

Review Essay:
Approximations to the Past:
Archivists, Historians, and the Mediation of Historical Documents

André Burguière, *The Annales School: An Intellectual History*, trans. Jane Marie Todd (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2009), xiv, 309 pp. Notes. Hardcover. \$45.00.

Jacques Le Goff, in collaboration with Jean-Maurice de Montremy, *My Quest for the Middle Ages*, trans. Richard Veasey (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), ix, 133 pp. Notes. Hardcover. \$80.00.

Jacques Le Goff, *Saint Louis*, trans. Gareth Evan Gollrad (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2009), xxxii, 947 pp. Maps, genealogical tables, notes. Hardcover. \$75.00.

The *Annales* school of thought, as French historian Jacques Le Goff (1924–present) reflected when looking back on his long and fertile career in *My Quest for the Middle Ages*, a recently published series of autobiographical interviews, “taught me that the way one approaches . . . documents gives rise to the history one produces. We take nothing on trust, but rather ask questions of our sources [and must] be critically aware of the way our own minds work” (p. 19). The books reviewed here call attention to Le Goff’s position among the *Annales* historians, the nature of historical documents, and the complex relationships that link historians to the materials they study.

The course of twentieth-century historiography in France (and to a lesser extent, around the world) was sparked and significantly influenced by the intellectual legacy of *Annales*, the seminal journal co-founded in 1929 by historians Marc Bloch (1886–1944) and Lucien Febvre (1878–1956). The *Annales* “school” grew up around the journal and developed into the preeminent movement in twentieth-century historical scholarship. Briefly stated, *Annales* historians sought to open history and make it receptive to the input of the social sciences without allowing it to be confined within any disciplinary specialties. It evolved over the decades, and various thinkers associated with it embraced individual priorities. Students of historiography now identify several “generations” of *Annales* historians, starting with Bloch and Febvre, leading to the generation of Le Goff and Fernand Braudel, followed by that of Le Roy Ladurie, Pierre Nora, and Philippe Ariès. Landmark studies produced by historians associated with *Annales* include: Bloch’s groundbreaking work foreshadowing *mentalité* history; Febvre’s elaboration on mentalities (he argued, incorrectly as it now seems, that atheism was not possible in sixteenth-century France because such a concept could not be grasped by the “mental tools” available in that time and place); Braudel’s monumentally full expression of the *longue durée* (privileging the study of deep “long-term” structures in society over specific events); Ladurie’s microhistorical study of the daily routines and thoughts of Albigensian heretics in a medieval village, based on Inquisition interviews in the Vatican Archives; Nora’s influential work on history and memory; Ariès’s thousand-year panorama of evolving attitudes towards death; and Le Goff’s excursions into the varieties and meanings of time.¹ The “history of mentalities” approach so important

to the work of several *Annales* historians, including Le Goff, studied unconscious patterns that may have guided individual actions in bygone societies. Roger Chartier often is considered to be the leader of generation four, which distanced itself from the school's earlier emphasis on *mentalités*.²

André Burguière, a member of the *Annales* editorial board, and for many years the journal's secretary, is the first insider to publish a longitudinal analysis of the journal's accomplishments and failures and detail the evolution of its priorities. He was witness to many of the trends he describes and knew personally many of the people discussed. *The Annales School: An Intellectual History* appeared first in France in 2006 before its publication in English in 2009. Burguière's thoughtful account is remarkably lively and will be of considerable interest to archivists as well as historians. It starts with the journal's origins in the 1920s and stops (too abruptly, perhaps) in the 1980s.

The book is not, as Burguière explains, a history of events pertaining to the *Annales* school, or a historical sociology of the group, or "an epistemological reflection on the foundations of historical knowledge that would use the conceptions of the *Annales* as its springboard" (p. 7). He aims instead "to understand an intellectual trajectory" (pp. 9–10) within the school of thought, including relationships among the works of key thinkers in the school (and how each built upon the work of predecessors) and links to practitioners of other important approaches to history, e.g., microhistory and social anthropology. One of the salient trends witnessed by Burguière within the *Annales* school was an evolution or shift in emphasis from socioeconomics to sociocultural concerns. Chartier's research in recent decades has focused on the cultural and linguistic turn, which seeks to understand the social history of cultural practices.³

From its beginning, the journal, under the aegis of Bloch and Febvre, proactively sought cooperation from geographers, economists, and sociologists. "Just as the impressionists invited painters to leave their studios," writes Burguière, "the founders of the *Annales* wanted to remove historical argument from its disciplinary and academic isolation." Bloch believed that "history might be . . . a wondrous, indispensable school of psychological and social analysis." He expressed his enthusiasm for research in a vivid figure of speech: "Whenever [a historian] smells human flesh, he knows [that] there is his prey." Febvre wrote that historians should not be "interested in some abstract, eternal, immutable man but in men, always captured within the context of the societies of which they are members" (p. 17).

