
Intended for mid-career "record keepers," a term used in this volume to refer to archivists and records managers as a whole, Record Keeping in a Hybrid Environment is a collection of topical papers that examines the fundamental functions of both professions through the lens of current technological concerns.

Knowing that this volume would tackle subjects pertaining to electronic records and digital repositories, I initially expected (and, let's be honest, feared) content akin to a technical "how-to" manual or systems guide. What I discovered instead was a complementary group of articles that, as a whole, result in a fascinating discussion of archival functions in the context of the digital environment. While many manuals and readings on archival theory and methodology still consider the paper record as a basis for conceptual analysis, saving concerns regarding digitization and technology for "advanced" readers, this volume presents the interdependence of the issues so completely that the "paper first, electronic later" approach—while in reality is the only feasible interim strategy for many of us—becomes conspicuously arbitrary. This effect is further enhanced by the texts because they blur the lines between archivists and records managers, emphasizing the association of the two professions rather than their distinctions from one another.

Record Keeping was produced by the Glasgow University Archive Services and the University of Glasgow's working archives in conjunction with its Humanities Advanced Technology and Information Institute (HATII), which sponsors interdisciplinary programming and research in fields related to information technology use in the humanities and offers a doctoral degree program for archivists, digital curators, and records managers. The editors, Alistair Tough, senior research fellow, HATII, and archivist/records manager, NHS Greater Glasgow, and Michael Moss, professor of archive studies, HATII, have brought together contributing authors with diverse research and professional backgrounds, who address topics from appraisal and professional identity to electronic records systems and technical considerations of a virtual record-storage environment.

The first two chapters discuss the emergence of the digital environment. Chapter one, by Alistair Tough, addresses the issues broadly. Frank Rankin, in chapter two, outlines the difference between electronic document management and electronic records—management systems, summarizing suggested system operability functions and describing strategies to ensure that such a system is an effective presence within an organization. Rankin and Tough both emphasize the need for a corporate culture that supports the self-analysis required to implement and sustain an electronic records—management system over a changing organizational hierarchy.

Chapters three and four address risk in an organization's record-keeping activities. James Currall narrows in on practical issues regarding the security of records, showing that, while the threats to paper and electronic information are the same, those threats manifest themselves differently and with varying degrees of probability in the digital
environment. Currall concludes with a summary of ISO standards for information security. Azman Mat Isa discusses risk and corporate record-keeping’s role in risk management, as both a tool for internal analysis and public accountability, as well as for retaining corporate memory and the record of past successes—and mistakes.

In chapter five, Claire Johnson and Moira Rankin look at the changing role of records professionals in a multimedia age, donning an outsider’s view of our professional responsibilities and playing devil’s advocate to the possible consequences of inadequate promotion of the record-keeping professions. Together they implore record keepers to be proactive and establish themselves as key players in their organization’s corporate culture. Concluding the chapter is an appendix that contains a guide to professional archives organizations and related advocacy groups, as well as relevant legislation pertaining to information rights and management.

Chapters six and nine discuss digital-content systems from a curatorial perspective. Seamus Ross, in chapter six, situates the concept of digital preservation within the larger field of digital curation, and reviews the challenges of promoting the preservation of electronic records, as well as the inherent difficulty of determining what constitutes a “successful” preservation solution. Ross’s discussion is more particular to a corporate digital records repository, while Ian Anderson, in chapter nine, addresses digital preservation from the perspective of cultural-heritage projects. Anderson outlines planning strategies for digitization projects that should be addressed before technological considerations even enter the picture.

Practical case studies conducted by Rachel Hunter, Lesley Richmond, and Victoria Peters are detailed in chapters seven and eight. Hunter and Richmond discuss their approach to functional appraisal at the Glasgow University Archive Services, and describe the role of documentation in their appraisal of both university records and the collections of the Scottish Business Archive. Chapter seven includes an appendix with forms sharing their appraisal toolkit. In chapter eight, Richmond and Peters report the results of their related project, experimenting with functional description for over five hundred years of student records at the University.

In chapter 10, coeditor Michael Moss closes the volume with a theoretical discussion of the function of archives within the context of postmodernism and the corporate audit culture: as record keepers we must contend with the explosion of records generated via the Internet, as well as within our own organizations, while at the same time legislation increasingly dictates the types of records we collect. Moss wonders how these factors will shape the archives—and the archivist—of tomorrow.

As Moss suggests, the future of the record keeper is up to us, and we must continue to be both effective day-to-day practitioners as well as general self-advocates. A strong theme running throughout Record Keeping is that of the need for archivists and records managers to be proactive in their institutions, and to stay relevant by “understand[ing] and meet[ing] the needs of decision makers,” as emphasized by Johnson and Rankin in chapter five. It is only through efforts to this end that we will continue as a valuable and pervasive presence within the corporate culture and successfully complete the transition of our professions to the hybrid environment.

While the structure of Record Keeping allows each chapter to stand independently as an article for topical reference, the impact of the volume is best appreciated by
contemplating on the works as an aggregate. With consideration of my own experience, an archives professional still accustomed to working in the paper world, I was impressed that, upon completing the volume, I was truly thinking in terms of the records continuum, without mental separation of archives and records, paper and electronic forms. This volume finally broke down the walls hindering my ability to conceptualize the records universe at large.

