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BOOK REVIEWS

Jeannette A. Bastian, Reviews Editor

A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology

By Richard Pearce-Moses. Archival Fundamentals Series II. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005. xxx, 444 pp. Paper. Available from the Society of American Archivists, $35.00 members, $49.00 nonmembers. ISBN 1-931666-14-8.

A dictionary is a peculiar book to review, one that resists easy description and evaluation by its very nature. Though every dictionary is a unitary whole in one sense, it is more obviously a set of interconnected entries, each of which we ask to stand on its own—though that is impossible. We cannot understand the definition provided for one word unless we understand the words used in its definition. If we don't understand every word in a definition, we can find ourselves on a wild chase through the alphabet, trying to keep track of the meaning of a phrase as we translate it, bit by bit, into something we can comprehend. Yet lexicographers have devised ways to evaluate the works of their colleagues. They examine the evidence of good research, evaluate the quality of the definitions, and determine whether the dictionary has clearly presented an appropriate selection of terms.

Richard Pearce-Moses' *Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology* holds up well against all of these measures. This glossary is a remarkable piece of scholarship, a revelation for those among us who have not fathomed the depth and breadth of the archival endeavor, and a fascinating browse for any archivist. For the first time ever, we have a glossary blessed with graceful definitions that cover the entire universe of archives. Its small imperfections and inevitable eventual obsolescence aside, this book will fill an honored and utilitarian space on any archivist's shelf for years to come.

As with any good dictionary, the *Glossary* shows signs of solid scholarship. Pearce-Moses has wisely constructed his edifice upon a linguistic corpus he built manually. From 500 separate sources, he collected 6,300 citations of archival terms in action so that he could coax every individual sense out of each word. (The word *archives* has seven separate definitions, each clearly distinct from the rest.) The process he used to understand the terminology of the archival profession has been the standard for professional lexicography for over a century, but this glossary marks the first time a general dictionary of archival terms has carefully deduced meanings in this way. The archival profession's previous glossaries have used the prescriptive method, which ultimately relies on the

particular linguistic prejudices of the lexicographer. The descriptive method tries to avoid the trap of personal biases by carefully considering documentary evidence to determine the meanings of words. What should ensue from such a process is a clear understanding of how people actually use words, rather than one person's idea of what each word should mean. Pearce-Moses reports that he spent three years developing this glossary, collecting citations, and expanding his knowledge of the archival field—all of which has ensured that this volume is a rich cache of knowledge.

The most famous of lexicographers, Samuel Johnson and Noah Webster, were rightly heralded not so much for their prodigious scholarship as for the clarity and beauty of their definitions. In the final evaluation, usually nothing but the quality of definitions matters to the casual dictionary user, who sees no need to understand the structure of dictionary entries or the depth of scholarship. Similarly, the core value of the *Glossary* is that it almost always provides the reader with remarkably clear and concise definitions. The seven senses of *archives* are a case in point. Most of the senses are quite easy to fathom on first reading: "2. The division within an organization responsible for maintaining the organization's records of enduring value. - 3. An organization that collects the records of individuals, families, or other organizations; a collecting archives. - 4. The professional discipline of administering such collections and organizations. -5. The building (or portion thereof) housing archival collections." These senses quickly define a handful of meanings of the term *archives,* even making the distinction between an institutional and a collecting archives with ease. The value of these definitions is also enhanced by the simple order of the senses, which allows the user to build an understanding of the distinctions between these senses step by step. This is a masterful job of lexicography, but the opening definition—the core meaning of *archives*—is a bit ungainly, hampered by the addition of a long clause at the end that adds no essential meaning to the definition: "1. Materials created or received by a person, family, or organization, public or private, in the conduct of their affairs and preserved because of the enduring value contained in the information they contain or as evidence of the functions and responsibilities of their creator, especially those materials maintained using the principles of provenance, original order, and collective control; permanent records." Occasionally, but rarely, the definitions leave out critical pieces of clarifying information. The definition of "spirit process" is simply "A technique to make multiple copies of a document from a master," which could easily serve as a definition for the significantly different mimeograph process. Fortunately, however, the reader is never left in the lurch. In those few cases where definitions lack some information, the entries' notes include helpful clarification.

The last general point for evaluating a dictionary is its lexicon. In this sense, a lexicon is the specific body of vocabulary a lexicographer has chosen for a specific dictionary. Pearce-Moses has intentionally expanded the target

lexicon beyond the narrow range of terms that made up the first two editions of this glossary (including Lewis J. and Lynn Lady Bellardo's *Glossary for Archivists, Manuscript Curators, and Records Managers* published in 1992). He has tried to develop a glossary for "anyone who needs to understand records because they work with them," so it includes terms from information technology, records management, and knowledge management. Archivists working with electronic records will be pleased to discover that this volume covers their specialized vocabulary in depth. With over 2,000 entries, the *Glossary* has the space to include terms that are primarily of historical interest now but remain important to understand, such as "SPINDEX."

If this glossary has any fault, it is that it too easily allows words into its lexicon. It contains a large number of terms from photography, most of which are perfectly appropriate, such as the various types of photographs produced over the years. There is, however, little justification to include such general purpose terms as *seascape, landscape, cityscape,* and *scene* within the covers of this book. The dictionary also includes a clutch of terms that are of interest to those involved in general cultural studies of contemporary America, but that bear no particular relation to the field of archives. These include *Disneyfication, docudrama, edutainment,* and *infotainment.* A few terms from other professions sneak onto its pages, even though these are unlikely to appear in the archival literature: *provenience* (the archaeological equivalent of *provenance*) and *desiderata* are two of these. The *Glossary* also includes a number of terms for early record types, such as *estray record* (which I knew only as a "book of strays" before opening this book) and *letterpress copybook.* It is perfectly suitable to include these in such a glossary, but their inclusion raises the question of where to draw the line.

Although this dictionary is quite complete and professional almost to a fault, it is missing a few helpful features. Pearce-Moses himself notes that the book could use some illustrations. Lexicographers have long realized that a simple illustration can be more effective than a clear definition in explaining terms like *clamshell case.* Fortunately, plans for the next edition include the addition of illustrations, and the current volume includes a call for such illustrations. The only feature this volume lacks to make it a full-fledged dictionary is pronunciations of the terms. It is unlikely that adding pronunciation for all the terms in this book is worth the trouble, and users of dictionaries are almost universally incapable of using pronunciation guides correctly. But there remains at least some historical value in recording the competing pronunciations of the word *archival* (which are not, as many believe, neatly divided by the forty-ninth parallel). Similarly, the archival pronunciation of *provenance* is nonstandard in general usage, something entirely invisible to users of this dictionary.

The most prominent deficiency of this glossary, however, is the lack of a hard cover. This glossary is a book that needs to suffer through some sustained

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reading and re-reading, so a hardback edition would be in order, though this simple change would add enormously to the cost of the book.

When I ponder this book and its accomplishments, I am struck by how contemporary it is. In the modern world of reference books, the borders between dictionaries, encyclopedias, and thesauri have become increasingly blurred, and this book adds to that excitement. This volume is a hybrid reference book: part historical dictionary (one based on a careful collection of citations), part encyclopedia of archivy, part thesaurus (for many entries include thesaural entries that make navigating the book easier for the user). I am left as impressed by this dictionary as I am by the great, though almost forgotten, masterpiece of the late nineteenth-century American scholarship, *The Century Dictionary*. In a race with what became the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the *Century Dictionary* won by decades, producing a multivolume dictionary of exquisite beauty, accessible scholarship, and utilitarianism that was a model too little followed after its time. What Richard Pearce-Moses has produced, single-handedly and in a remarkably short period of time, is a volume with these same qualities. He calls his glossary a "work of autobiography," but it is more than that. It is a history of our profession that will be a mainstay of ours for years.

What we have here, finally, is the dictionary that our profession deserves. In some real way, this dictionary is all the evidence we need that the field of archives has become a mature profession, rich in theory and deep with intellectual underpinnings. For any of us who might still think that ours is a narrow profession interested in simple pursuits and a slow pace, this book makes clear instead that ours is one deeply rooted in the past but quickly moving into the future, one more complicated than we expected it to be, but all the richer for it.

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Providing Reference Services for Archives and Manuscripts

By Mary Jo Pugh. Archives Fundamental Series II. Society of American Archivists, 2005. 368 pp. Appendices and index. Soft cover. Available from the Society of American Archivists, $35.00 members, $49.00 nonmembers. ISBN 1-931666-12-1.