Early historians associated with the school were "very attached to the empirical foundations of the historian's labor [including] the exploitation or discovery of unpublished documents," but were highly critical of erudition as an end in itself, i.e., bereft of a point of view. They worked within the traditions of scholarly practice while "at the same time, subverting the chartist cult of the written document deposited in the archive. They did so by inventing new types of sources. In their eyes, however, it was not the sources that provided the historian with a new point of view but the questions asked of them" (p. 16). Historians must seek new areas for investigation, new resources to probe, and new questions to ask.

The book exposes the fallacy of "total history" (pp. 133–159), explaining that "complexity does not mean completeness" (p. 134); discusses the validity of the notion of *mentalités* (pp. 52–75, 219–242); and critiques multiple attempts to "reintroduce the

political into historical explanation” (pp. 243–252). Of special interest is the chapter entitled “Agreements and Disagreements: Caught between Two Directors” (pp. 38–51), which details the often turbulent relationship between Bloch and Febvre and sifts through the controversy over whether or not to continue publishing *Annales* after the Nazi occupation of France. Febvre was in favor of continuation even after anti-Semitic legislation forced the removal of Bloch’s name from the masthead. The critical consideration, Febvre argued, was that shutting down the journal would put the Nazis one step closer to complete control of the country’s intellectual life. *Annales* continued publication under an altered name at irregular intervals throughout the war (with pseudonymous contributions by Bloch). He was arrested for his work with the French Resistance and faced a German firing squad in 1944. “The differences that sometimes put Bloch and Febvre at odds,” according to Burguière, “protected them from dogmatism, introducing into the message of the *Annales* a share of uncertainty and an openness that allowed it to survive fashions and resist time” (p. 51).

Burguière’s work is far from flawless, and my overall impression is marred by the presence of several careless (or uninformed) mistakes. For example, in attempting an analogy between “total history” and “thick description” (the process, employed by anthropologist Clifford Geertz, of reconstituting a society’s system of values by deciphering a social act that seems “enigmatic for the observer” but “routine for the society under consideration”) Burguière incorrectly identifies the potlatch as a practice among Australian Aborigines (p. 134). The potlatch, in fact, is a tradition belonging to the Kwakwaka’wakw, Indigenous inhabitants of coastal British Columbia.⁴ But his insider’s view of *Annales* is the most informed and interesting account yet written.

I have perused many autobiographical statements made by historians (in the form of memoirs, essays, interviews, introductions to monographs, acknowledgement pages, etc.). Jacques Le Goff’s reflections on his career and personal life, his feelings about the historical past, and his relationship to the raw materials of history (e.g., archives, manuscripts, and archaeological remains) are among the best I have seen. His book *My Quest for the Middle Ages* comprises a series of revealing autobiographical interviews, equally of interest to archivists and historians. The thoughtful and cogent interviews were conducted by Jean-Maurice de Montremy in 2002, published in French in 2003, and translated for an English language edition in 2005. The translation is engaging and precise while retaining much of Le Goff’s spontaneity. Insights into the historian’s craft abound and are interestingly glossed and colored by personal revelations. The French title of the book, *À la Recherche du Moyen Âge*, is curiously similar to the title of Marcel Proust’s *À la Recherche du Temps Perdu* (best rendered in English as *In Search of Lost Time*).

Le Goff recalls that his “true discovery” of the Middle Ages occurred in 1939 at the age of fifteen when he saw for the first time a Romanesque church while traveling with his family. “I was profoundly moved by it. But it was clear to me that it belonged to another world. . . . Who had built it and for whom? How might one get to know these men and women?” (p. 6). In a telling passage he describes the allure, as he later experienced it, of studying medieval manuscripts: “Handling manuscripts fascinated me. In most cases they are made of animal skin, parchment, which is enjoyable to touch. You have a physical sense of the scribe’s work, his ink, his pen, the codes he uses, his

minor quirks, his labour. Paleography confirmed me in my love of the Middle Ages” (p. 11). Le Goff also compares research in historical documents to playing musical instruments. While watching his mother play piano he understood (or imagined) as a child that “All one had to do was to place one’s fingers on the keyboard in order to breathe life into old works. . . . Documents were like scores. . . . One had to interpret, learn, transmit, and at the same time bring back to life” (p. 8).

In a more technical vein, Le Goff discusses the evolution of books from scroll to codex, differences in the way each format would have been used, and how such practices affected thinking. Scrolls, for example, contain evidence of ideas about sentences and punctuation to which we are unaccustomed:

The scroll is hardly conducive to silent reading. Even if they knew perfectly well how to read and write, the powerful men and scholars of antiquity were in the habit of *being read to* because specialist readers were quicker at manipulating scrolls, freeing their masters from such material constraints. In the same way they also preferred to dictate things. . . . The widespread use of the codex . . . marked a shift. . . . It favored a personal, internalized form of reading, even though totally silent reading was not widespread until the thirteenth century. . . . The ultimate arrival of silent and even more interiorized reading corresponds to a new period in the Middle Ages. It implies a profound change in the nature of memory, since the ease of the use of the codex and the development of margins enabled one to move backwards and forwards with ease (p. 12).