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The title of this book aptly describes the content its readers will experience. The author provides an in-depth study of the implementation of an electronic records-management (ERM) project for an organization. He includes all phases of an e-records project in the discussion, from making the business case for an organization-wide solution to a final project report to stakeholders.

Kelvin Smith is well positioned to write on this topic. Smith is the head of the Accessions Management Unit and is a records management consultant in the Records Management and Cataloguing Department of the National Archives in Kew, England. On a cautionary side, this book is very U.K.-centric regarding the policies and references to additional information that can be found on the Web. U.S. readers will have to find corresponding policies and information on their own. With that aside, this is a very useful read for anyone embarking on an electronic records-management program regardless of his or her country of origin. Smith’s intellectual understanding of the subject and his ability to convey the methodology for implementing an ERM is universal. His thorough understanding of electronic records management comes through in each of the topic areas of this volume.

Planning and Implementing Electronic Records Management takes a comprehensive approach to the implementation of an electronic records program. The book is laid out in four parts, which illustrate the ERM implementation process as Smith sees it: “Preparation,” “Design,” “Implementation,” and “The Future.” In addition to in-depth discussion of these topics, Smith provides his readers with a number of charts and examples to assist records managers in both implementing their first ERM project or in revising previously implemented systems.

Part one, “Preparation,” contains three chapters: “The Underlying Principles,” “The Context,” and “Making the Business Case for ERM.” In the first chapter, Smith distinguishes between the underlying principles of information technology (IT) and records management and explains how the boundaries between the two have become blurred. He makes the case that changes in the way we produce records today and the public’s right to access are driving forces in implementing ERM solutions. In the private sector, the management of records for the benefit of the corporation and the ability of workers to better access information are key factors driving corporate-wide ERM solutions. Smith also points out that, although the boundaries of records management have crossed with those of IT, the principles of records management have not changed. He goes on to address the major points that concern records managers and archivists.

In “The Context,” Smith addresses those concerns by describing the functions and necessary positioning of records management within an organization. In the final chapter of part one, “Making the Business Case,” Smith also explains the process of building a business case for ERM, since the program needs to be sold to top executives in order for it to function effectively. Included is a model business case that can be used to help build a business case for any organization.
Part two, "Design," is the most important section of this book. It consists of six chapters that discuss in detail how an ERM system is designed. This discussion is imperative to ensuring that the necessary functionality of the system is addressed in the request for proposal (RFP) process. In chapter four, "Main Issues for Design," Smith does not leave anything to assumption. He clarifies the difference between electronic document management (EDM) and true ERM and how the systems work in harmony with each other. He also explains how to determine an organization's ERM needs against the requirements of an ERM system. Finally, Smith discusses metadata standards and the role metadata plays within ERM.

The next two chapters outline what lies at the heart of any well-planned ERM program: information surveys and file plans. The information survey, or records inventory, is key to ascertaining the status of a records management program and helps establish the direction an ERM program will take. Smith describes the file plan as the most crucial aspect of ERM design and the principal intellectual instrument of records management. He explains how to develop a useful and complete file plan for an organization and explores all aspects of the plan, from who should and will have access to the plan to the implementation of naming conventions and metadata.

The next two chapters of this section explore appraisal and preservation. Smith spends a fair amount of time describing appraisal methods for paper records and why those methods do not work for electronic records. He strongly advocates for up-front appraisal of electronic records. Smith says, and rightly so, that without up-front appraisal, the organization will lose records of long-term value, because context and content are separated in the electronic environment. Although a new approach to appraisal is necessary for electronic records, he makes it abundantly clear that the retention of electronic records is the same as that for their paper counterparts. He states that it is the information and not the medium that is being appraised. Early appraisal of electronic records can also aid in the preservation issues Smith covers in the following chapter. He emphasizes the need to consider the medium term, which he calls sustainability, for electronic records, as well as the long term, or preservation, of electronic records produced in a wide variety of systems. He asserts the need for technical help from and collaboration with IT to design the best process for long-term preservation.

The final chapter of the "Design" section discusses access. Smith says that, while the principles of access are the same as with paper records—accessibility, usability, and security—there are unique challenges, particularly in the redaction of e-records. He spends a great deal of time on the issue of redacting information. He makes the valid point that unless care is taken, the bytes of information that are redacted can be recovered. This information, while somewhat useful for all audiences, is very U.K.-centric, because it pertains to the U.K. Freedom of Information Act 2000. This act addresses the right of access to information, and now requires that documents containing sensitive information be redacted to release as much of the information contained in them as possible.

Part three of the Smith volume, "Implementation," focuses on the implementation of an ERM program. Smith stresses that not only does e-records implementation take an extraordinary amount of technical planning, it takes strong management skills in four critical areas: project management, procurement, change management, and training.
A chapter is devoted to each of these areas. He explains that change management, although a discipline in itself, is the key to the success of a project. The people who use the system must be comfortable with it and understand it. With that said, training of users plays a paramount role in the success of a project as well. Good management skills in these areas will help ensure a successful electronic records program.

Finally, in the concluding chapter that comprises part four, "The Future," Smith looks at where records management is going. He believes there will be greater emphasis on technical solutions for records management and that "paradigm shifts in most aspects of the management of records and information" (p. 203) will occur. Clearly, Smith sees the future of records management as a partnership between technology and records and information management. This volume is a worthwhile read for any archivist or records manager faced with implementing an ERM program. It contains all of the important topics to consider when doing so, along with examples of requirements that can be used as a starting point.