This long-awaited revision of *Providing Reference Services for Archives and Manuscripts* offers useful information to the novice as well as to the seasoned reference archivist. Mary Jo Pugh's considerable experience—as reference archivist at the Bentley Historical Library, as consultant and teacher, and as supervisory archivist at the San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park—shows clearly in this work. She understands what it's like to be on the front lines of reference service, dealing with shifting user demographics, technological

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innovations, evolving researcher methods, and finite resources—all the while striving to implement best practices. Pugh offers very thoughtful reflections on what goes into implementing professional archival reference services and what constitutes best practice. The volume is carefully constructed in clearly written prose, building from a discussion of basic archival theory, to an analysis of the role of reference services in an archival or manuscript repository, to a dissection of specific reference policies, procedures, and functions.

Thirteen years have passed since the earlier edition of this volume was published, and the reference landscape has undergone enormous changes in that time. Those changes have made the practical part of her earlier work less and less applicable to daily reference life. Pugh reflects that the major revolutions since the early 1990s have been the exponential increase in the availability and power of computers, along with their connectivity. The impact of technological advances that are part of the fabric of everyday life in 2005 were barely on the reference horizon in 1992 for most people and were not addressed routinely in archival, much less reference, access, or public services policies of the time. E-mail, Web sites, virtual reference services, born-digital documents, and other innovations have changed the behaviors, dynamics, and expectations of users of archival materials. And these innovations have wrought changes in the world of archives. The good news is that Pugh once again provides a solid, comprehensive reference source and guidepost for archivists, and others, who are implementing, updating, or reflecting on reference services for archival and manuscript materials.

The volume includes not only discussion of best practice in theory, but deals with the very practical, day-to-day issues that anyone working in reference faces. The issues Pugh covers range from setting priorities and response time when dealing with questions from remote users, to deciding when to allow copying of fragile physical documents, to permitting (or not) scanners and cell phones in addition to laptops into the reading room, to explaining and administering restrictions on collections, to staffing reference desks, to mediating between researchers and collections. Archivists frequently seem to be in the position of telling users all the things they cannot do—always seeming to say "no"—and Pugh offers some handy explanations that can be passed along to questioning researchers. She also considers the space and physical needs of a reading room for archivist and researcher alike, addresses security concerns, and points out the need for adequate signage to direct the patron to the archives reading room and to resources within. Many chapters of the book include checklists and sample forms borrowed from other authors that can be particularly helpful for comparing with one's own practices or when developing policies and procedures in newly established archives. Throughout the volume, Pugh references works and reflections by prominent archivists on archival theory, functions, and services that have an impact on reference services. The inclusion of these references informs the reader about accepted practice.

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Pugh starts each chapter with at least one introductory paragraph that serves as an abstract of the chapter and many chapters end with a conclusion that ties the topics covered in that particular chapter (and previous ones) with upcoming chapters. These helpful signposts enable readers to skim chapters or to select sections most relevant to a particular topic. But this work is not just a "how-to" book—Pugh also explores the concepts underlying the policies, procedures, and practical concerns in the many areas of reference that archivists face.

Pugh spends a lot of useful time analyzing the types of users likely to examine primary source material, considering their differing goals and the needs and expectations of both records and archivists. She provides a helpful framework for grouping users and determining how best to help them accomplish their goals. She is very thorough in analyzing how people search for and use information.

It is hard to find weaknesses in this volume because the author is so thorough, but with so much to cover, a few areas are not explored very deeply, in part because they are secondary or peripheral to reference services (such as exhibits) or are dealt with in other reliable publications (EAD or sample forms, for example) to which Pugh refers the reader. However, Pugh's priorities are clear, and the bibliographic essay (chapter 10) supplements the rest of the volume nicely by reviewing the professional literature and pointing the reader to useful sources for gaining an even broader perspective on particular topics. In addition, it is clear that technology will continue to evolve in ways that neither Pugh, nor any of us, can anticipate, and will lead to new ways of providing access to collections in the future. She notes that information available via the World Wide Web, reliable or not, competes with archives for the attention of users. As Pugh points out, the relationship archivists have with researchers and records creators will continue to change as more and more records are born digital and may be administered by an office other than the archives. Archivists will be challenged to work more closely with records creators and technology/systems staff to ensure that records are created and maintained in ways that protect their integrity and future accessibility.

It is striking to realize that the earliest reference manual published by SAA, *Archives and Manuscripts: Reference and Access* by Sue Holbert, published in 1977 as part of SAA's Basic Manual Series, was a mere thirty pages and considered a noteworthy text in part because so little professional literature about reference services existed at the time. Reference was frequently addressed as an afterthought, and it did not receive the same level of research as other aspects of archives, such as processing, electronic records, or the creation of access tools (finding aids, guides, and the like) to archival or manuscript collections. In the last decade or so, increasing attention has been paid to reference services, as providing access to collections has become more complex due to changes in copyright laws, the demands of users for electronic access to documents and collections as well as to

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finding aids, and the dwindling resources to process collections as thoroughly as we would like. Fortunately, the literature has increased and a number of very useful resources are now available. User studies have been on the rise throughout the 1990s, and, in recent years, the influence of metrics as an administrative tool has inspired more in-depth interest in studying who uses archives, what they use, and how they use it. It is hard to compare this work with others because Pugh is frequently cited as the authority or used as the text in graduate school archives course. Many other volumes on reference services are compilations of articles by a number of respected authorities in the field. Other cited sources are usually articles in professional journals that treat only one aspect of reference services.

Pugh states as her goals at the beginning of the book: "This revision seeks to create a model for understanding the legacy from the archival institutions we inherit and for assessing how new developments extend and change it. It also seeks to assist reference archivists in managing accelerating change, keeping the best of past practice, while becoming integral to the knowledge organizations of which archives are a part" (p. 1). Pugh accomplishes her goals, and the volume will serve as a useful model, at least until technological innovations, the law, shifting resources, changing user populations, and unforeseen circumstances again necessitate a revision.

In sum, Pugh's reflections on the role of the reference archivist are an inspiration, placing the significance of the sometimes mundane and routine into the larger goals of archives, "At its best, reference work brings forth the meaningful association of information and insights that result in new understanding of the human condition" (p. 7). With luck this volume will encourage all who work in reference services to strive for the same.

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Final Acts: A Guide to Preserving the Records of Truth Commissions

By Trudy Huskamp Peterson. Washington, D.C. and Baltimore, Md.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press and Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005. xii, 102 pp. Index. Available from the Society of American Archivists, $23.00 members, $30.00 nonmembers. ISBN 0-8018-8172-2.

For a cogent, clear reminder of the critical significance of archives—both content and methodology—in the advancement of the human condition on a global scale, pick up the book *Final Acts.* It illustrates in just 102 pages that the principles and practices archivists take as routine and basic can, in the way they are applied or not, have profound consequences everywhere for the safeguarding of human rights, political self- determination, and the rule of law.

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Final Acts is the outcome of a study prompted when the author was asked in 1998 to advise on the disposition of the records of the South Africa Truth and Reconciliation Commission, materials found to be "of the greatest importance, unique in their contents and in the charged context in which they were created." It is hard to imagine an American archivist more qualified to undertake this task than Trudy Huskamp Peterson, whose deep experience in governmental and international records administration includes serving as acting archivist of the U.S., director of the Open Society Archives in Budapest, and archivist for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Peterson's assessment of the situation in South Africa led to the eventual transfer of records to the national archives of that country and inspired a larger, multinational survey of truth commission records sponsored by the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. In 2003–04, information was gathered about twenty such commissions, a number that itself reveals something of the turmoil and tension of the latter part of the twentieth century. Most of these had been convened in Central and South America and Africa, and no two were exactly alike in their administration, their results, or the fate of the often voluminous records they created and received. As Peterson notes, just getting a clear answer to the question, "Where are the records now?" was either difficult or impossible.

Such challenges make the production of this guide all the more impressive and important. The structure of the volume is part methodological handbook, part survey report. Its primary intended readership is truth commission officials and staff who may have responsibility or influence over the disposition of records. Most of the book is devoted to explaining the nature of records typically associated with truth commissions and to breaking down the various considerations that go into determining where and how these records are ultimately administered. An outline of fundamental legal, political, and archival questions precedes an extended discussion of the ramifications and, in several cases, varied perspectives on these questions.