He expands on this train of thought, adding that: “The nature of the documents available to us influences our way of thinking about the period studied. . . . The Middle Ages are inseparable from the manuscripts which they produced. They are also the product of those manuscripts” (pp. 11–12).

Le Goff and Nora suggested the term “new history” (*nouvelle histoire*) in the 1970s as a shorthand description for new historical approaches that emphasized cultural history, the history of mentalities, and the history of representations. The methodology associated with *nouvelle histoire* rejects earlier historical emphases on politics, administrative documents, and “great men.” It questions the need for narrative and the belief in objectivity held by earlier historians. It de-emphasizes the study of individual lives as a way of understanding historical events.⁵

It was, therefore, somewhat surprising when Le Goff, in the waning years of his career, turned to historical biography, composing massive books about Saint Francis of Assisi and Saint Louis (Louis IX, the Crusader King of France). His preoccupation with Louis IX seems at face value to cut against the current of French historiography. The *Annales* approach long since had rejected political history and biography. “[But] I am not interested in biography as such,” Le Goff explains in *My Quest*:

It only appeals to me if, as in the case of Saint Louis, I can draw together around a specific character a body of material which throws light on a society, a civilization, an era. . . . There was little interest in the individual in the Middle Ages . . . and so the number of people of biographical interest is very limited: Abelard, Saint Bernard, Saint

Francis of Assisi, the Emperor Frederick II, Saint Louis. . . . At one point while I was studying the voluminous dossier on Saint Louis, I posed the provocative question: ‘Did Saint Louis really exist?’ What I discovered in the source material was less an individual than a succession of stereotypical models. Because he was considered a good king and a saint, no one described him as he was but as they thought a holy king should be. This was not a question of propaganda or of falsification, but a cultural fact (pp. 96–97).

Historical texts written in the Middle Ages include a great deal of moral content that would be “excluded from the precincts of modern historical realism: miracles, resurrections, saints, myths, and visions, inter alia.” If a historian wants to understand what is “going on,” what is “being said and represented” in such texts, “modern criteria governing the representation of reality” and “historiographical ‘realism’” are not applicable.⁶

Biographies of saints written by churchmen, an important genre of documentation for the Middle Ages, are packed with historiographical challenges. The prism of twentieth- and twenty-first-century historical thought separates such “lives” into spectrums that must be assessed in layers. The narratives, for example, contain more or less reliable stories about the saints being described: events witnessed by the writer, observations imparted to him by others, and lore preserved in oral traditions. On the other hand, they include stories constructed for the express purpose of establishing a claim to sainthood, a compilation of supposed miracles and prophetic statements tailored to fit the characteristics of what saints were expected to be during the biographer’s era. The narratives also reflect to some degree the particular interests and personalities of each writer as well as the “general mental world” in which clerics lived and wrote. “Somehow the modern medievalist must sort . . . this out: establish the objective biographical information and identify the formulas of sainthood . . . and some of the characteristics of the mental world of the monkish intelligentsia responsible for writing these tales.” The commitment of the life-writing monks to the type of historical accuracy that we envision and strive toward today did not exist for them.⁷

The life and the legend of Saint Louis are intricately intertwined. Le Goff sets out to disentangle the threads and discover (or come closer to) the elusive truth about Louis, the central figure of the Christian world in the thirteenth century. Each of the resources available for dissection needed to be carefully considered because each had its own agenda. It cannot be assumed that historical documents are an accurate reflection of what really happened in history. After years of rumination, Le Goff ultimately decided that the most convincing account of Louis was that penned by the king’s friend and sometime confidant, Jean, sire de Joinville, whose memoirs focused largely on personal recollections. “It was only after having read and reflected on Joinville’s memoirs,” Le Goff recalls in *My Quest*, “that I thought I could try to write a book about Saint Louis, which is, in some respects, an anti-biography” (pp. 96–97).

Saint Louis attracted much attention when it first appeared in France in 1996 after a decade of painstaking research. The English language edition, published in 2009, is well translated and beautifully designed, but at 947 pages the volume is long and distractingly repetitive. Each of its three sections could stand alone as a book in its own right. Taken together, they offer an exhaustive (and somewhat exhausting) analysis

of a man, his environment, and the complex interactions among social, geographical, psychological, and economic factors in the thirteenth century. The three main divisions of the book are supplemented by appendices, genealogical charts, maps, a chronology, and copious notes.

Part One (pp. 3–238) delineates Louis's life in a conventional format, following him from birth (1214) to coronation (1226) to death (1270) to canonization (1297) and placing his activities in the context of family, dynasty, politics, and the physical, social, and cultural environment of his reign. Louis's attitudes were, in part, imprinted in childhood by his domineering mother, Blanche of Castile. A vow made in illness caused him to "take up the cross" and leave in 1248 on a crusade to Egypt, a disastrous campaign resulting in his capture and eventual ransom. After returning to France, he took up moral and legal reforms and became conspicuously ascetic. He died in Tunis after unwisely embarking on another crusade despite poor health. The main theme to emerge from Part One is that Louis's moral and religious fixation was so engrained by an early age that every activity seems to have been affected by his desire to be an ideal Christian king.