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It’s an all-too-common predicament. One day the office manager is handed keys to a storeroom full of overflowing boxes and instantly—without training, experience, or resources—becomes the house archivist.

Now would be the time to consult Building a Successful Archival Programme, a slender volume aimed at guiding such hapless recruits in performing their newfound duties, and doing so on a shoestring budget. The authors, Marisol Ramos and Alma Ortega, base their advice on their shared experience of establishing the archives at the Chicano Studies Research Center Library at the University of California, Los Angeles.

This manual offers very little in the way of archival theory, and focuses instead on the practical steps necessary to transform a closet full of documents into an archival program. Although it would have benefited from closer editing in places, the prose is conversational and accessible. The authors eschew archival terminology for less-intimidating layman’s terms. Although this book should not replace the Society of American Archivists’ Archival Fundamentals series as required reading for the new archivist, it will be a useful companion because of its sound advice, insider tips, and step-by-step instructions.

Wisely, the authors recommend that the new archivist begin by assessing the collection and writing policies. Indeed, Ramos and Ortega devote the first third of the volume to this important task. They argue convincingly that the first charge of an archivist with an unorganized collection is to conduct a needs-assessment survey that takes into consideration not just the content and condition of the collection, but its potential clientele, intellectual property issues, and the research value of the records. The findings from the survey will inform a series of policy documents, including a mission statement, a modest strategic plan, collection-development and access policies, and finally a budget. The appendices of sample documents complement the clear directions for writing these policies found in the body of the work.

In the rest of the text, the authors address the other major areas of archival practice, including preservation, arrangement and description, reference and outreach, and donor relations. Though each of these sections is very short, they provide good introductions to the topics, as well as the benefit of the authors’ recent experience.

Those inexperienced in grant writing, for example, may find the description of the application and award processes to be useful. The authors caution that applying for grants is very time-consuming, and advise, “If grant writing is one of your primary duties, make sure that this is clear to your supervisors. Otherwise, it can become a major issue if they think you are not spending enough time on your other duties.” They also warn, “Once you win a grant, do not necessarily expect that you will receive the full award, as the parent institution may well deduct some, due to costs such as overheads and maintenance.”

The chapter “Access, Archival Reference and Outreach” provides the kind of step-by-step instructions that are sure to be welcomed by the new archivist. For example, it includes an inventory of tools to have available at the reference desk, including pencils.
for patron use, long strips of paper for patrons to use as bookmarks, donation and citation guidelines, reading room rules, brochures, and access policies. The section on drafting a preferred citation for the collection is also particularly helpful.

The chapter "Arrangement, Description and Finding aids" may be the most confusing to American readers. Because this volume is aimed at an international audience, the authors point to the International Standard on Archival Description (General) as a reference for creating an in-house processing manual. The American standard, Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DACS), is not mentioned in the chapter, nor does it appear in the "Further Reading" section. The casual tone of the chapter also underplays the importance of Encoded Archival Description in the archival field. The manual tells the reader that "encoded archival description (EAD) is quite the thing to do if you have finding aids that you want to make available electronically via the Internet," but it does not make clear that this is the standard for encoding finding aids.

Although Building a Successful Archival Programme does not address the question of electronic records, except to offer a "Further Reading" list, it is otherwise a comprehensive introduction to the practice of managing an archival program. The authors should be commended for addressing, albeit briefly, such topics as the ethical considerations in accepting donations and the provision of access to patrons with physical disabilities.

A second goal of this book, in addition to introducing the field of archives to those without archival training, is to offer advice on establishing an archival program on a very small budget. Here, too, the authors make some good suggestions. For example, in the preservation section, they recommend concentrating on regulating the temperature and humidity of the storage area and not necessarily on rehousing the collections in acid-free folders and boxes.

At some points in the book, however, they make specific suggestions for operating an archival program that has almost no resources. Although the authors propose some creative responses to this predicament (such as holding a sale of books donated by the staff), they do not address the possibility that the parent institution may not be sufficiently committed to the archives for it to be viable. I would argue that it does the profession a disservice to give resource allocators the impression that an archival program can be run without a minimum level of financial support.

Newly minted archivists operating on a shoestring may find the $55–$69 jacket price for Building a Successful Archival Programme to be an obstacle. However, for those faced with the difficult task of transforming an unorganized collection of boxes into an archival program, this book would be a worthwhile investment.

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Richard Cox, professor of archival studies in the School of Information Science at the University of Pittsburgh, has once again kindled my thoughts, launching weighty ideas and arguments to ponder, and placing archives and archivists at the forefront of many contemporary events. Cox relies on a variety of sources, not only archivists and historians, but also journalists, philosophers, writers, and artists, which demonstrates his interdisciplinary perspective. Cox interprets these writings, casting archives and records managers in starring roles. He has compiled nearly 30 pages of references (which includes a page of self-references—Can he help it if he is one of the most prolific writers in the business?), and a thorough index. In his introduction, “From Ethics to Accountability, or When Do Records Professionals Become Whistleblowers?” Cox covers such varied topics as corporate scandals (e.g., Enron and Arthur Anderson), government secrecy (particularly the KGB and the CIA), and the complicated and sensitive issues surrounding archival collections of indigenous people—all the while reminding us of the archivist’s place in society.