The author is careful to recognize that the matter of where commission records are best housed cannot be subjected to universal resolution given the differing political circumstances in each country, though it is not difficult to see—or agree with—her predilection for establishing custody in national archives whenever possible. She does not equivocate, however, in her advocacy for professional planning, appraisal, preservation, and access measures for these records wherever they may be housed.

Scholars seeking to understand the experiences and impact of truth commissions will find the chapter entitled "Country Reports" extremely useful. Here the mysteries surrounding the whereabouts of the records are described to the extent Peterson's investigations revealed, including some fascinating tales. Her questionnaires to national archives, inquiries to embassies, and interviews with former commissioners and staff yielded the full range of

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responses, from clear indications of safe landing (Germany) to complete uncertainty (Nepal). In the majority of the twenty cases, the location, condition, and accessibility of the materials are still unresolved or unclear.

Perhaps the most intriguing scenarios are those that have involved the transfer of records to the United Nations. The case of El Salvador offers an illustration. In the aftermath of the UN-mediated civil war in that country, the *Comision de la Verdad para El Salvador* issued its final report in 1993 and specifically addressed the matter of its archives. The commission recognized the vital importance of preserving these sources and proposed the establishment of an internationally administered Foundation for the Truth to be located in the United States with authority for preserving and providing access to the records. However, El Salvador's influential Jesuit hierarchy intervened and blocked this move, with the result that the records were sent to the United Nations archives in New York where they are closed and in ambiguous legal status. In recounting this story, Peterson appears to be lamenting the failed proposal for an independent archival entity, and she admonishes the UN to "acknowledge its trust responsibility for the records and take steps to preserve them."

What makes this and the other cases involving the UN especially interesting is the fundamental question they evoke: Whose records are these really? The challenge of answering this, perhaps more than anything else, explains why physical ownership has been perplexing to uncover and to resolve. The completion of truth and reconciliation investigations does not necessarily equate with peaceful government by and for the people, and control over the highly volatile documentation that is often gathered in these processes can be, and evidently has been, contested and manipulated. Perhaps the best answer to the above question is that ultimately the records belong to the survivors of oppression and their descendants. Too seldom, though, will these people affect the disposition of the material or enjoy free access to it, even if the records come to rest in a national archives.

Peterson does acknowledge these complexities, particularly in her discussion of questions regarding the right to know and the right to privacy. If ever there was a body of documentation that dramatized the forceful tension between these two archival values, it is truth commission records. The very purpose of such commissions, at least in name, is to unveil shrouds of misinformation and to subject the actions of predecessor regimes to the light of day. Yet the revelations of these actions so often involve the most sensitive disclosures pertaining to victims as well as to alleged perpetrators. The author addresses this extraordinarily delicate balance especially well in her appendix on Access Criteria, in which she invokes and elaborates upon a set of principles earlier devised for the UN on archives dealing with human rights violations.

While relatively few archivists will themselves work with the records of international truth commissions, this volume offers significant value beyond its immediate focus. For one, it is rare to find concise discussions of the kind noted

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above pertaining to access challenges on levels of both principle and practicality. Many archivists face the dilemma of simultaneously honoring privacy and transparency demands, but there is little guidance for helping them not only do it better but to think about it more intelligently. Also, this study invites consideration of the possibility that similar approaches might be in order for assessing the locations, conditions, and needs of other dispersed, interrelated communities of records—approaches that in essence combine the best elements of past surveys, handbooks, and functional analyses.

How much impact *Final Acts* will have on its primary intended audience remains to be seen. One can only hope that present and future commissions will, indeed, engage the questions the author poses in preparing for the disposition of their records. One also hopes that the publication of this study might somehow bring about a more satisfying and conclusive fate for many of the records Peterson attempted to track down. In achieving both aims, it would seem that the contents of this volume might be well suited for Web publication and occasional updating (of the country reports), something that would require ongoing institutional commitment, from exactly whom it would be hard to say. Nonetheless, *Final Acts* is an evocative, informative study that merits widespread attention not only from commission officials but from numerous researchers and the international archival community as well.

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Creating EAD-Compatible Finding Guides on Paper

By Elizabeth H. Dow. Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow Press, 2005. 151 pp. Bibliography. Available from the Society of American Archivists, $35.00 members, $49.00 nonmembers. ISBN 0-8108-5166-0.

Anyone reading the archives listserv in the past few years can't have helped but notice the ongoing discussions regarding the pros and cons of implementing EAD (Encoded Archival Description). The issue seems to be of particular concern to archivists in smaller repositories who are apprehensive that creating EAD finding aids would represent a significant commitment of time and may require a level of expertise that the repository simply can't accommodate. Repositories are feeling increasing pressure, both from fellow archivists and from granting agencies, to include the creation of EAD finding aids in processing projects. The irony, of course, is that many of these repositories have limited resources and may not even have their own Web site, and they and their user communities may not have access to databases such as Archival Resources; there is no useful place to "put" EAD-encoded finding aids, even if staff manage to create them.

The debate over balancing the time and effort required to create EAD-encoded finding aids against the benefits of doing so for the small, underfunded repository is likely to continue for some time. Nevertheless, many repositories (whether or not their staff is "professional"—or even paid) have already reached the conclusion that they simply are not yet ready to implement EAD. Yet creating finding aids without keeping EAD in mind is likely to create problems down the road. One day they may well find themselves in a position to develop their own EAD resource, or to participate in a regional or other consortial project; all the finding aids they create in the meantime will one day need to be reworked and made to "fit" into EAD.

After reading Elizabeth Dow's indispensable volume, I can assure you that help is on the way! Finally, here is a basic book that explains, in easily comprehensible, jargon-free language, exactly what needs to be done to create on paper a finding aid that can be easily converted to EAD if and when the time comes to do so. In a mere 139 pages of readable—even entertaining—text, Dow provides all the basic information necessary to create finding aids that, while not "marked up" in EAD format, can quickly and smoothly be migrated to EAD. The seven chapters summarize (and build a case for using) such archival standards as *ISAD(G)* and *DACS;* define "markup language"; explain how to assemble and express the component parts of a finding aid; describe how to maximize researchers' ability to locate one's collections; and outline the many questions that will need to be answered before one can actually begin creating EAD-encoded finding aids. The book contains plenty of examples, not only of possible ways to express text in a finding aid but also of specific EAD markup. In addition, Dow includes some examples of "bad" (or at least less clear) portions of finding aids, and explains why her alternative examples make more sense. By the time the reader encounters the first examples containing those formerly intimidating angle brackets, he or she has been completely reassured—no, empowered—by Dow's mantra that "a computer is as dumb as a hubbard squash." The down-to-earth tone of the book completely disarms the reader, and therefore makes its content that much more accessible, whether one is an EAD expert or has had no exposure to it at all. The very useful glossary at the end of the book serves as a handy reference, as do Dow's thorough bibliography and index.

Dow's position on the faculty in the archives track at the School of Library and Information Science at Louisiana State University, combined with her previous experience as an archivist and early EAD implementer at the University of Vermont, contribute to her perspective on EAD. She not only has in-depth understanding of EAD and its underlying architecture, she has also had a great deal of exposure to individuals (whether students or colleagues) who need to understand how to create a paper finding aid with EAD "in mind." For example, the section "Key Data Elements" in chapter 4 ("Getting Organized and Collecting

Information") is an invaluable section for anyone creating a finding aid. In it, Dow clearly and succinctly (and with examples) lays out all the elements that one should include in a finding aid and explains not only why but also how.

An equally valuable section is found in chapter 5 ("Putting It All on Paper"), in which Dow outlines some common mechanisms used in paper finding aids and discusses their use in an EAD finding aid. She explains how such conventions as using abbreviations or "ditto" marks can at best vastly reduce the usefulness of the finding aid in an on-line environment; at worst they render an EAD finding aid almost completely incomprehensible. Yet this discussion's usefulness expands beyond the scope of her book. All archivists, not only those implementing EAD, will be well served by examining such issues as the functions of typographical conventions. What purpose do ditto marks serve on a page? How does the white space that they introduce help the reader to more easily navigate the document? Despite the fact that dittos are clearly a disadvantage in EAD-encoded documents, what lessons can be learned from their use on paper and how can the value they add be transferred to an on-line environment? Again and again, Dow encourages the reader to think about the differences between looking at a piece of paper and viewing a computer screen. She helps us to think about how these differences can influence the creation of our finding aids. Since paper documents are "linear" and on-line finding aids may never be viewed in a linear fashion, archivists need to think not only about the text of various components of their finding aids (scope notes, for example), but also their placement in a document in an on-line environment.