Part Two (pp. 240–418) is an archaeological dig of sorts through the multilayered historical traces employed in Part One. Le Goff picks away at the traces to reveal how each may have been colored by the motives or affiliations of the writers involved. Louis, for example, was a staunch supporter of mendicant orders; in hagiographies composed by mendicant monks he is depicted as a humble holy man who would have joined their ranks if he could have done so. Capetian claims to the French throne in the thirteenth century were shaky, but monks at Saint-Denis, who depended on Louis's generosity, affirmed in their writings that he was the rightful successor to the Merovingian and Carolingian kings who were buried in their abbey. Louis was typically depicted by clerics as an ideal king, embodying traits that resembled the ideal rulers envisioned in handbooks for kings that circulated in manuscript form in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Louis may have modeled his behavior (or his projected image) on the handbooks, or his hagiographers may have crafted their accounts using the models as a guide. Was the man a "saint," or was the "saint" merely an invention of his eulogists? Le Goff looks carefully at Louis's cultivation of his own image and at the mythologies that sprouted in the aftermath of his death.

Part Three (pp. 420–735) explores the contradictions that Le Goff sees within Louis and reflects on the sense that he (Le Goff) had gotten to know the saint-king personally, having studied him and "lived" in his presence for many years. He ultimately concludes that the "saint" and the "king" co-existed in the same personality during Louis's life, but the self-imposed suffering was such that the "saint" eclipsed the "man."

Joinville, who knew Louis as a young man, observed his activities at firsthand and followed him through several long journeys, including the Egyptian crusade and captivity (1248–1254). His reminiscences were written years after the king's death and are, thus, inevitably mediated by memory.⁸ His account also is colored by disdain for Louis's successors and irritation at the Pope for not declaring Louis a martyr. Over and beyond Joinville's intimate portrait of the king, his *Life of St. Louis* affords one of the best pictures we have of ordinary living in the medieval world. Individuals come to life in his pages, rivaling the vividly depicted pilgrims in Chaucer's *Canterbury*

Tales. Readers come to know (or think they know) the author as well, e.g., in passages where he describes his difficult departure for an uncertain fate as a crusader (as quoted by Le Goff, p. 379): “And . . . I didn’t ever want to look back toward [my estate of] Joinville for fear that my heart would soften at the sight of the beautiful castle and the two children I was leaving behind.”

Le Goff privileges Joinville over all other available resources, calling him “an extraordinary witness.” In particular, Joinville’s account is distinguished from other resources because he knew Louis well, had seen much, and had direct access to other people who had witnessed key events. He was a layman, not a cleric, and his intent was not to produce a hagiography. He understood war and had observed Louis in action as a warrior in the field. He wrote in French (not Latin) and quotes the king’s words in French, the language he used for conversation. He seems to have possessed a memory “rich in vivid visual and auditory sign,” and memory, as Le Goff reminds us, was probably more durable in the Middle Ages than now because people in the past were less reliant on books and other written records as mnemonic devices (pp. 377–381).

Referring to his own mediation of Joinville’s memoirs as well as other documentary traces of the past, Le Goff explained in *Saint Louis* that:

I do believe that the historian has the right, and perhaps also the duty, to implicate himself in his subject matter, even when this subject is a historical figure. . . . [O]ne of the charms and major risks of historical biography is that a certain bond forms and develops between the historian and his character. . . . The historian does not have the same kind of relationship with the subject of a biography that he has with other historical problems. It was a problem more than a man that I took as my point of departure: how and why can a historical biography be written? . . . [C]ontrolled and enlightened imagination is necessary to the historian’s work. Thus the perhaps illusory feeling came to me that I was getting to know Louis better and better, that I could see him, that I could hear him. . . . [T]he historian’s impertinence and distance in time allowed [me] to forget [my] position. . . . I hated [Louis] as much as I loved him (pp. 726–731).

Le Goff’s oeuvre, taken as whole, illustrates that in history nothing can be effectively understood or described in isolation because all aspects of a civilization are related. His biographical (or “anti-biographical”) projects are aimed in large part at reconstructing a mental universe. During Louis IX’s reign, for example, time was multilayered. Concepts of time imposed by the Church, based on natural phenomena, were limiting. The emerging merchant class had a more predictable and regularized concept of time than that of the Church, one that imposed fewer restraints and enabled the advance of merchant capitalism.⁹ Such flexible concepts, and their influence on the saint-king and his environment, are detailed in fascinating profusion in *Saint Louis* in the chapter entitled “Saint Louis in Time and Space” (pp. 423–460).

A more accessible biography of Saint Louis is that by Cecelia Gaposchkin.¹⁰ A more concise and lucid statement of Le Goff’s views about the relationship between historians and the documents they use is found in *My Quest for the Middle Ages*. Le Goff’s *Saint Louis* nevertheless stands as a monumental exploration of one historical

figure within the whole context of his time and place. Le Goff is distinguished by an unusual awareness of the symbiosis between traces of the past and the historians and archivists who find, assess, organize, and interpret them.