The nine chapters cover a panoptic range of archival concerns, and it is apparent that the general theme in this textbook is not simply instructional. I chose to read it from front to back, but that isn’t necessary, since all the chapters can stand on their own. A whole reading, in whichever order one chooses, does give a complete picture of the author’s intention, which is stated in the final chapter: “... to try to provide some understanding of how the notion of archives—as place, function, mission, and idea—has been shifting about in meaning through the 20th century and what the implications of this continuous transformation are for archivists and the society they serve.” The book is a reminder to practitioners that the jobs we perform are for the greater good, a mission that we sometimes forget when we are buried up to our necks in, well, archives.

In the first chapter, “Testing the Spirit of the Information Age,” Cox reminds us of the grand promises about improvements the information age will bring, such as “making our lives and jobs easier and more efficient,” and asserts that there is too much acceptance that everything will be better, with little awareness on the part of most people that this is not always the case. He advises us to be more objective about technology and also to look at the costs of being constantly connected. Finally, he passes on advice from environmental activist and technology critic Jerry Mander: “Since most of what we are told about new technology comes from its proponents, be deeply skeptical of all claims.”

In “Searching for Authority and Recognition,” Cox addresses the availability of professional literature on electronic records management, and considers where archivists have historically (meaning, in the past couple of decades) obtained their literature. Cox discusses electronic records management (ERM) and strategic information management (SIM) and warns against relying too heavily on these concepts because they may take us further away from our real mission.
In “Why the Archivist of the United States is Important to Records Professionals and America,” Cox demonstrates how the decisions made about the National Archives decades ago affect policy today. The chapter also covers the 2004 controversy over choosing the new archivist of the United States.

The chapter “Presidents and Their Libraries” presents an overview of the history of the presidential library program, introducing arguments for and against the program, and outlining the political pitfalls associated with the creation and maintenance of said libraries. Cox gives a persuasive policy recommendation to turn over the responsibility of managing presidential papers to the National Archives.

In “The World is a Dangerous Place: Recordkeeping in the Age of Terror,” Cox asks us to consider what archivists might be asked to do in a “dangerous world”—what kinds of ethical infractions might we be willing to commit or infringements might we concede to if asked or ordered? He weighs the dilemma of maintaining a balance between a secure and safe society against a free one, in which the government is as transparent as possible while still providing protection to its citizens. Cox also discusses how professional codes of ethics might be applied in this new “age of terror.”

The ways technology has changed record-keeping methods in business and industry, and the effects of technology on the workplace in general and the archival profession in particular, are examined in “Technology, the Future of Work, and Records Professionals.” In this chapter, Cox stresses the importance of integrating the needs of people with their technological capabilities. He brings the problem into focus when he suggests that, in order for records professionals to avoid losing sight of their true mission, they should slow down and consider the effects of technology on society, rather than reacting to whatever high-tech innovation is running us down at the moment.

“Records and Truth in the Post-Truth Society” focuses on the writings of several authors who examine the breakdown of social contracts and truth-telling in our society. Cox argues that relying more on records to tell the truth and improve accountability can help us to salvage the trust relationship between citizens and the experts (or those who claim to be experts), something many of these authors neglect to mention. He examines some of the recent corporate scandals, as well as some historians’ transgressions, to illustrate the point that archivists and records managers should take note of these events and keep in mind the role we may play in them.

In “Personal Notes: Intellectual Property, Technology and Unfair Stories,” Cox compares the views of two authors who have written books on intellectual property, Lawrence Lessig and Siva Vaidhyanathan, and applies their ideas to the work we do as information professionals. Cox continues with a discussion of fair use and copyright, using as an example his own experience in seeking permission from a major publisher to quote another author.

I have only two complaints about this book: its price and its cover. There is not much to say about the former. It is simply too expensive, and the sinking value of the dollar compared to the British pound does not help. As for the latter, it is a truism that you
should not judge a book by its cover, but people still do. Just because it is a textbook, does not mean it has to look like one.

Despite such appealing topics as censorship, scandal, fraud, and conspiracy, my initial impression was that this book was overly specialized. Having completed it, I now recognize Cox's volume is directed toward an informed readership that will be edified by his message.

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The loss of family records, either from a catastrophic natural disaster or a simple accident, can have far longer financial and personal implications than the loss of personal property. Records that are destroyed or lost can lead to a loss of property rights, health insurance coverage, and even identity theft if the records end up in the wrong hands.

Rescuing Family Records: A Disaster Planning Guide, which was released in conjunction with Home and Family Preparedness Week in 2007, was conceived and written with the layman in mind. The main purpose of this guide is to discuss the necessity of protecting family records by creating and updating a disaster plan in preparation of a major natural or man-made disaster. Educating families residing in at-risk environments on the importance of preserving their family and personal records is a topic that has been championed by author David Carmichael, the director of the Georgia State Archives. Rescuing Family Records arose from Carmichael’s discussions with individuals residing in hurricane- and tornado-prone areas, who feared the loss of important personal records in the event of natural disaster.

Carmichael’s guide begins by creating a solid background for the reader on the risks associated with not having a Family Records Plan. Carmichael provides examples of worst-case scenarios that could arise from a loss of valuable family records, following up these introductory sections by defining which records are essential and including an easy-to-use “Essential Records Checklist.” The checklist is an inventory of records that families should have ready to remove from the home in the event of a disaster, with descriptions of what these documents look like and what information they include and whether or not duplicates can be procured from the institutions of origin.