In the introduction, in which Dow outlines the value of EAD (whether in the long or short run), I wish she had made the pro-EAD case more strongly. Her arguments clearly support the idea of putting finding aids on the Web, but she does not make a compelling enough case to do so using EAD rather than HTML. Although she does discuss the issue later in the book, if the reader has concluded that there's no compelling reason to consider EAD after reading the introduction, he or she is not likely to get to the stronger arguments Dow makes later on. I might also quibble with Dow's initial stylesheet discussion, which leads the reader to believe that markup is primarily for display, rather than educating the reader about how markup enhances a document's value for researchers by allowing detailed indexing and complex searching.

One of the great strengths of the book is its relative brevity. Both symbolically and practically, it conveys that EAD doesn't need to be intimidating. But in her attempts to remain brief, Dow occasionally overdoes it. In chapter 3, for example ("Anatomy of a Markup Language"), some of the explanations of XML concepts such as *stylesheet* and *attributes* are a bit skimpy. Since they are fundamental to XML and must be understood to proceed with an EAD project, the chapter would be strengthened by fuller explanation of these concepts, many of which seem foreign and rather perplexing to the new EAD user.

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While I agree with Dow's approach to making EAD more accessible, I am concerned that chapter 7 ("Starting Your EAD Collection") might not be daunting enough. I do believe that just about anyone can learn to use—and understand—EAD, but I also acknowledge that it does take a significant commitment of time and mental effort. I do not believe that Dow expresses strongly enough that before one embarks on an EAD project, one should have a solid understanding of EAD. For example, Dow notes that one can hire a conversion vendor to do the actual markup. While this is true, the successful partnership between a repository and a vendor must include the participation of someone on the repository's behalf who is well versed in the entire EAD tag library. One must be able to articulate, in thorough and clear terms, exactly what is requested (and what is not!) of a vendor, or one will undoubtedly expend significantly more resources—in terms of both money and time—than necessary. Chapter 7 might be strengthened with the inclusion of slightly more in-depth answers to the questions Dow poses; in some cases she does not provide enough information to allow the reader to examine the questions fully. The chapter (or possibly an appendix) could point the reader to a greater number and variety of paper and on-line sources "for further investigation."

Despite these few and minor suggestions, I submit that this book is a "must have" for any repository, small or large. Although I have more than ten years of hands-on experience with EAD, I found it incredibly useful, and I know I will refer to it again. At times I was a bit alarmed by my own enthusiasm, as when I was reading one particularly "right on" chapter in my office and found myself repeatedly shouting "yesssssssss!" (much to the consternation of my colleagues in adjoining offices). With the expectation that none of you are quite as geeky as I (or with the recommendation that you read the book with your office door closed), I advise anyone responsible for creating finding aids to become familiar with this excellent volume.

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What Casanova Told Me

By Susan Swan. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2005. 302 pp. $23.95. ISBN 1-58234-453-1.

Susan Swan's *What Casanova Told Me* is not only the story of how one young woman uncovers the final days of her distant great-aunt; it is also the story of how that young woman sheds her resentment toward her dead mother, and her own timidity and loneliness. Luce Adams, an archivist and the book's protagonist, is a descendant of President John Adams. As Swan's tale opens, Luce is on a

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twofold journey: deliver a bundle of Giovanni Casanova letters to Venice and accompany her mother's gay partner to Crete for her mother's memorial service. By the time we turn the last page, Luce has discovered Casanova's last lover, exorcized the demons that haunt her, and come out of her lonely shell.

On her travels, Luce carries two other items: the 1797 journal of her great-great-great-great-great-aunt, Asked For Adams, and an undecipherable, leather-covered Arabic (later discovered to be Turkish) manuscript. The letters, journal, and manuscript had been discovered by an Adams relative in the family's St. Lawrence River cottage. The articles having been authenticated by the Harvard University Archives, Luce agrees to loan Casanova's correspondence to the Venetian Sansovinian Library. As she journeys there, and then to Crete to retrace her mother's last steps, she is drawn to read Asked For's journal.

Swan, an associate professor of humanities at York University, and the author of *The Wives of Bath*, uses the jump from past to present to weave together Luce's two quests—to find out what happened to Asked For Adams and to come to terms with herself and her mother. Luce's ambivalence toward her mother and her antipathy toward her mother's lover, Lee Pronski, fill the pages of *What Casanova Told Me*. The daughter's feelings stem from her sense of abandonment. She had imagined that she was an indispensable part of her mother's life, and that the two shared a mutual dependence. When Kitty Adams, a renowned Canadian archaeologist with some decidedly controversial theories about the ancient Mediterranean world, falls in love with Lee and leaves the United States to live with Lee overseas, Luce is grieved and resents both Lee and Kitty.

Luce's journey from petulant loner who holds a grudge against Kitty and Lee into a more accepting maturity that finally allows her to give and receive love is only one part of Swan's story. The other narrative unfolds in the more than two-hundred-year-old papers of her distant aunt. Asked For disappeared while in Venice with her father in 1797; her diary reveals that she left with the aging Casanova and traveled with him throughout the Mediterranean on much the same route that Luce herself is taking. As Luce traces the fate of Asked For, she also discovers the fate of her mother, and, in the process, frees herself to emulate the two adventurous, independent women.

What Casanova Told Me is an ambitious book. It has a wealth of interesting excursions. Swan delves into the world of Minoan goddess worship and Western Orientalist stereotypes. The author also says much about self-discovery, love, and how acceptance can heal the hurt of loss. Swan has a knack for describing people: "Lee was fast asleep, her Birkenstocks sticking out from under the diaphanous fabric of her sun wear like the half-shod hooves of a weary draft horse" (p. 176). Her prose is at times, however, less successful. Would the father of a young, eighteenth-century woman have used the term "sturdy young heifer" to describe his daughter (p. 18)? And sexual innuendos such as Swan's description of Casanova's "manhood," which was, we are told "as thick and long as

the morels [Asked For] once found under the maple trees of Quincy [Massachusetts]" (p. 205) grow tiresome.

Nor is *What Casanova Told Me* without other problems. Take Casanova for instance. He would have been 72 in 1797. About him Swan has her facts straight. She correctly identifies 1759 as the year he escaped from a Venice jail and she dates his death accurately. But Swan's Asked For/Casanova story relies on the contention that a young woman of Puritan stock would have willingly abandoned her safe existence for the arms and adventures of a sexy older man. Yet, Swan's descriptions of Casanova strain the credulity of this storyline. Rather than the vivacious, active, and attractive man Casanova needs to be to woo the love of a vibrant young woman, Swan paints him as an out-of-date, out-of-touch, wheezing geriatric.

The structure of Swan's narrative also presents a problem. It takes an adept author to balance past and present so that both prove equally interesting to the reader. Unfortunately, Swan does not achieve that balance. This reader was much more interested in Asked For's journey with Casanova than with the more mundane story of Luce Adams and her inner turmoil over Lee and Kitty. But just as the Asked For/Casanova story deepens, Swan switches to the present and another of Luce's soulful internal searches.

This also leads to other issues with *What Casanova Told Me,* archivally speaking. The reader learns about the relationship between Asked For Adams and Giovanni Casanova in bits and pieces, as Luce has time on her trip to read her great-aunt's journal and Casanova's letters—a necessary technique, perhaps, for the structure of Swan's tale, but far from realistic. A trained archivist would have bristled at the thought of someone repeatedly exposing a treasured document such as Asked For's journal to the ravages of fingerprint oil and sunlight. He or she would have been far more likely to have thoroughly examined such a rare record before leaving for the trip. Swan has Luce do things that make a professional archivist shudder. Luce is not content to take along and read from the user copy of the journal made for her by the people at Harvard. Instead, she packs up the original document, albeit in acid-free paper, and carries it along with her in her knapsack. Moreover, it seems unlikely that Harvard's archives would incorrectly identify the language of the manuscript as Arabic rather than Turkish. The author needs the manuscript to weave suspense into her story, but this is an amateurish way to do it.

