

Generic Bio

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Shawn(ta) Smith-Cruz is an Assistant Professor and Head of Reference at the Graduate Center, CUNY. She is a long-time archivist and community member in NYC lesbian/queer organizing spaces, [presenting](#) on queer/archival practices. Shawn's writing is discoverable in journals and anthologies such as, [Journal of Lesbian Studies](#) (2016), [Informed Agitation: Library and Information Skills in Social Justice Movements and Beyond](#) (2014), [Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies](#) (2013), [and others](#). She's on the advisory board for Gale Primary Resources *Archives of Human Sexuality and Identity* database, and referees for the GLBT Studies section of Resources for College Libraries (RCL), a reference work developed by *Choice*.

Shawn is a volunteer coordinator at the [Lesbian Herstory Archives](#). She's served as Archive Coordinator for StoryCorps, and initiated access to all Black+LGBTQ interviews at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture/NYPL. Shawn is a co-editor of a special issue of [Sinister Wisdom](#), a lesbian literary and art journal on honoring the Michigan Women's Music Festival. She is a Board member of [Fire and Ink](#), a national organization for LGBTQ writers of African Descent. She co-founded Sister Outsider (2000), an organization for and by self-supporting young women in Brooklyn, NY, and is a co-founding member of FIERCE! (2001), and Ya-Ya Network (1999). Shawn has been cited by the City of New York in 2014, for "Archiving Black Lesbian Communities" and in 2003, for "Co-founding Sister Outsider."

Shawn is the LGBTQ studies library liaison where she promotes a queer library collection through an endowment provided by CLAGS, the Center for LGBTQ Studies at CUNY. Shawn has an MFA in Creative Writing/Fiction, and an MLS with a certificate in Archiving and Records Management from Queens College. She also holds a BS in Queer Women's Studies from CUNY.

Other concurrent or past community and literary projects have included the initiation of [Alternative Realities](#): Three Staged Readings by Black Lesbian Writers where she debuted her play, *Saturnistas*. She was co-producer of [Rivers of Honey](#), a performance space for women of color held in the herstoric WOW Cafe Theater for eight years. She co-founded Sister Outsider (2000), an organization for and by self-supporting young women in Brooklyn, NY. She was also a co-founding member of FIERCE! (2001), and the Ya-Ya Network (1999), youth member led organizations in NYC. She was a 2014 Louis Armstrong House and Museum Resident where she created the Zine, *Louis Armstrong and His Women*. Shawn founded [Queer Housing Nacional](#), an online space for queer women of color and allies to support the housing needs of queer women of color. With her project, *Her Saturn Returns: Queer Women of Color Life Transitions*, Shawn (still) collects and archives stories of queer women of color turning thirty. Shawn distributes her zines and others with [Lambey Press](#).