Carmichael concludes the guide with a discussion on strategies that can be employed to protect family records, namely records duplication and having a “ready to evacuate” plan. The author does an excellent job of explaining the important legal distinctions between certification and notarization, electronic and paper duplication, and the proper maintenance and repair of older, historically significant documents.

This guide is an outstanding introductory resource for individuals not familiar with records management on the importance of protecting family records. It does a superb job of explaining the why and how of family records plans, and which documents need to be included, so that families can be protected in the event of disaster. Rescuing Family Records is a must for any family living in a region with the propensity for natural or man-made disasters.

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At first glance, the title of this volume might lead archivists, historians, and other readers to surmise that what they will find within are the type of light stories that are often told around the average reading room or history department or that sometimes bounce around various electronic mailing lists. In fact, *Archive Stories* with Burton and the 15 individual chapter authors explores the intersection of archivists, historians, historiography, and modern archival collections. The result is not light reading, but rather is an important glimpse into how history is written and how archives and archivists might help shape the process and the results.

There are a number of previous accounts published regarding the interplay between historians and the archival collections they have accessed, and almost all are told from the perspective of the historians themselves. Seldom does one see the process of how history is written and interpreted from the eyes of the people who collect and describe material for historical research—unfortunately, this volume is no different. *Archive Stories* is a narrative of historians and, despite Burton’s statement: “Our emphasis on the need for archive stories—narratives about how archives are created, drawn upon, and experienced by those who use them to write history,” archivists are almost completely left out of the dialogue. The conflict between archivists and historians over the collecting, describing, and telling of history is present, but what is missing is the effect of useful collaboration between archivists and historians. Where are the stories about historians tipping off archivists about important collections that need to be processed, or stories about how archivists (sometimes subtly, sometimes not so subtly) guide historians through the shoals and deep waters of institutional collections?

The volume is broken down into three parts: “Close Encounters: The Archive as Contact Zone,” “States of the Art: ‘Official’ Archives and Counter-Histories,” and “Archive Matters: The Past in the Present.” While Burton’s case for breaking down the volume into three sections is interesting, her arguments ultimately do not ring true. The result is a text that shoehorns chapters into sections without evident fit or flow. Burton makes a case for archival spaces (both physical and of the mind) being important to research, and this is a basis for part one. However, the chapters in parts two or three could easily have been substituted for other chapters in part one, and the reader would have been none the wiser. A telling example of this might be Polhandt-McCormick’s “Soweto in the Archives of South Africa,” which, it could be argued, fits equally well in any of the three parts. After all, it is a story of close encounters, of official archives versus counter-histories, and of the intersection of the past and present.

*Archive Stories* does add to the conversation that all historians and archivists should have about historiography and, especially, the bias that always creeps into collecting and making available historical material. Milligan’s “What Is an Archive?” does a good job of exploring how the role and very nature of the Archives Nationales has changed as France itself has changed. This contrasts very nicely with Polhandt-McCormick’s “Soweto in the Archives of South Africa,” which, in part, studies the role of archivists and archives as custodians of sometimes competing pasts.
Ultimately, *Archive Stories* is most important for what is left out rather than for what is found within. How much more complete and, indeed, colorful the discourse would have been had archivists themselves been a larger part of the conversation.

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The title of this publication is right on the mark and should be considered a “must-read” for those just entering the field of archives (i.e., students) and those needing a refresher on why we do what we do as archivists. The author not only restates many of the concepts we practice every day, but also describes why we continue to do them year after year, generation after generation: because they work.

The author, Caroline Williams, is well suited to the task of writing such a manual. She worked in archives and records management in local government before joining the University of Liverpool in 1996. The same year, she was instrumental in the establishment of the Liverpool University Centre for Archives Studies (LUCAS), the university’s center for research, education, and training in archives and records management. Williams became director of the master’s program in archives and records management in 1997, and served until 2007, when she left to take up the post of head of research and collections development at the National Archives. She has been chair of FARMER, the Forum for Archives and Records Management Education and Research in the United Kingdom, since 2003, and a member of the International Council on Archives Section on Education and Training since 2001. She is also an honorary research fellow at the University of Liverpool.

Managing Archives is a well-rounded and comprehensive treatment on the subject of managing archives from a content approach. The book is laid out in such a way that the discussion of archival basics follows a logical progression toward that of the more complicated and theoretical sides of archival management. In addition to an introduction, the volume contains six main chapters that discuss principles and purposes of records and archives; selection, appraisal, and acquisition; archival management and description; access, reference, and advocacy; preservation; and managing an archives service. The comprehensive bibliography and index are welcome and very useful. The figures and tables are well placed and always relevant to the surrounding text.

The author does a wonderful job of outlining her vision with the introduction. In the next chapter she effectively communicates the need to appreciate the concepts and principles we all strive to follow within the archival workplace. This section explains the principles and concepts of records and archives; the similarities to and differences from other information sources; the uses of records and archives by individuals and organizations; the core functions of archives management; the role of the archivist and the records manager; and the historical and institutional environments in which archives are found. It is a helpful refresher, even for an experienced archivist like myself.