Swan correctly uses archival jargon. She understands such terms as *provenance* (p. 40) and *fonds d'archives* (p. 7). But, again, Swan has Luce treat the rare, Turkish manuscript in an equally unprofessional manner. At one point Luce takes the manuscript out of its protective covering to read in the bright light of a bar, where cigarette smoke and glaring lights, as any archivist knows, will begin to do it harm. As if that were not bad enough, Luce then proceeds to leave the manuscript at the bar as she departs. It also seems unlikely that an

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archivist, having gone to the trouble of having the documents authenticated, would send such a scarce item as the Turkish manuscript on a long trip, where anything might happen, without having the document translated first.

Swan opens *What Casanova Told Me* with a Nathaniel Hawthorne quote from *The House of the Seven Gables*, in which he claims the right to deliver a truth "of the writer's own choosing or creation . . . ." Swan, too, asks for the same right. Readers who are unfamiliar with archival practices or who have never known a sexy older man will no doubt wonder why Swan prefaces her story with such a quote. Those of us who work with rare documents or who have known vivacious, energetic older men will not.

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Arranging and Describing Archives and Manuscripts

By Kathleen D. Roe. Archival Fundamentals Series II. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005. xv, 180 pp. Illustrations. Available from the Society of American Archivists, $35.00 members, $49.00 nonmembers. ISBN: 193166613X.

SAA is in the process of revising its manual series, and Kathleen Roe's contribution is a welcome addition to Archival Fundamentals Series II. The manual replaces the volume written by the late Fredric M. Miller that served as a text for graduate education programs and as a reference tool for many practicing archivists since its publication in 1990.

Kathleen Roe is the perfect author to take on the challenge of explaining the evolution of arrangement and description theory and practice. She has been a leader in descriptive standards development throughout the series of changes brought about by several generations of technology. In her position at the New York State Archives, she was involved in the first projects that introduced MARC AMC to public records repositories; she taught SAA workshops, contributed to RLG discussions, participated in the Working Group on Standards for Archival Description that codified archival descriptive practice in the late 1980s, and served on the various SAA committees and task forces that oversaw descriptive standards development leading up to the recently issued *Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DACS).* Roe is uniquely situated to reflect on the context of archival processing and to interpret concepts and applications to an audience that includes both experienced archivists and those seeking an introduction to archival practice. I could hear her inimitable combination of competence and humor as I read through the chapters.

I must admit that I approached reviewing this volume with considerable trepidation as I admire the Miller manual and have enjoyed using it as a teaching tool. Students found Miller's approach, and especially his use of the four State of

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Saratoga collection examples, easy to comprehend. Although Miller has served us well, the descriptive world has changed fairly dramatically since 1990, and a revision reflecting current descriptive standards was certainly needed. The Roe manual brings us up to date without sacrificing most of what we valued in its predecessor. The problem with writing on this topic, as Roe points out at the end of her introduction, is that change is rapid. Anything one writes is quickly out of date.

The structure of *Arranging and Describing Archives and Manuscripts* resembles the other manuals in this new series. There are fewer chapters and longer, more thoughtful narrative sections. Perhaps this reflects the maturation of the archival profession and the ways in which theory and context are better integrated into practice. The trend is not only to provide instruction for undertaking a particular task, but also to explain how and why such practice arose. Roe's manual is very successful in this respect. She takes the reader step by step through the functional areas, beginning with accessioning and ending with data structure, content, and value standards. At each step she provides background for her guidelines. The manual is divided into four chapters: "Overview," "Core Concepts and Principles," "The Context of Arrangement and Description," and "The Practice of Arrangement and Description," followed by a short section on "Conclusions and Future Directions." Almost half the volume is glossary, bibliography, and appendices of examples.

Unlike Miller, who separated arrangement and description, Roe combines collections management functions in each of the chapters. The "Overview" chapter explains the nature of archives and manuscripts, the kinds of institutions holding such materials, and the functional role of arrangement and description within repositories. Within "Core Concepts," Roe defines the various underlying principles, emphasizing the differences between context and content—concepts that frame much of arrangement and description work. She also clearly explains the issues surrounding levels of description, pointing out that description at different levels is both permissible and frequently recommended. New archivists, in particular, struggle to identify the entity to be described and need to understand that contemporary descriptive systems allow for varying and multiple levels of description within a specific collection or record group. Chapter 3, "The Context of Arrangement and Description," covers the historical development of descriptive practice in Europe, Canada, and the United States. Roe does an excellent job of reviewing the stages of standards development that brought the profession to current practice. Those of us who were archivists throughout the 1980s and 1990s do not take these accomplishments for granted. But younger archivists are often impatient with what has not yet been accomplished, including the inability to reconcile Canadian and U.S. descriptive standards. Roe clearly and objectively describes the stages, affirming the common ground that the archival profession has achieved, despite differences across borders. In this area the Miller volume is sorely outdated.

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Chapter 4, "The Practice of Arrangement and Description" is the heart of the volume, comprising half of the narrative portion of the manual. Roe walks the reader through the stages of arrangement and description, beginning with acquisition and accessioning, where the archivist integrates a new group of material into a repository's recordkeeping system. She then moves through the stages of activity: establishing contextual information, determining arrangement, physically carrying out that arrangement through the steps of processing, describing the newly arranged records, and finally developing access tools. She points out where electronic records necessitate different practices. The section on description is particularly strong because it focuses more on elements of description than on particular manifestations of finding aids. For example, she includes charts delineating the potential types of contextual and physical information an archivist can provide. This emphasis reinforces notions of descriptive standards because it reinforces consistency across collections, across finding aids, and across repositories. She does include examples of traditional archival finding aids, so that the reader is not left without that level of guidance. My only real disagreement with her approach is that her definition of arrangement in both chapter 4 and in the overview rests on the physical arrangement of the records. I would argue that arrangement is initially an intellectual problem of identifying the structure of the collection, its relationship to the activities and functions that created the records, and the resultant organization of the material into series. The physical steps are then the means by which the archivist implements the intellectual decisions.

The second half of the manual consists of several useful appendices. The glossary somewhat surprisingly uses terms from both the outdated Bellardo and Bellardo *Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology* (1992) and the recently published Pearce-Moses edition (2005), as well as terms from *Describing Archives: A Content Standard* (2004) and *ISAD(G).* The bibliography is quite selective and is organized both by category of title, for example; manuals and guidelines; core principles; issues and special topics; development of descriptive standards; and standards and guidelines. Bibliographies are always helpful, never complete, and almost immediately out of date. However, it is important to have specific citations for fundamental sources in one place. One appendix consists of the main principles of *DACS,* which ties the manual specifically to current standards, unifying the profession's approach to arrangement and description.

The remainder of the appendices are examples of arrangement and description scenarios and finding aids. The two arrangement scenarios are clear, if somewhat simplistic, as are the examples of arrangement patterns. While it is difficult to provide easy-to-follow examples of complex record groups, such as one might find in a state government agency or other large bureaucracy, I was surprised at the traditional nature of these examples. The New York State Archives could certainly have provided more typical examples of contemporary

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record complexity, as well as examples of ways in which archivists have separated agency histories from series descriptions. Roe refers to the functional practice of separating agency histories from series descriptions in chapter 2 and again in chapter 4 (see figure 4–10), but the later examples do not reflect that approach. That said, the examples of bibliographic description are excellent and varied in terms of types of records and record creators. The examples are annotated nicely to indicate the points being made, such as the level at which a particular group of materials is being described, the fact that an organizational history provides evidence of the group's function, the existence of restrictions on access, the existence of reproductions as well as originals, and so on.

Throughout the manual, Roe includes explanatory notes and figures that highlight and illustrate specific points. Both students and more experienced archivists will find these notes helpful as emphasis and as a way to locate information while thumbing through the pages. (I do, however, miss the four examples Miller used consistently throughout the 1990 manual; they were indeed artificial, but at the same time effective.)

The strength of this edition of *Arranging and Describing Archives and Manuscripts* lies in its thoughtful and coherent approach to what archivists actually face in processing records and papers in today's repositories. Issues of media and technology are woven throughout, rather than treated as an add-on, and topics are applied to repositories in many institutional settings. As a single volume, this manual fills a critical need for a synthesis of arrangement and description theory and practice. By including it in the Archival Fundamentals II Series, SAA continues to provide current and comprehensive guidance for the profession.

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Day of Reckoning: Power and Accountability in Medieval France

By Robert F. Berkhofer III. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004. 280 pp. Appendices. List of abbreviations. Notes. Bibliography. $49.95. ISBN 0-8122-3796-X.