Historical awareness is constructed primarily from historical traces found “in the mediated form preserved for us in language. . . . [W]e need to think carefully about how we understand mediation and how that understanding affects our practice.”¹¹ The overarching message of *Saint Louis*, and of Le Goff’s fecund career, is that doing history, the historian’s craft, is difficult as well as nuanced. Truth is elusive. Archivists and the historians who explore archives should engage more closely and more carefully consider the multitextured resources whereby trails to the past can be blazed and better approximations to historical understanding can be mapped.

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NOTES

1. See, respectively: Marc Bloch, *The Royal Touch* (New York: Dorset Press, 1989), first published in French in 1924; Lucien Febvre, *The Problem of Unbelief in the Sixteenth Century, the Religion of Rabelais* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982), first published in French in 1942; Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), first published in French in 1949; Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, *Montaillou: The Promised Land of Error* (New York: G. Braziller, 1978), first published in French in 1975; Pierre Nora, *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past*, 3 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996–1998), first published in French between 1984 and 1992; Philippe Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1981), first published in French in 1977; and Jacques Le Goff, *Time, Work, and Culture in the Middle Ages* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), first published in French in 1977.
2. See *The Columbia History of Twentieth-Century French Thought*, ed. Lawrence D. Kritzman (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006): 9–15, 54–59, 255–260, and passim. See also *The Annales School: Critical Assessments*, 4 vols., ed. Stuart Clark (London: Routledge, 1999).
3. *The Columbia History*, 480–481. See also Roger Chartier, *The Order of Books* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1994), first published in French in 1992.
4. Christopher Bracken, *The Potlatch Papers: A Colonial Case History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997).
5. See *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*, second edition, ed. Peter Burke (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001); Philippe Carrard, *Poetics of the New History: French Historical Discourse from Braudel to Chartier* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992); and Jacques Le Goff, “Is Politics Still the Backbone of History?,” *Daedalus* 100:1 (1971): 1–19.
6. Gabrielle M. Spiegel, *The Past as Text: The Theory and Practice of Medieval Historiography* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999): xii–xiii.
7. Bernard Bailyn, *On the Teaching and Writing of History* (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1994): 43–45.
8. A good English language edition of Joinville’s memoirs is: Jean, sire de Joinville, *The Life of St. Louis* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1955).
9. See Jacques Le Goff, *Time, Work, and Culture in the Middle Ages*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980); and Miri Rubin, *The Work of Jacques Le Goff and the Challenges of Medieval History* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, England: Boydell Press, 1997).
10. M. Cecelia Gaposchkin, *The Making of Saint Louis: Kingship, Sanctity, and Crusade in the Later Middle Ages* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2008).

11. Spiegel, 48–49. N.B.: Technical perspectives about the creation, interpretation, and care of medieval manuscripts are concisely presented in a splendidly printed and illustrated new reference book available from Cornell, an entry-level (but thoroughly packed) volume replete with information about medieval manuscript genres, seals, forgeries, paleography (the decipherment of ancient handwriting), diplomatics (the science of authenticating documents), and codicology (the “archaeology of the book”). See Raymond Clemens and Timothy Graham, *Introduction to Manuscript Studies* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2007).

Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense. By Ann Laura Stoler. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009. 314 pp. Bibliography, index. Softcover. \$22.95.

Chasing the traces of fear and uncertainty through colonial archives, Ann Laura Stoler argues in *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* that these affective states, not reason, constituted the common sense governing Dutch colonial rule in the Netherlands Indies during the nineteenth century. Using her lens as an anthropologist, Stoler tracks these sentiments across a variety of archival documents, piecing together a narrative of colonial rule and governance that runs counter to prevailing wisdom that colonialism and reasoned judgment were inseparable. While intended as a scholarly study on colonialism for anthropologists, not archivists or historians, this reviewer believes *Along the Archival Grain* holds valuable insights for the archival field as well.

Using the metaphor of reading along the archival grain, rather than against it, Stoler endeavors to study the colonial archives as subject, not just use it as a source, and read into it current scholarly narratives that may, in fact, be at odds with the historical record. Reading along the grain involves setting aside these assumptions and looking at the archives with an open mind and fresh eyes. Stoler asserts that colonial scholars who solely read against the grain by cherry-picking information from the archives bring preconceived ideas to the documents, assuming that the “grand narrative of colonialism” already has been told. In her complex examination, however, Stoler makes the case that a careful reading of the archives along its grain contradicts this. Instead, colonial archives are the sites of contested knowledge, rumors turned into fact, shifting notions of governance and order, future imaginings, and sentiment. There is no one grand narrative to explain the nature of colonialism, and anthropological scholars who make that assumption, according to Stoler, ignore the true nature of the archival record.

The book’s seven chapters are divided into two parts with the first two chapters serving as an extended prologue. Stoler spends these introductory chapters describing the colonial archives she consulted in the research for her book. Not limiting herself to the official state archives, Stoler broadens the depth of the archival space she studies by drawing upon personal papers as well. She also details the methodology of her anthropological study. While apparently groundbreaking in scope, Stoler’s elegant prose in this section tends to drift toward flowery language and an abundance of metaphor. Those unfamiliar with the field of anthropology may find this somewhat confusing. Since the remaining chapters each can be read as micro case studies, it is recommended to skip ahead to Part Two, as Stoler suggests near the end of the prologue. These final two chapters read like a detective story and were a welcome respite from some of the academic jargon.