Chapter three concentrates on three core concepts of archives service: selection, appraisal, and acquisition. Williams discusses the differences between selection, appraisal, acquisition, collection, accession, and documentation, as well as the developing awareness of current archival appraisal theory. She also instructs on writing an archival acquisitions or collections policy, developing an acquisitions strategy, establishing processes for the systematic acquisition and accessioning of material, applying appropriate methodologies in the appraisal of records and archives, and successfully negotiating
the donation or deposit of material. This section proved to be a good review of our most important daily functions and will have you rethinking some of your current policies and strategies.

The fourth chapter is especially compelling, as it both challenges and supports the ways in which archival arrangement and description can be done. It gave me new insights into why I do things the way I do at Hope College and why others do their arranging and describing their way at other institutions. It was thought-provoking and very informative, covering important topics such as how finding aids differ depending on the type of institution that creates them, accepted principles and practices, archival descriptive standards, creating archival descriptions in conformity with accepted standards, and developing strategies for retrieving information from archives through indexes and finding aids.

The next chapter concentrates on all of the important aspects of access, reference, and advocacy. Specifically, it focuses on ethical and international issues, access in the United Kingdom, privacy and copyright legislation, access in the private sector, standards and policies, reference services and users, advocacy and outreach, and assessing the impact of a repository’s services. I found this section revealing, considering how we are addressing these issues in the United States at all levels.

Chapter six deals with the topic of preservation and the need to properly define it within our particular agency, where possible, since each archival agency is unique. Williams also discusses how to develop and implement policies, strategies, and standards; assess preservation needs through surveys, audits, and benchmarking; recognize the attributes of and threats to diverse media and formats; understand the role of conservation within preservation; create an emergency plan; reformat materials and create surrogates for everything from paper to digital records; and plan a digitization program.

The final chapter concentrates on managing an archives service. It provides a framework to assist you in defining your role within your organization; in placing your organization in a professional context; in setting organizational missions, goals, aims, and objectives; in establishing personal aims and objectives; in applying project management techniques; in developing archives policies; and in taking stock of resources like staffing, finance, and accommodations.

I was glad to review this book and have referenced it frequently during projects concerning nearly all of the above. Complete it is, and well-read it will become.

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Joint Archives of Holland
Hope College

In the modern archival world and our daily work, we archivists spend the bulk of our time on the fundamentals of our profession. We appraise and collect recorded information; we process collected records and information in all their forms and provide access to them for our users; and increasingly over the last two decades, we worry about one of the larger issues facing our profession: the collection, preservation, and referencing of digital records. Directors of large archives, as well as lone arrangers, also spend a great deal of time with essential but less intellectually stimulating archival functions, such as funding and institutional politics. In a recent work, Archives, Documentation, and Institutions of Memory: Essays from the Sawyer Seminar, editors Francis X. Blouin Jr. and William G. Rosenberg remind us that it is always a wise endeavor, and a good use of time, to take a break from our usual work to consider how and why archivists do what they do.

Archives, Documentation, and Institutions of Memory is an outstanding collection of 46 essays from the 2000–2001 Sawyer Seminar held at the Bentley Historical Library by the Advanced Studies Center of the International Institute of the University of Michigan. This long-term seminar featured 150 presentations and extensive commentary from prominent scholars and archivists from 15 countries. The essays are loosely organized along five themes, which also serve as titles for the sections of this publication: Archives and Archiving; Archives in the Production of Knowledge; Archives and Social Memory; Archives, Memory, and Political Culture (Canada, the Caribbean, Western Europe, Africa, and European Colonial Archives); and Archives and Social Understanding in States Undergoing Rapid Transition (China, Postwar Japan, Postwar Greece, Russia, Ukraine, and the Balkans). The book also includes a list of all seminar participants.

Although this is an exceedingly complex volume, Blouin and Rosenberg begin their investigation with a simple premise: What is an archives, and what actually goes on there? To be sure, the editors recognize that these two larger questions are “deceptively simple.”

Archives are indeed complex structures, well beyond mere physical repositories for warehousing historical records, although the editors do suggest that archives as space is one aspect that needs to be considered. The question remains: What really underlies archives and the work archivists perform? The complexity of modern archives and archival practices are shaped by the production of recorded information in its many forms, fluid and ever-evolving digital technology, and the influence of national, regional, and local political cultures. All of these factors are further influenced by the ideas, education, and social and political backgrounds of individual archivists and users as they ply their trades.

As one can imagine, this tour de force of archival inquiry is a difficult work to review in just a few words. A brief review cannot do justice to this most important contribution to the literature. One cannot cite a specific essay without short-changing another that also deserves to be discussed. Among the many ideas and theories, however, a few
overall themes emerge. One salient notion is best stated in the authors' introductory remarks, in which they emphasize that an "archive is a constant site of mediation between the materials and the archivist, as well as between the archivist and the user."

Indeed, this book demonstrates that the ultimate nature of a particular archives and mode of archiving depends on a vast range of variables. It offers more questions than answers, but they are questions worth pondering. In our postmodern world, what, exactly, constitutes an archival record and who produces such a record? Is the video someone places onto YouTube as valuable as a paper archival record from the nineteenth century? Does the ethnicity of archivists, no matter their attempts to work within nonbiased, ethical methodologies, make a difference that we need to recognize and understand? What do the users of our archives expect from our work, and how do they "read" the archives and the materials we preserve and prepare for them?