Archivists will inevitably be reminded of M. T. Clanchy's *From Memory to Written Record* when they begin this study of the relationship between archives and power in France and Flanders during the high Middle Ages by Robert F. Berkhofer, who teaches medieval history at Western Michigan University. They may also initially find his detailed account of five Benedictine monasteries during a period of religious and economic reform somewhat less accessible than Clanchy's examination of English records and recordkeeping during a more familiar era of political and

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dynastic transition. However, Berkhofer's study of the rich documentary sources held by the monasteries of Saint-Bertin, Saint-Denis, Saint-Germain-des-Prés, Saint Père de Chartres, and Saint-Vaast-d'Arras will in the end prove to be as worthwhile and rewarding as Clanchy's earlier work, if not more so.

While an interest in the nature of power and the development of the concomitant notion of accountability prompted Berkhofer's survey of the archives of these great houses, he quickly found that both could only be understood in the context of "the relation of oral culture, a culture of memory, to a scribal culture, a culture of written records" (p. 6). His study therefore came to focus on the transformation of records from commemorative, polemical, or historical aids to remembrance into instruments of management reflecting what he terms a protocapitalist mindset that understood land as an exploitable economic resource. As his study developed, he also found that to explore fully the evolving use of records to manage monastic estates he would have to go beyond conventional diplomatic analysis of individual documents to examine the rise of new methods of organizing records, the point at which his work intersects traditional archival theory.

Day of Reckoning gets underway in late tenth-century France when the dissolution of the Carolingian empire forced the great monastic houses to defend what would in time become an idealized vision of their patrimony from threats within and outside the cloister. Berkhofer begins his introduction to established monastic concepts of land and archives with a detailed analysis of the *gesta abbatum* compiled by Folquin of Saint-Bertin in 962 that combined selected documents (including at least one forgery) and a narrative based on tradition and memory, then he describes the creation of similar documents by other great houses. According to Berkhofer, this chronological arrangement and narrative presentation, which enshrined in writing a community's memory of the contours of its holdings, represents an effort to create "a useful past" (p. 35) that transformed the role of archives in the monastery. Berkhofer finds further proof of the growing importance of written records and the emergence of a monastic scribal culture in the parallel increase in the modification or outright forgery of documents.

At the dawn of the next century all five houses began to draw on these memorial narratives and contemporaneous lists of charters to seek papal or episcopal confirmation of their title to monastic holdings, which became increasingly specific as a result. Soon after the turn of the century, disasters such as the great fire at St. Père de Chartres, reforms driven by the monastery at Cluny, and occasional secular appropriation of monastic lands sparked a growing need for detailed descriptions of land holdings and spawned a new way of composing and storing documents known as the *cartulary* or "book of documents."

Initially, most scribes who created cartularies followed the pattern of the earlier *gesta abbatum* and grouped the documents they copied by rule of abbots

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or, occasionally, reign of kings, while a few organized both authentic and forged papal and royal charters by grantor, alternating between ecclesiastical and secular authorities. Berkhofer argues that while these volumes made access to information easier than earlier systems of filing in boxes, bundles and cubbyholes, the volumes nonetheless still functioned primarily as agents of commemoration that could be and were used to defend what their creators viewed as a static, inviolate patrimony.

By the twelfth century, however, cartularies increasingly departed from these earlier schemas to present charters and confirmations geographically, usually in the context of their proximity or relationship to the abbey. According to Berkhofer, this alteration in the organization of cartularies, which suggested possibilities for sale or exchange of land and facilitated the collection of revenues, provides "valuable evidence of the purpose or intention of the organizer" (p. 73) who had begun to view the monastic patrimony not as fixed and holy but as a resource to be improved or even capitalized on. He finds further evidence of this twelfth-century monastic turn to an administrative mindset in the documents themselves, which began to chronicle exchanges of land between churches rather than simply describing land holdings, occasionally even using the terms *emo* (buying) and *vendo* (selling).

According to Berkhofer, the new format of cartularies and the simultaneous appearance of lists of rents and renders that show allocation of specific income to specific offices or activities reflect a new interpretation by abbots of their traditional responsibility to minister to the chapter. He contends that in tracking changes in holdings and improvements in farming and revenues, such transactional records demonstrate a burgeoning sense of fiscal responsibility on the part of abbots. He therefore focuses his portrait of this era on two energetic abbots, Martin of Saint Vaast and Suger of Saint Denis, who used their long tenure to implement changes in land management that in turn transformed their relationship with the chapter and laid the foundation for new forms of accountability by their successors.

Over time, all five houses developed a body of clerical officers who received specific revenues, oversaw particular activities, and kept written records of their actions, and abbots also began to require extensive recordkeeping by their dependent lay agents, including mayors. This flourishing scribal culture gradually made writing a powerful tool for enforcing responsible behavior and faithful service from agents inside and outside the cloister. As a result, *brevia*, minisurveys of rents owed and revenues collected by specific agents that were presented in a fairly standard format, began to appear in archives alongside reports of what became regular meetings between abbots and their agents.

In his study, Berkhofer takes particular note of the detailed and precise *brevia* kept by Guimann, the cellarer of Saint Vaast from 1175 to 1192, which he describes as "practical working documents" and maintains that such documents could become the basis for auditing and accounting. However, he points out

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that in this period it would be impossible to separate fiscal or judicial accountability from their religious and moral dimension and is also careful to note that "one must not mistake his [Guimann's] desire to create orderly records for the existence of actual order" (p. 151). Indeed, throughout the book, Berkhofer is careful not to claim too much for the changes he discerns in the creation and organization of monastic records and often couches his conclusions in phrases such as "seems likely" (p. 86) and "strongly suggests" (p. 169).

Critical evaluation of Berkhofer's construal of an administrative protocapitalist mindset from the evolution of monastic recordkeeping practices must be left to students of medieval history. Archivists will be much more interested in his detailed and effective defense of the evidentiary value of the organization of records, which reminds us that historians of the Middle Ages devote more time and effort to the study of documents than other historians and raises a question about the apparent fixation of American archivists on records-as-information. Could their obsession be the product of practicing their craft in a society that never experienced the transition from an oral to a written culture?

Day of Reckoning raises a number of other intriguing questions about the social nature and function of documents that will be of interest to archivists and testifies eloquently to the need for historical and contextual analysis of records in applying archival principles. One therefore hopes that in future editions the publisher will include at least one map as useful as those in other volumes in this series and perhaps add a brief timeline for each monastery to make this work more accessible to nonspecialists. However, even without such aids, archival educators and historians will find that the rewards of reading Berkhofer's thought-provoking treatise more than outweigh the diligence needed to tackle his dense and occasionally opaque prose.

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Archives: Recordkeeping in Society

Edited by Sue McKemmish, Michael Piggott, Barbara Reed, and Frank Upward. Wagga Wagga, New South Wales, Australia: Centre for Information Studies, Charles Sturt University, 2005. vi, 348 pp. A$71.50. ISBN 1-876938-84-6.

In their introduction to *Archives: Recordkeeping in Society*, editors Sue McKemmish, Michael Piggott, Barbara Reed, and Frank Upward explain that the purpose of this volume is to "provide a conceptual basis for archival science which coherently incorporates both established and emerging concepts within this discipline." By "established" the editors may refer to the kinds of practical and theoretical content that shapes such earlier volumes as *Keeping Archives.* While McKemmish and her colleagues certainly build upon the valuable

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content of such discussion, it is in their concern for "emerging concepts," and especially "the challenges posed by changing technologies" that this volume occupies an important new intellectual and theoretical space. In the words of one contributor, the greatest professional challenge facing archivists today is "the instant construction of archives that can be electronically communicated across vast spaces and through long reaches of time." Both in the architecture of its argument, and in its broad theoretical concern for identifying new perspectives on the kinds of intellectual and cultural exchanges that occur within archival environments, the volume makes important advances "both within and beyond the archival profession."

The design of this volume complements its stated intention of creating an environment for leading scholars to "present the results of their research and reflections around a number of issues and perspectives." "One such perspective," explain the editors, "is the metaphor of the web." The image is appropriate. With recurring historical references and philosophical allusions providing important intellectual stability, the text as a whole convincingly illustrates the interconnectedness of archives, "recordkeeping objects," memory, and the more general formation of cultural and historical identity. In general, readers will appreciate that these perspectives are filtered through an overarching postmodern orientation which allows for interesting re-evaluation of such standard discussions of "accountability" and "governance" while also gesturing toward more metaphysical concerns.

