting, extracting, and re-imaging gestural fragments of a queer and gender queer past, and think of Juana María Rodríguez's account of individual gestures and movements as part of an "archive of received behaviors and social norms" "reveal[ing] the inscription of social and cultural laws" that are racialized and culturally specific.²⁹

QUINN: These include laws we contend with for access to documents concerning our histories. For example, Davis lives on in the Robert Cummings Papers, held in the archives of Brigham Young University's Special Collections Library. The school's restrictions concerning gender-appropriate appearance and homosexuality, which people often surmise from gender nonconformity, certainly discourage access for marginalized researchers to these materials documenting the history of queer gender. Ten years ago, I was a no-ho³⁰ boy who had white privilege enabling me to show up in anti-fashion t-shirts rather than formal scholar-wear—good thing because I didn't yet have the resources for that—but proffering identity documents with a coercively assigned "F" gender marker, and unable to figure out where to stay safely and affordably.

ERICA: We went to Provo eight years later, in 2015, so you could visit that archive again. Having the right gender marker then didn't make your visit smooth either. I interfaced with our Airbnb hosts, implying by omission and commission that we were a conventional couple: didn't say "my husband" but didn't correct anyone either, acted hyper-polite, avoided in-person contact. Then I hid out in the coffee shop with condoms for 27 cents at the counter, a books-for-prisoners drop-off box, and other people visibly violating the BYU honor code (in my case with white yet Semitic looks mitigating and compounding, respectively, the violations). You found great treasures but refrained from mentioning the collection inventory you'd received on your earlier trip, fearing that the hitherto friendly curator might informally curtail your access

based on the trans history inferable from your name change between visits. Especially given the often haphazard, minimally sorted condition of materials, having an archivist inclined to point you in fruitful directions can matter a lot.

QUINN: That's a good point, but it avoids an issue you raised earlier, that what an archivist thinks of as fruitful might take someone away from what they're after rather than closer to it. Imagine the constraints. It can often seem to be in your best interests to presume that you will be interfacing with queerphobic or transphobic individuals, or with neglect or hostility embedded in institutions.³¹ Then again, barriers we encounter can also lead to queer attractions in unanticipated finds.

QUINN and ERICA: In "The Queer Art of the Counterarchive," Ann Cvetchovich writes:

The often-ephemeral nature of queer life necessitates a creative approach to archiving, an openness to unusual objects and collections, and an acknowledgment of that which escapes the archive. It demands what Alex Juhász has called "queer archive activism," an activist relation to the archive that remains alert to its absences and that uses it to create new kinds of knowledge and new forms of connectivity.³²

Trans media appears in its fullness when you take the broadest possible archive into account. We encounter Davis, and encounter each other through our love of Davis, in the making of an archive. So far we have described these encounters as, at many points, almost magical—an unlikely romance, a chance discovery of glorious affinities over channel surfing, one stupendous video or document find after another. And, indeed, the pleasures of the project have been immense. Importantly, however, our compilation of this archive and reflection on it has also been, at times, fraught, painful, and disturbing. Our elicitation of queer gender brought us into uncomfortable relation with troubling speculations about Davis's sexuality, troubling not as speculation or, of course, as aspersion, but in their fetishizing and narrow conceptions of what counts as evidence, and in common moves to read looks

narrowly. Light on the lipstick equals butch. Butch equals queer. Silence equals lesbian. Yes it does. No it doesn't. These terms of battle tacitly exclude a range of possibilities—add agender, aromantic, asexual, just to start.

Also, the differences between us make the stakes different. Erica's at-first sunnier account of Quinn's archive successes indexes a number of times when, even in speaking directly to cisgender privilege, she sometimes brutally underplayed the difficulties of living as trans and dealing with anti-trans bigotry, including being under- and mis-represented, seen, and characterized. "Because I'm trans and you're not." "Because you're trans and I'm not" "Because I'm trans and you're not?": We struggled, together and against each other, over wording, strategies, memories, content, and affect, usually in the most difficult moments of mutual self-reflection. We develop an archive based on a shared appreciation of the effect the material has on us and the connections we make across texts and time, but the consequences of attraction vary. Both the joys and the difficulties make this archive a register of our experiences with television and with archives. It is the sparking of our lives and work through television history and through Davis.



Screenshot from an early episode of *The Brady Bunch* "Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore," (Season 1, Episode 4), written by Paul West.

Ann Bradford Davis (1926–2014). We love you. RIP.

Quinn Miller is an Assistant Professor in English at the University of Oregon. He has published in *Feminist Media Histories*, *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly*, *Cinema Journal*, and the anthologies *How to Watch TV*, *The New Queer Aesthetic on Television*, and *Transgender Migrations: The Bodies, Borders and Politics of Transition*. Miller is currently completing a book titled *Camp TV: Trans Gender Queer Sitcom History*.