In Part Two, Stoler deftly chronicles the saga of Frans Carl Valck, a mid-level bureaucrat as he finds himself at the center of an investigation into the Luhmann family murders. In 1876, the wife and two small children of a planter were brutally killed and dismembered. After happening upon a thirty-page letter Valck wrote detailing his interpretation of events leading up to the murders, Stoler became enthralled at his uncommon perspective and tracked Valck through the colonial archives. In his official

reports, she found a man at odds with his superiors. Wishing to place the blame on native unrest, the colonial authorities cannot accept what Valck becomes convinced of—Luhmann treated his workers poorly, and these were revenge killings. Valck's theory ran in opposition to the reason of his superiors, and he eventually finds himself honorably discharged from service for his "bungling" of the investigation.

This page-turning account is augmented by a peek into Valck's personal life through his family's papers. Even though the collection of letters and photographs resides only one floor above the traces of his official life in the state record, it was almost twenty years between Stoler's serendipitous discovery of his official letters and state reports and when she became aware of his family's collection. Through these personal papers, we get a glimpse of what cannot be traced in the official version of Valck's life. In the correspondence between Valck and his daughter a half a world away, we are privy to the effects of the colonial empire on an average civil servant. We witness the slow deterioration of their relationship across the years and see a father struggling to connect to a seemingly indifferent daughter he barely knows. We also discover Valck in his final years vainly trying to regain his honor, preoccupied with telling his version of what happened in draft after draft of an apparently unsent letter.

If the chapters on Valck are dessert, then Part One is where Stoler serves up a skillfully prepared main course. In "an often muddled and confusing archival world," Stoler delves deep into the anxious mind of the colony's ruling bureaucracy through its numerous letters, reports, and other missives. She traces the constantly shifting notions of their common sense based largely on racial and class fears that wind their way through the archival record.

In Chapter three, "Habits of a Colonial Heart," Stoler pursues the emotional causes of a little-known protest in 1848 and examines what it suggests about the state's interference in the lives of families for the sake of security and cultivating authority. Wishing to instill a love of the "fatherland" at the expense of tearing apart families, the Dutch colonial state required their civil servants to acquire a European education. "Administrative apprehensions," not logic, informed the policies they set. Stoler's reading of the archives suggests this requirement created "sustained distress" in parents, forcing them to choose between their sons' careers and being separated from them for years. Eventually these aggrieved families could not take it any longer and an isolated uprising occurred. However, the event shouldn't be construed as random. Unlike the French and German revolutions that also took place that same year, the outrage did not come from the disenfranchised, but from the "respectable." Their emotional distress built up slowly over time until it no longer could be contained.

Stoler next turns her attention to the efforts of the Dutch colonial state as they tried and failed repeatedly to reform education over the course of several decades. Chapter four finds Stoler following the archival traces of colonial administrators as they imagine bright futures for the colonial children educated by the state, then sabotage these utopian dreams again and again through their own misgivings, grounded in race about whom to educate and how. Their desire to assist the natives was outweighed only by their persistent fears of what their education would mean to the state. As much as they wanted to educate the natives and developed a variety of educational reforms to do so, colonial authorities did not want to give the students any "illusions about the

future,” but instead wanted to train them to do menial jobs and be content with their lot in life. This reviewer’s only criticism of this chapter is that the archival records seem somewhat beside the point next to documenting the continual school openings and closings. Though she bookends the chapter by invoking images of “swelling” archives and reams of paper, unlike in other chapters, the actual documents are peripheral to the narrative, and Stoler does precisely what she derides in the prologue as a superficial research method: “mining” for treasures.

The last remaining chapter in Part One concerns the colonial authorities’ efforts to ascertain the level of European pauperism in the Netherlands Indies by forming commissions of inquiry to study the matter. Stoler studies the findings of two different commissions that, while they had very little in common on the surface, were undermined by their reliance on colonial common sense. One commission refused actually to talk to the poor because they did not want them to know they were being studied, and the other commission left out a number of potential paupers after concluding they were not truly “European,” or that they were victims of their own making and could crawl out of poverty if they would just set their minds to it. Both commissions found it easier to adjust their findings to colonial biases and pretend European poverty did not actually exist in the colonies, thereby creating convenient narratives based ultimately on a lack of knowledge.

While the main focus of the book is on the archival material itself, archivists and their work are practically invisible to Stoler, barely registering a handful of mentions throughout the entire book. While she recognizes that the colonial records she studies were not the result of a lone “grand narrative,” it would have been preferable to see her explore more thoroughly how the archival record is affected by those who keep and preserve the documents, not just those who create them. As archivists are keenly aware, for good or ill, our decisions impact the historical record.