While the editors invite readers to explore the book in a nonlinear fashion, a sequential approach reveals three logical demarcations to which the editors themselves confess. The first "provides stand-alone introductions, raising much that is wrong with approaches to recordkeeping in democratic societies today, giving a view of archives across time, and introducing the communities of practice which make up the recordkeeping and archiving enterprise." The second "looks at archivists in operation" while the third is described as "open slather for thinking." It seems appropriate for a review to respect the editors' designs.

In her well-titled introduction, "Traces," McKemmish uses the tragic sinking of a boat laden with asylum seekers off the coast of Australia to problematize the conventional tension concerning the creation and management of records and information reception, while emphasizing its importance to historical constructions. The example resonates with and helps define the theoretical posture that shapes much of this volume. "In the postmodern archival discourse," explains McKemmish, "positivist ideas about the objective nature of the record, and the imperial and neutral roles played by archivists in their preservation, are giving way to explorations of processes of remembering and forgetting, inclusion and exclusion, and the power relationships they embody, depicting archives as political sites of contested memory and knowledge, following Derrida's 'there is no political power without control of the archive.' "

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Within such a theoretical rubric, Adrian Cunningham then explores such critical paradigms as the understanding that archives are "mutable creations," and that they are both "active and subjective participants in and shapers of political and cultural power relations." "Even in democracies," Cunningham reminds us, "governments do not surrender lightly the power of archival consignation." His analysis is historically grounded, and argues for a contextualized study of archival practice and methodology within a defined historical backdrop, as well as specific political and cultural environments. Beginning with the practical (though not always appreciated beyond the archival community) understanding that "recordkeeping provides the intellectual infrastructure that underpins all human endeavors," Ann Pederson provides additional historical orientation to archives and recordkeeping practices with the intention of placing "the spotlight on both those who 'profess' to provide recordkeeping services as their major work and on the nature of their communities of practice."

Discussion then turns "systematic." Successive chapters explore "Documents" (written by Robert Hartland, Sue McKemmish, and Frank Upward) and "Records" (written by Barbara Reed) with an emphasis, quite clearly articulated, on viewing culture as being shaped by a "web of documents," and on records as engaged in a kinetic inter-relationship with the process of daily activities. While the intellectual content is solid throughout these chapters, the discussion here is especially useful because it explores the problems inherent to such theoretical understandings when they are transposed onto a functioning archive and, of course, the work of archivists more generally. That is to say that the evaluation of both documents and records presents an elegant interplay between theoretical consideration and practical management. Indeed, such interaction between conceptual and professional concerns identifies these chapters as especially well suited for professional training.

Such analysis provides a segue into a chapter by Hans Hofman that explores the meaning, or perhaps definition, of an archives. Within the archival profession, such formulations have, of course, become increasingly nebulous as pressures ranging from technological influence to postcolonial theory have resulted in an often dizzying re-evaluation about the entire construct of an archives. Despite the often confused nature of such dialogues, Hofman's analysis remains accessible and provides a poignant orientation to the influence of technology on our changing conception of archives. As Hofman describes, "The two-dimensional and physical way of thinking has been replaced by a three- and even four-dimensional universe. This new paradigm allows us to view the archive from different viewpoints, and to better acknowledge the many perspectives, embedded in the interrelationships between organizations, business function, recordkeeping process, and evidence or memory." Hofman's discussion provides fitting introduction to the more practical contributions that follow (written by Sue McKemmish, Barbara Reed, and Michael Piggott), and that provides an especially useful (and thorough) introduction to appraisal that includes an

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important orientation to the "Australian 'series' system." Especially within these two chapters, the editors achieve their stated purpose of extending the relevance of archival theory "beyond the archival profession." Debate about such (now) iconic arguments as Derrida's *Archives Fever* could benefit from aligning their discourse with the innovative (practically oriented) perspectives of professionals within the archival field that these chapters provide.

Finally, there is "open slather for thinking" that occupies, essentially, the final third of this volume. While the precise demarcation of this section could be the subject of debate, I tend to view its beginning with Frank Upward's chapter entitled "The Records Continuum." Indeed, Upward himself describes his contribution as a preface to the final four chapters in which, to use his words, "authors variously tease out recordkeeping-based activity theory in relation to topics such as law, memory, accountability and power." These final chapters benefit from the groundwork Upward provides, and which advances toward a "spacetime meta-narrative of archives in different eras, looking at the storage of action-based information in different eras and trying to begin to draw attention to the accelerating and expanding universe of the archivist." Refreshingly, despite Upward's interest in advanced theory, his discourse remains both accessible and practical. Archivists, Upward explains, are constantly challenged by "the recurring need of different eras to discover the general metaphysics of recordkeeping anew for their times and technologies."

At the volume's conclusion, Chris Hurley, Livia Iacovino, Eric Ketelaar, and Michael Piggott explore the interplay between archives and more general cultural and historical constructions under the respective titles, "Recordkeeping and Accountability," "Recordkeeping and Juridical Governance," "Recordkeeping and Societal Power," and "Archives and Memory." The inclusion of these chapters marks a welcome advance upon the work of earlier studies and elegantly forces the vision of this volume beyond professional boundaries, while arguing emphatically for the importance of archival theory. In ways that gracefully mirror the earlier sequential discussion of documents and records, the succeeding chapters concerning accountability by Chris Hurley, and governance by Livia Iacovino, improve upon prior discussion and capture their readers' imagination by attributing to their topic inescapable, and indeed universal, relevance. "Institutions since ancient times have used alleged 'truth' from documents to legitimize their power," writes Iacovino, adding, "Archival science, which drew many of its principles from diplomatics, continues to remain relevant to law, as records are a source of legal evidence, and to institutions of state, as records document the relationships between individuals and the state."

Informed by well-selected historical examples ranging from the destruction of material evidence as a form of resistance to Nazism, to KGB files, and to interactions between archives and colonial and apartheid interests, Ketelaar builds upon the contributions of Hurley and Iacovino and offers a compelling (and

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indeed imaginative in its use of examples) association between social influence and control of the archives. Ketelaar's assertion includes a poignant discussion of how "political and societal inversion in former totalitarian countries involves a profound reassessment of the role of archival institutions," and a well-defended assertion that "each activation of the record is an enrichment, an extension." Ketelaar's discussion extends quite naturally into a final chapter by Michael Piggott entitled, "Archives and Memory," in which Piggott turns the popularized connection of archives with memory into something of an archival dilemma. "Mission statements notwithstanding," observes Piggott, "there is no consensus among those who have seriously thought about archives-based memory, and the shades of variation are intriguing." Piggott then articulates what he rightly asserts to be "a broader and more qualified articulation" of the topic. Collectively, these final pieces force an important interplay between the methodological and theoretical content of the preceding chapters and readers' more general appreciation for how historical and cultural identity interact with archives.

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Selecting and Appraising Archives and Manuscripts

By Frank Boles. Chicago. Society of American Archivists. 2005. vi, 192 pp. Illustrations. Index. Available from the Society of American Archivists, $35.00 members, $49.00 nonmembers. ISBN 1-931666-11-3.

This third incarnation of an SAA manual on appraisal has a different approach and tone from its predecessors. To begin with, it is less a "manual" than its predecessors have been and more a treatise on the subject of archival appraisal/selection, one that argues a particular point of view. This approach mirrors the general direction of the SAA Publications Board to produce a series that "reflect[s] evolving viewpoints about archival theory and practice." As one result of this evolutionary license, Boles emphasizes, more than others before him, the term *selection* rather than the more traditional *appraisal* that he considers to be "opaque" and associated with assessing the value of fine artwork rather than determining whether or not to retain archival records. He also states at the outset his intention to eschew the bland and use "humor" that includes "cheap shots, inside jokes. . .and other bric-a-brac ramble" despite knowing that "this manuscript [will] likely annoy some." (The decision to embrace this approach will come as no surprise to anyone who knows the author.) Whether the new emphasis on selection and the new "edgy" tone improves the manual as a learning device will remain for individual readers to determine for themselves.