Erica Rand is the Whitehouse Professor of Art and Visual Culture and of Women and Gender Studies at Bates College. Her writing includes *Red Nails, Black Skates: Gender, Cash, and Pleasure On and Off the Ice* (2012), and work in *GLQ*, *Radical Teacher*, *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly*, and in the anthology *Queer Difficulty in Art and Poetry: Re-thinking the Sexed Body in Verse and Visual Culture*. Rand is currently working on a book project called *Hip Check: Experiments in Queer Gender and Writing*.

Notes

1 Davis won Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Comedy Series in 1958 and 1959. She did theater, including Broadway and summer stock, local speaking engagements, nightclub performances, sitcom special guest spots, and feature film cameos. Davis played a gym teacher in the *John Forsythe Show* (NBC; 1965–66) and appeared on *I've Got a Secret* (1958), *Regis Philbin* (1965), *Hollywood Squares* (1971), and *Mike Douglas* (1964, 1971), among many other TV series. We thank Roxanne Samer for her generous and generative enthusiasm and feedback and Grace Glasson for expert and timely research assistance.

2 See Toby Beauchamp on ways that perceived gender normativity and gender transgression always depend on "regulatory norms of race, sexuality, class, and nation." "Artful Concealment and Strategic Visibility: Transgender Bodies and U.S. State Surveillance after 9/11," *Surveillance and Society*, Vol 6, No 4 (2009), 360. As Kai M. Green argues in "Troubling the Waters: Mobilizing a Trans* Analytic," a hold on the category *woman* is racialized as well. In *No Tea, No Shade: New Writings in Black Queer Studies*, edited by E. Patrick Johnson, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), 71.

3 In developing this queer gender archive, and in understanding it as an archive, we join and draw on an abundance of work involving

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queer reconceptualization of the archive, including José Esteban Muñoz's 1996 essay "Ephemera as Evidence: Introductory Notes to Queer Acts," *Women and Performance* 8, no. 2 (January, 1996): 5-16, Ann Cvetkovich's *An Archive of Feeling: Trauma, Sexuality, and Lesbian Public Cultures* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), Martin F. Manalansan IV's "The 'Stuff' of Archives: Mess, Migration, and Queer Lives," *Radical History Review*, no. 120 (Fall, 2014), 94-107, and work on gesture that we discuss later by Juana María Rodríguez and others.

4 Peppermint Trolley Company, "The Brady Bunch Theme," Sherwood Schwartz and Frank De Vol, 1969, Paramount Television.

5 The gendered characterizations "widow" and "widower" were part of the tidy heteronormativity of the series. Carol and Mike, the Brady parents, came to each other burdened by the blameless purity of tragic loss, not by divorce, exes, or possibly sketchy timelines of desire and recoupling. As the song stated of Mike and his sons, before Mike met Carol, "They were four men living all together. Yet they were all alone." Schwartz and De Vol, "The Brady Bunch Theme." (In fact, however, they were not alone. They lived with Alice, who stayed on after the marriage. Her absence from the song's narrative underscores her marginalization.)

6 The line comes from the song "Shake your Rump." Beastie Boys, "Shake Your Rump," in *Paul's Boutique*, Capitol Records, 1989.

7 Prior work that brings us to this project includes Erica's book *The Ellis Island Snow Globe* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005) and Quinn's essays "The Dick Van Dyke Show: Queer Meanings," in *How to Watch Television*, edited by Ethan Thompson and Jason Mittell (New York: New York University Press, 2013), and "Queer Recalibration," *Cinema Journal*, Vol 53, No 2 (Winter 2014): 140-144.

8 On some key barriers to access for trans people using archives and regarding trans material in archives, see K.J. Rawson, "Accessing Transgender/Desiring Queer(er) Archival Logics," *Archivaria* 68 (Fall 2009): 123-140.

9 Harry Benshoff, "Vincent Price and Me: Imagining the Queer Male Diva," *Camera Obscura*, Vol 23, No 1 (2008), 146-150; Judith Roof, *All About Thelma and Eve: Sidekicks and Third Wheels* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2002); Patricia White, *unInvited: Classical Hollywood Cinema and Lesbian Representability* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1999).

10 We align here with the understanding that rather than narrowly concerning matters involving trans people, trans studies includes the study of gender nonconformities and normativities broadly situated. For example, Paisley Currah and Susan Stryker argue that "there is a sense in which *transgender* is a "critical term that demarcates a conceptual space within which it becomes possible to (re)name, (dis)articulate, and (re)assemble the constituent elements of contemporary personhood in a manner that facilitates a deeply historical analysis of the utter contingency and fraught conditions of intelligibility of all embodied subjectivity." "Introduction," *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly*, Vol 1, No 1-2 (May 2014): 1-18.