Despite this small criticism of the book, Stoler achieves what she set out to do: dismantle the biased narratives in current colonial studies and force scholars to look at colonialism with fresh eyes through the archival record. Though the nonscholarly may find the book’s anthropological jargon challenging, I nonetheless believe the effort will prove worthwhile for all practitioners in our field, not just those archivists seeking the perspective of outside disciplines. It is vital for all of us to understand how archives are viewed outside our sometimes insular enclave. As archivists, we have an important role to play in the production and preservation of knowledge, and *Along the Archival Grain* is just one glimpse into that process, giving us fresh insight into how archival records are produced and used.

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Archives and Archivists in 20th Century England. By Elizabeth Shepherd. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009. 245 pp. Bibliography, index. Hardcover. \$114.95.

How do we understand the history of the archival profession? This question grounds Elizabeth Shepherd's analysis of archives and archivists in England. Shepherd's comprehensive survey is packed full of information, yet is approachable by the American archivist completely unfamiliar with the history of archives and archivists in England. Indeed, one of the main points of the book is to showcase to an international audience the "English" voice in international archival history. A second focus of the book is to encourage modern English archivists to reflect upon the often quite messy and disconnected history of their profession in order to come together as a cohesive community in the twenty-first century.

The book is organized into four sections that cover, respectively, the history of policy in relation to archives, the history of archival institutions, the history of professional associations, and the history of archival education. Each section could be read individually, but together they offer a comprehensive survey of the English archival profession worthy of being emulated in other parts of the world.

Of special interest is Shepherd's analysis of Sir Hilary Jenkinson, who has an unimpeachable role in the history of modern archival theory. Yet, when Shepherd compares Jenkinson as theorist to Jenkinson as archivist, she notes that during his tenure at the Public Record Office he effectively blocked all efforts to modernize the archives to address contemporary documentation and records management issues, which remained unresolved until his retirement in 1954. More generally, Shepherd shows how a handful of forceful movers and shakers dramatically shaped the development of the archives profession throughout the twentieth century.

Shepherd's contextualization of archives and archivists throughout the book primarily is organized around policy issues and broad-scale trends within the archival profession. For example, she explores the interactions between archivists and an increasingly large and important "heritage sector" within England's economy in the second half of the twentieth century. Shepherd argues that archivists were unprepared to respond to this nascent sector, and, as a result, lost out on much available funding until 2000, when the National Council on Archives appointed and paid someone to help archivists survive and thrive within this new terrain. This brief example represents just one of the intriguing nuggets spread through Shepherd's text, which can and should prompt much reflection on the history of our own professional community over the last century.

Despite the book's seeming comprehensiveness, however, there are, for this reader, some glaring gaps and absences. Most importantly, Shepherd almost completely elides the history of British Imperialism and the role of imperialism in shaping the archival profession. Much more could be said on this issue, with Shepherd merely hinting at the impact of archivists in commonwealth countries looking to England for archival education, and the formerly colonized coming to the metropole seeking records to prove their British citizenship following the end of the Empire. These allusions imply a much more globalized, transnational archival profession than Shepherd seems prepared to address.

Nonetheless, it is hard to fault Shepherd since she has included so much information in her book, drawing especially on the archives of various British professional associations, as well as the university archives of multiple schools offering archival education throughout the twentieth century. Shepherd, a current faculty member in the Information Studies Program, University College London, is especially interested in the role of education in shaping the profession.

Any individual interested in aspects of British archival history definitely should add this important volume to their collection. The book is also of value for any American archivist seeking to compare our profession to one with a very different historical trajectory. For those not sure if this volume is for them, it is worth reading Shepherd's 2009 article in *Archival Science*, "Culture and evidence: or what good are the archives? Archives and archivists in 20th century England," which touches on some, but by no means all, of the issues addressed in the book.

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Bloodlines: Recovering Hitler's Nuremberg Laws, From Patton's Trophy to Public Memorial. By Anthony M. Platt with Cecilia E. O'Leary. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, 2006. 267 pp. Softcover. \$22.00.

In June 1999, the Skirball Cultural Center, a Jewish heritage museum in Los Angeles, opened a public exhibit featuring an original typescript of the Nuremberg Laws that was on loan from the Huntington Library. Because the typescript bore the signature of Adolf Hitler, the Huntington Library hoped that media coverage would focus on the famous library's generosity in sharing such a rare and valuable document with an up-and-coming, lesser-known institution, but the loan drew immediate international attention for different reasons altogether. Scholars and reporters alike wondered why the Huntington Library never formally had accessioned the typescript, or even revealed its existence, and had instead hidden the document in a bomb-proof vault for 54 years.

In *Bloodlines: Recovering Hitler's Nuremberg Laws, From Patton's Trophy to Public Memorial*, historian Anthony M. Platt, with Cecilia E. O'Leary, traces the provenance of the typescript and follows several generations of Huntington Library staff, from the administrators who initially hid the document to the subsequent curators who strongly advocated for its release. Platt renders a harsh judgment on the actions of the Huntington Library and clearly demonstrates how the institution failed to uphold its professional and scholarly responsibilities to public history and cultural memory by keeping the typescript a secret for more than five decades.