In this respect, since archivists have a great measure of control over the sources from which most history is written, how have we historically and how do we currently influence social memory, and for whom? What are the differences in practice and theory in archives long-since established, those in nations that have remained relatively stable over the past century or so, and those in nations that have experienced rapid, wrenching transitions over the past few decades? And, what role does political culture have in deciding what archives will be developed, how they will be formed, and for what purposes and users they are intended to serve?

The hallmark of a great book is that it provides the reader with something important to think about, and this volume does just that. The essays are thoughtful and generally readable, but make no mistake, these are pieces of scholarship by serious thinkers, and not light reading. They provide the reader with a plethora of ideas, some to be savored and registered in our minds for application in our professional practices, and some to be debated and argued long into the future. There are ideas that will make us happy in our work, and others that will give us pause. Ultimately, this compilation shows that archivists are not neutral managers of information. The decisions we make play an important and active part in shaping historical and collective memory. Archives, Documentation, and Institutions of Memory: Essays from the Sawyer Seminar deserves a close reading by all of us in the archival profession.

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Sir Arthur Conan Doyle is best known for writing the mystery/adventure stories of Sherlock Holmes, but he was also the author of many other works, a practicing medical doctor, an occasional lecturer and journalist, and, at times, an aspiring politician. In addition to his published writings, it turns out Conan Doyle was a prolific letter writer. Arthur Conan Doyle: A Life in Letters contains hundreds of previously unpublished letters primarily written by Conan Doyle to his mother. These letters are from Conan Doyle’s collection of personal papers located in the Manuscripts Collection of the British Library.

The volume spans nearly his entire life—letters begin when he was a schoolboy and continue up until his mother’s death in 1920, nine years before his own. The book is divided into 13 chapters, which are arranged chronologically and titled after a major event in his life at the time. The first chapter, which contains letters from Conan Doyle’s days at school, is appropriately entitled “The Schoolboy,” and spans the years 1867–1876. The remaining chapters cover his years as a medical student, struggling doctor, successful writer, aspiring politician, and war correspondent.

The letters cover a variety of issues but nearly always include allusions to his money troubles, his health, friends, and family. Financial trouble is a predominant subject in the second through fourth chapters, which cover the years 1876 to 1890, when Conan Doyle was dependent on his mother to help him make ends meet. Since the English were not on the decimal system during this period, it would have been helpful if the editors had provided an explanation of the monetary system.

Archivists will cringe when reading the introduction to find that Conan Doyle rarely dated his letters and kept few of the ones he received. English majors will also find appalling his inconsistent use of spelling and grammar, particularly as a schoolboy. The editors of the volume, his great-nephew Charles Foley and two scholars on Conan Doyle, should be commended for their extensive research into his life in order to place the letters in the correct chronological sequence. They acknowledge a number of repositories, archivists, and librarians for their help in finding information. Though the letters came from the collection in the British Library, the research was done around the world. The editors also provide detailed background information on events mentioned in the letters, which may be unfamiliar to the reader. The early chapters also include snippets of Conan Doyle’s other writings to illustrate how the events in his life influenced his stories. For example, after a letter in which Conan Doyle informs his mother that his school number is 31, the editors include a quote from “The Adventure of the Retired Colourman,” in which a character recalls his old school number to be the same.

Fans of the Sherlock Holmes stories are probably already aware that Conan Doyle was never a big fan of the character. His letters reveal some of that disdain. Holmes is mentioned primarily as a source of income—something to be written about when the author needed extra money. Nor did Conan Doyle view the stories as being his most significant or best work. The writings he describes most passionately to his mother
are not as well remembered as the Holmes stories and often did not receive the critical acclaim or financial success the detective tales did.

The strength of *A Life in Letters* lies in the fact that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle had a lifelong correspondence with his mother; however, in that also lies the book's weakness. It is clear in many cases that he tempered his responses to his mother in order to protect her from certain situations. His first wife was ill for a long time, and the descriptions he provides his mother of the illness always reflect a positive tone. The editors explain that privately he did not feel as optimistic as he led his mother to believe, and his letters to others tended to be more realistic about her condition. Conan Doyle also shielded his mother from his growing belief in spiritualism. She did not like that her son was going against church doctrine. He kept his belief in spiritualism out of his letters until the mid 1910s, when he began publicly lecturing on the topic. That is not to say that he protected his mother from all his life events and philosophies. They openly argued over his involvement in the Boer War. He acted on his own beliefs, but he respected her opinion enough to keep her letters to him on that subject, though he discarded most others. Also, in contrast to his secrecy about spiritualism, Conan Doyle was surprisingly open about his growing friendship with Jean Leckie (who would become his second wife) while his first wife was ill.

*Arthur Conan Doyle: A Life in Letters* is a fascinating, if not necessarily penetrating, study of a man whose literary writings continue to attract new admirers. Conan Doyle was himself a larger-than-life figure, who was as complex as any character he created. His letters show his passion and his intellect, although the portrayal is somewhat tame due to his Victorian upbringing. Casual fans may be surprised to learn the full extent of his writings and the breadth of subjects he covered. Processing archivists will appreciate the time the editors took with placing hundreds of undated letters into chronological order. The book is aimed at Conan Doyle fans who wish to know more about the inner workings of the man, but they, too, may be left wanting more.

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Years ago, when our sole computer was used only for typing letters in response to research inquiries and not at all for cataloging, I would select several points of access for each newly processed collection. The collection itself would be arranged in some order, either its existing order or one we imposed on it. Each one of these access points required the typing of a catalog card, so I might type three or four cards for a given manuscript collection or archival records accession. As our catalog grew, we hoped that access to our collections would improve—as long as the user found us.