11 Jamie A. Lee "Be/longing in the Archival Body: Eros and the 'Endearing' Value of Material Lives," *Archival Science: International Journal on Recorded Information*, Vol 16, No 1 (2016): 35.

12 Julie R. Enszler, "Feverishly Lesbian Feminist: Archival Objects and Queer Desires," in *Out of the Closet, Into the Archives: Researching Sexual Histories*, eds. Amy L. Stone and Jaime Cantrell (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2015): 164-68; Zackary Drucker, "Bring Your Own Body: The Story of Lynn Harris," *Art Journal* 72.2 (Summer 2013): 99; Marika Cifor, "Presence, Absence, and Victoria's Hair: Examining Affect and Embodiment in Trans Archives," *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly* 2:4 (Fall 2015): 645-48): 645.

13 Cifor, 647.

14 See, for example, Associated Press Entertainment Staff, "Ann B. Davis, who gained fame playing 'Brady Bunch' housekeeper Alice Nelson, dead at 88," *Cleveland.com*, June 2, 2014, http://www.cleveland.com/entertainment/index.ssf/2014/06/ann_b_davis_who_gained_fame_pl.html, accessed November 26 2016. The article they cite is by Walter Ames, "Natural Ann Davis a Natural as Cummings' Schultzzy," *Los Angeles Times*, August 7, 1955, E 11, Proquest Historical Newspapers. <http://search.proquest.com/docview/166839256?accountid=8505>.

15 Several examples come from the Episcopal bishop Bill Frey, describing the life of religious outreach that followed Davis's heyday in the industry. Describing their life together after Davis, who, in the mid-1970s, moved into a communal residence with him, his wife, and others, Frey says, "Ann was just a marvelous companion here at the house for my wife and myself and any other people who happen[ed] to be living with us at the time." He also writes, about Davis's discussions with groups around the country, "Her talks were frank and honest. Once at a men's gathering someone asked her about the toughest thing she had to give up in joining our household. She quickly replied, 'My lover.'" We refrain from presuming the nature of that companionship or expounding on Davis's gender neutral reference to "my lover," although the use of "lover" itself, often disdained for crass explicitness, combined with Frey's comment that Davis, unlike Alice, had no knack for talking to kids, makes us also think about the ways that TV roles may be among many factors that color gendering presumptions from silence. Emily Strohm, "Ann B. Davis: How the *Brady Bunch* Star Spent her Final Years, *People*, updated Sept. 23, 2016, <http://people.com/celebrity/ann-b-davis-spent-final-years-with-friends-church/>. Accessed December 26, 2016; William E. Frey, "Life with Alice," *The Living Church*, January 15, 2016, <http://www.livingchurch.org/life-alice>.

16 *The Brady Bunch*, "Brace Yourself," Season 1, Episode 20, 13 February 1970, written by Brad Radnitz, Paramount Television.

17 *Medical Center*, "The Fourth Sex," Parts 1 and 2, Season 7, Episodes 1 and 2; 8 and 15 September 1975, MGM Television. Reed was nominated in the category of Outstanding Lead Actor for a Single Appearance in a Drama or Comedy Series. "Robert Reed," *Emmys*, Television Academy, (<http://www.emmys.com/bios/robert-reed>), accessed Dec. 27, 2016.

18 *The Brady Bunch*, "Jan's Aunt Jenny," Season 3, Episode 13, 21 January 1972, directed by Hal Cooper, Paramount Television. Aunt Jenny's connections include: Wilt Chamberlain, who signed a basketball; Peggy Fleming and Paul Newman, who signed her cast; Golda Meir, whose name she can't pronounce and who gave her a Shofar; Ari and Jackie Onassis, whose party she will skip for the Peace Corps; and Harry Houdini, who she toured on vaudeville with.

19 *The Brady Bunch*, "The Not So Ugly Duckling," Season 2, Episode 9, 20 November 1970, directed by Irving J. Moore, Paramount

Television. A mark of Jan's enduring characterization as somewhat undateable occurs in the 2011 movie *Bridesmaids* when the main character gives her own fictional boyfriend the same name.

20 *The Real Live Brady Bunch*, directed by Faith S. Soloway and Jill Soloway—the latter later know as the creator and executive producer of the Amazon series *Transparent* (2014)—premiered at the Annoyance Theater in 1991 in Chicago and traveled to other locations including New York and Los Angeles.

The Brady Bunch Movie, directed by Betty Thomas (Paramount Pictures, 1995).