For the most part, *Selecting and Appraising Archives and Manuscripts* is an articulate, thought-provoking work. The text is divided into six chapters and

three significant appendices (more on these later). The first, "Why Archivists Select," is an overview of how archivists came to be charged with actively making decisions about which records ought to be preserved. Boles uses Hilary Jenkinson as his foil, repeatedly contrasting Jenkinson's well-known belief that records creators, not archivists or historians, are the most qualified to select administrative records that will yield an unbiased documentary record with the current view that places selection of records with continuing value squarely at the core of the archivist's responsibilities. The chapter discusses how, for years, many archivists embraced this "keeper mentality" and only later came to embrace their role as selectors as well as preservers of documentary material.

"Muddied Waters and Conflicting Currents: An Overview of Appraisal Thought" is a historical overview of how archival appraisal methodology developed in the United States. Boles begins with Schellenberg and the early work of the National Archives in the 1930s, including their articulation of a set of "values" that archivists need to consider when making appraisal decisions and the importance of the research needs of secondary users. He takes a few more swipes at Jenkinson, characterizing him as "the old fossil" (a Schellenberg appellation) for the second time in two chapters. But the emphasis of "Muddied Waters" is on what one might call the "Post-Archival Edge" era as archivists responded to the challenge to become better decision makers regarding records. He chronicles our search for the "holy grail" of appraisal, describing briefly the "documentation strategy," the "new paradigm," "macro-appraisal," and other recently developed methodologies that have been put forward as better frameworks for making selection decisions. The chapter does for the recent era of archival appraisal thinking what Nancy Peace's seminal 1984 essay, "Deciding What to Save: Fifty Years of Theory and Practice," did for the earlier era, albeit with a bit more "attitude."

"The Big Picture: Mission Statements, Records Management, and Collection Policies" provides an overview of the different types of repositories and missions that define archives. Boles uses the same framework as the previous manual to describe types of repositories: institutional, collecting, and combined. He covers both records management programs that provide a structured appraisal/selection methodology in institutional archives and collecting policies that define the parameters of a collecting repository's "documentary goals." He covers both the advantages and disadvantages of each and also includes an interesting comparative discussion of the life cycle of records versus the idea of a records continuum and functional analysis.

"Mucking about in the Records: Making Selection Decisions on the Ground" brings us from the world of policy and administration to actually making decisions about records. Boles defends the use of taxonomies in making appraisal/selection decisions, and a good deal of what he has to say is sort of a *"Reader's Digest* condensed version" of the 1991 Boles/Young monograph

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Archival Appraisal. His discussion will be familiar to those who have read this earlier work or the 1985 *American Archivist* article "Exploring the Black Box: The Appraisal of University Administrative Records." The discussion meanders about, touching on but not dealing extensively with a number of important points. For example, he chooses to jettison "fiscal value," a venerable term that has been in use since Schellenberg's day, but the reason is explained only in a short footnote. The distinction between "legal value" and "legal use" is murky, focusing narrowly on third- party rights and the possibility of records being used in a legal action against the creating institution. Dealing with the drawbacks of restrictions on access, he cites the practice of the Minnesota Historical Society not to accept records with restrictions on use longer than twenty years "except under extraordinary conditions." But no examples of "extraordinary" are given, and novice readers might be left with the impression that records such as federal and state census returns might be destined for the shredder under this new regime, although presumably this is not the conclusion that Boles would wish the reader to draw. In many respects, this is the least satisfying chapter because it raises so many interesting issues but then races on to the next point without providing adequate background, explanation, or alternatives for those making selection decisions. Perhaps this is inevitable when trying to cover so much ground.

"Putting the Pieces Together: A Selection Model" flirts briefly with the age-old question of whether appraisal is an art or a science (equal parts of both, we are told) and then outlines a suggested six-part process through which selection decisions can be made. These steps are 1) defining the current goals of the archives and understanding how past decisions have been shaped the existing collection; 2) determining the documentary universe; 3) prioritizing; 4) defining desired functions and documentary levels; 5) selecting records; and 6) periodic updating. The chapter concludes with a short discourse on reappraisal and a section titled "Resting Easy" that encourages archivists to be bold in their decision making and not to worry about occasional mistakes. The framework takes up the bulk of the chapter. It is interesting and merits serious discussion. Boles includes a strong dose of the "Minnesota Method's" approach to determining priorities in collecting and its intriguing idea of assigning "documentary levels" to particular types of records. For the section on "Selecting Records," he introduces two hypothetical scenarios and guides the reader through a selection process. The examples will make for good classroom fodder and suggest other scenarios that instructors might develop.

The final chapter, "All Media Are Created Equal and with the Right to Be Archived: Media and Selection," repeats the familiar charge that, for years, archivists "marginalized" nontextual records and tended to treat them as "alternative" media, subservient to the printed word. Laying aside for the moment the question of whether a special chapter, focusing almost exclusively

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on nontextual records and located at the end of the book will help to end their "ghettoization" or simply perpetuate the old view, the chapter is a pretty good brief overview of some of the specific concerns (such as cost) that are frequently associated with preserving electronic or visual media. But why the special chapter? One can argue that this material might have been more effectively incorporated into earlier chapters. Our past marginalization of such media could have been addressed alongside Boles's Jenkinson denunciations (a task that might have been fun for the author because Jenkinson also wrote about "New Materials" with which archivists must deal). The increased costs of preserving such contemporary media could have been neatly incorporated into the "cost of retention" discussion in chapter 4. Dealing with nontextual media in this way might have been a more effective way to incorporate them into the archivist's mainstream consciousness.

A similar argument can be made regarding appendix 1, "Accessioning-Transferring Records to the Custody of the Archival Repository," and appendix 2, "Mathematical Sampling in Selection." Both are awkwardly out of place. The former is simply a reprint of chapter 9 from F. Gerald Ham's 1991 *Selecting and Appraising Manuscripts* with a few footnotes added but stripped of its useful examples of accession and transfer forms. The latter is both misplaced and incomplete. It would have been more effective if presented, as others have done, as a more comprehensive discussion of the options (short of re-creating the Minnesota Method) that are available to archivists who seek to reduce the quantity of records chosen for retention. Because many appraisal decisions fall between the two extremes of keeping all the records and destroying all the records, it would have been useful to include in one place not only random or statistical sampling but also retaining only key documents, exemplary or exceptional selection, retaining only an example, or even simple "weeding" (a Jenkinsonian term, I believe). This would have assisted archivists "mucking about in the records" to select wisely from all of their available alternatives.

Appraisal and selection should be a story well told. Unfortunately, separating the sections on accessioning and bulk reduction from the main *corpus* of the text marginalizes their impact, leaving the reader with a sense of "*treatise interruptus*." In fact, the Ham material could have been reworked and presented as a part of chapter 4. The sampling appendix could have been broadened and incorporated into either chapter 4 or chapter 5.

Finally, although we all enjoy "cheap shots" and "bric-a-brac rambling," Boles sometimes goes over the edge with his assault on blandness. He denigrates Hilary Jenkinson repeatedly for his "custodial" perspective and his naïve, passive reliance on records creators to make decisions about what is to be turned over to the archives. As a literary device, the technique works well. But over the course of his repeated jabs, Boles never once cites directly Jenkinson's 1937 work *Archive Administration* (an update of the original 1922 edition), relying instead

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on what others have said about Jenkinson. What he gives us is a simplistic caricature of an archivist who was as influenced by the "impossibly bulky" records from the First World War as much as he was "looking backward in time" to a period when record production was limited. Jenkinson was concerned with eliminating bias from the historical record, an issue that still troubles archivists. He acknowledged the danger that "record makers" might be tempted to make decisions with an eye to their image in history or to avoid criticism rather than according to administrative needs. He also acknowledged that by either destroying too little or too much, administrators might fail to do their duty responsibly. He clearly recognized a role for archivists "to make sure that [the administrator] destroys enough." Some of what he proposed could be termed a primordial form of records and forms management, although neither term had been coined at the time Jenkinson was writing. In retrospect, we might reject his solution, but Jenkinson clearly understood the problem and articulated it thoroughly and effectively. He should be given credit for this rather than simply to have been cast as "the old fossil." His 1937 monograph has not been reprinted as a "classic" by the SAA, not because Jenkinson was a doddering old fool, but because the issue of copyright cannot be resolved. As it is with all of us, he had some ideas that may not have been so good, but others that were insightful and even a little ahead of their time.

But, in the end, Boles has achieved the goal of updating our knowledge of recent developments in the profession. His work will stimulate discussion and thereby advance our knowledge of appraisal and selection. He obviously knows the subject thoroughly and he articulates his views well. Whether one agrees with his perspective, it is excellent grist for the mill. And it is by no means "bland."

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