In Everything is Miscellaneous, David Weinberger, a fellow at Harvard Law School’s Berkman Center for the Internet and Society, posits that such traditional processes for cataloging information are becoming obsolete. He discusses how the digital age has not only created a need for new ways to access the chaos of abundant information, but that it also provides the means to do so. Weinberger describes the world as structured into three orders. In the first order are the things themselves: the silverware, clothing, books, photographs, or archival documents that need to be placed somewhere. In the second order are the catalogs, inventories, and finding aids—the descriptions of the items on paper. The second order separates the first order and groups them together with like items, but second-order items take up space, too. First- and second-order items “can only go [in] one place. That’s just how atoms work,” writes Weinberger.

The third order, on the other hand, frees us from set arrangement schemes, such as the Dewey Decimal System and alphabetization, and allows people to come up with their own connections between pieces of information. In my cataloging process, for example, I was constrained by time and space in adding second-order catalog cards to describe first-order collections. In a third-order Web database, such as the one on a social media site like Flickr, keywords, or “tags,” are attached to an item so that others looking for similar items with that tag will find it. For example, when I searched the tag Dusseldorf on Flickr, I received more than one hundred thousand results. When I couple this with a garden, the number is reduced to fewer than six hundred. Users load their photographs to the site and assign them tags. When another user finds a photograph with the same tag, he can give it an additional tag, thereby increasing the possibility it will be found by yet other users. There become endless combinations that a cataloger in the second-order days would not have had the time for creating, if he could have thought of them all.

Weinberger gives many more examples of what he calls the third order of order. Most of these, like Flickr and iTunes, will be familiar to readers. The social bookmark manager del.icio.us (now Delicious) keeps track of favorite Web sites in a much better way than using conventional browser-based bookmarks that get unwieldy after the user has created a few hundred. It instead employs user-created tags to allow the user to retrieve the sites as needed, with a single tag or some combination of them. LibraryThing, which allows users to create a catalog of their personal book collection, dubs itself, “the world’s largest book club,” where users have cataloged more than 24 million titles. At DePauw, librarians have embraced LibGuides to create both class-
specific and subject guides to library resources. It is a tag-oriented product that allows users to make the connections between the guides that were difficult to create in the second-order world.

The example that Weinberger gives the most space to is Wikipedia, the user-created encyclopedia that librarians still cannot agree to consider a legitimate resource. To quote Weinberger, “The bits and pieces of Wikipedia are, in effect, an enormous reserve of miscellaneous information that can be assembled in precisely the ways we need at precisely the moment we need it.” None of the pieces of information are in alphabetical order as in a conventional second-order (paper) encyclopedia, but are put together when the request is received.

The major objection to Wikipedia is that articles are written anonymously. Authors are known only by their pseudonym or their ISP protocol, depending on whether they are registered users or not. Users can become authors and edit existing articles. Of course those edits are also subject to change by yet other author-users. Frequent successful authors gain their reputation through both their knowledge and their negotiation skills. When part of an article is challenged, the author of that piece may defend his position.

The goal is the neutral point of view (or NPOV, for devoted Wikipedians). But without an editorial board, how is neutrality achieved? Weinberger posed that question to Wikipedia founder, Jimmy Wales, who responded, “I’m not all that interested in French philosophy. An article is neutral when people have stopped changing it.” Of course there is some control exercised over the content; otherwise some controversial subjects would get changed constantly, back and forth, or even vandalized by malicious users. Those can be frozen, and the work of vandals can be undone. A community of several hundred people who have special administrative privileges exists for this purpose.

So what does Weinberger see for the future? The World Wide Web is big, messy, and miscellaneous. Its inventor, Tim Berners-Lee, made it without a plan so that it would grow rapidly. No approval is needed to post something, but to make it more useful, people have worked hard at creating systems to better link the information on the Web. Weinberger suggests that we might move beyond simple tagging through a system proposed by Berners-Lee, called the Semantic Web. In this scheme, the metadata would be expressed in three words, or triples, called the Resource Description Framework (RDF): a car is a type of vehicle. Different fields of knowledge can use RDFs to describe relationships within their areas. In theory, the whole world could be described this way. This effort is still in development, but Tim Falconer, a proponent of the Semantic Web, says, “It’s better to do something and tweak it for the rest of your life than to get 30 people into a room to figure out everything you’re ever going to need.”

Weinberger’s book is enjoyable, up-to-date, and informative and includes a detailed index that is a helpful resource in itself. He tells an entertaining story of how people have handled knowledge in the “first, second and third orders of order.” The interconnectedness of Web applications today, or Web 2.0, is where the greatest development is occurring. Everything is Miscellaneous is certainly not a how-to manual on using new Web technologies in archives or library work, but it does make you think about the rapidly changing ways information is being made available. The highly structured description methods that archivists had long been accustomed to using were creatures of the second order. New methods for the dissemination of information from archival
collections will draw from and take advantage of third-order information technologies.

So, is everything really miscellaneous? Yes, but now, freed from the constraints of paper, we can cluster and recluster information by the attributes that interest us at a given time, exploring each facet until we have the need to recluster again by another set of attributes. If you are interested in Weinberger’s subject, then read his book soon, before it becomes just a great piece of nostalgia.

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