21 *The Brady Bunch*, "Sargent Emma," Season 3, episode 20, written by Harry Winkler, 11 February 1972, Paramount Television. As Tison Pugh points out in "The Queer Innocence of *The Brady Bunch*," which catalogs erotic references and departures from gender normativity in the show, Alice also recounted a cross-gender performance to the girls, noting that she had played Julius Caesar in a play at her "all-girls" high school, and notably leaves her uniform to play the Pilgrim John Carver, with a costume change to a woman Pilgrim, in an episode in which Greg makes an "arty" home movie about the first Thanksgiving. *Journal of Popular Culture* 48, no. 4 (2015): 646. That movie ends, we note, prefiguring the mix of racist settler colonialism and homonationalism operative today. Mike had tried to challenge some bigotry during rehearsal, telling Peter and Bobby—playing Indians, signified in standard dehumanizing Hollywood shorthand by a feathered headband, and gleefully ready to "attack the fort"—that Indians had not acted violent until their land was stolen. Nonetheless Greg's film ends with the standard happy Pilgrim future save for its anticipated population: Pilgrim father (Mike) heads back to Europe, leaving a family headed by two white Pilgrim women (Alice and Carol) to make a home in the New World. "The Un-Underground Movie," Season 2, episode 4, written by Albert E. Lewin, 16 October 1970, Paramount Television.

22 Quinn discusses this image and episode further in "The *Bob Cummings Show's* 'Artists at 'Work': Gender Transitive Programming and Counterpublicity," *Spectator* 2B, no.1 (Spring, 2008): 10-28.

23 Season 3, Episode 16, aired January 14, 1972.

24 *The Brady Bunch Variety Hour*, season 1, episode 2, 27 February 1977, directed by Jack Regas, Paramount Television; Ted Nichelson, *Love to Love You Bradys: The Bizarre Story of the Brady Bunch Variety Hour* (Toronto: ECW Press, 2009), 197-199. See Bruce La Bruce, "Pee Wee Herman: The Homosexual Subtext" in *Out in Culture: Gay, Lesbian, and Queer Essays on Popular Culture*, eds. Corey K. Creekmur and Alexander Doty (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995), 387.

25 Priscilla Peña Ovalle, *Latinidad: Transnational Cultures in the United States: Dance and the Hollywood Latina: Race, Sex, and Stardom*. (Piscataway, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2010), 49. As Ovalle explains, Miranda was invoked and impersonated by numerous people professional and amateur, ranging from gay and straight GIs in World War II to Mickey Rooney, Lucille Ball, Bugs Bunny, Rita Moreno, and herself (68). Miranda was popular to US audiences, Ovalle argues, as an exotic representative of Latin American culture, although, and because, she was really a white woman from Brazil who "embraced and commodified the traditional black styles of Brazilian music and performance" (49). In the US, however, the link to blackness was erased, contributing to making Miranda a palatable, ambiguous Other (60-61 and Chapter 3 throughout).

26 Nichelson, *Love to Love You Bradys*, 196, 197.

27 *Ibid.*, 199-202. The representation of Davis as displeased with Taylor for reasons of Christian conservatism risks masking other reasons Davis might well not have liked working with him, including rather assaultive physical gags, like throwing glitter right into her face.

28 "Alice Brady Bunch Star on The Dating Game," YouTube video, 9:22, posted by "TELEVISIONARCHIVES," 2 June 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3yfNU00Zz04>

29 Juana María Rodríguez, *Sexual Futures, Queer Gestures, and Other Latina Longings* (New York: New York University Press, 2014), 5. Campbell's 2014 series, *Ever Your Friend*, for example, reworks fragments from photographs found in the Lesbian Herstory Archive, and appears in one form as an artist's book (Grand Rapids, MI: Issue Press, 2014). I discuss the Campbell's work further in "Hip Openers: On the Visuals of Gendering Athleticism." Forthcoming in *Queer Difficulty in Art and Poetry: Re-thinking the Sexed Body in Verse and Visual Culture*, edited by Jongwoo Jeremy Kim and Christopher Reed (Routledge, 2017). See also the comments on gesture by, especially, Rodríguez and Susan Stryker in Anjali Arondekar, Ann Cvetkovich, Christina B. Hanhardt, Regina Kunzel, Tavia Nyong'o, Juana María Rodríguez, and Susan Stryker, "Queering Archives: A Roundtable Discussion," compiled by Daniel Marshall, Kevin P. Murphy, and Zeb Tortorici, *Radical History Review*, No 122 (May 2015): 213-14.

30 No-ho is short for no-hormones, or for refusing, avoiding, or otherwise passing on, in my case, synthetic testosterone, or, medically conceived, hormone replacement therapy.

31 Consider also how a researcher's dependence on particular archives and archivists can play out differently depending on perceptions of trans status and gender normativity, affecting both. access to resources and the pleasures that visiting archives can involve.

32 Ann Cvetkovich, "The Queer Art of the Counterarchive," in Lock and Franz, *Cruising the Archive: Queer Art and Culture in Los Angeles: 1945 - 1980* (Los Angeles: ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archive, 2011), 32. She is referring to Juhasz's essay "Video Remains: Nostalgia, Technology, and Queer Archive Activism," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 12:2 (2006): 319-328.