Considered by historians to be one of the first steps toward the Final Solution, the 1935 Nuremberg Laws rescinded the citizenship of German-born Jews, established civil and legal distinctions between Germans and Jews, and prohibited marriage between the two groups. The Huntington Library's typescript was signed by Hitler in Nuremberg in September 1935 and turned over to the city government. In 1943, Nazi officials hid the document in a bank vault in the nearby city of Eichstätt, where a U.S. Army intelligence team found it in April 1945. Over the next few days, the document was passed up the chain of command until it was in the custody of General George S. Patton, who had been ordered by General Dwight D. Eisenhower's Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force to send any seized Nazi records to Paris, where the Allies were collecting evidence for forthcoming war crimes trials. Patton ignored his orders and instead brought the typescript with him when he returned to the United States on temporary leave a few weeks later. On June 11, 1945, Patton visited the Huntington Library and deposited the typescript with Robert Millikan, the chairman of the library's board of trustees. During this meeting, Patton dictated a statement in which he not only claimed that the typescript had been presented to him in a public ceremony by his subordinates but also asserted his personal ownership over the seized government document.

In *Bloodlines*, Platt describes Patton as a "self-made historian" who "was knowledgeable about primary documents," and he argues that Patton fully understood the importance of the typescript when he claimed it as a personal trophy. Platt believes that Patton deposited the document at the Huntington Library precisely because the repository could keep it safe and, more importantly, secret. As a lifelong friend of the Huntington family, Patton trusted the library's discretion, mainly because his father

had served as the chairman of the library's board of trustees during the 1920s. Platt speculates that this long-standing family relationship, combined with the Huntington Library's pride in being connected to the world-famous war hero, clouded the library's professional judgment regarding the typescript, especially after Patton unexpectedly died in a car accident six months after his visit to the library.

An experienced researcher, Platt has a clear understanding of the differences between documents that are donated and documents that are deposited, and he relies heavily on this distinction while describing the transaction that occurred between Patton and the Huntington Library. Platt argues that Patton only intended to temporarily deposit the typescript with the library, perhaps until the general retired from active duty military service, and he faults the library for continuing to keep the typescript a secret after Patton's death. Not only did the library fail to question their claim on the document immediately after Patton died, but it also neglected to do so while the Nuremberg Trials were making well-publicized use of Nazi documents to convict German war criminals. Decades later, a new generation of library administrators continued to hide the typescript even after Patton's daughter instructed the library in 1969 to transfer "the papers directly relating to my father" to the Library of Congress. Platt contends that the library's failure to release the typescript or establish rightful ownership over it was not because of ignorance or naiveté but was instead the result of a greedy desire to keep this trophy, regardless of its suspicious provenance.

Platt's condemnation of the Huntington Library in *Bloodlines* is measured, well-researched, and compelling, with careful reference to the American Association of Museums guidelines regarding documents and artifacts with Nazi-era provenance. While he reserves his harshest judgment for Patton and the World War II-era Huntington administrators, he also faults generations of library officials who knowingly kept quiet about the document. Platt reports the various defensive claims and contentions made by Huntington administrators before skillfully eviscerating their arguments. For example, Platt quotes Huntington Library President Robert Skotheim's 1999 assertion that the typescript never was made available to researchers because it was outside the library's "collecting and research areas" and "irrelevant to our work," but then demonstrates the library's long history of collecting and providing access to "trophy items" that do not adhere to the library's literary focus. In addition to his critique, Platt praises a series of librarians and curators whose persistent advocacy eventually led to the 1999 release of what they internally had determined was "war loot."

While *Bloodlines* largely focuses on the provenance, concealment, and release of the typescript, the narrative is supplemented by a number of tangential stories, including primary source documentation of Patton's racism and anti-Semitism, historical descriptions of Nuremberg and the Nuremberg Laws, and biographies of the U.S. intelligence officers who recovered the typescript. Platt also examines the sordid history of eugenics advocacy in California during the early part of the twentieth century, noting that a number of prominent Huntington Library leaders, including Millikan, were active members of the Human Betterment Foundation, which had ties to eugenics researchers in Nazi Germany. While this interwoven narrative does not always flow particularly smoothly, the supplemental information helps fill out what otherwise would have been a short book, and the detours add depth to the account. For example, Platt includes the

satisfying story of how Franz Perls, one of the U.S. intelligence officers who recovered the Nuremberg Laws typescript from the bank vault in Eichstätt, was a German-born Jew who had fled Nazi Germany in 1933.

Perhaps less necessary in *Bloodlines* are the autobiographical portions included by Platt, who integrates a number of details about his Jewish upbringing and identity that are not vital to the main narrative. While this memoir-style commentary may appeal to some audiences, it does not add to Platt's scholarly analysis of the provenance and concealment of the typescript. Platt's first-person narrative, however, is used effectively and appropriately in describing the release of the document. As a visiting fellow at the Huntington Library in June 1999, Platt was not only a first-hand witness to the loan to the Skirball Cultural Center and its fallout, but he and O'Leary also helped the Skirball investigate the true provenance of the typescript later that year.

Although Platt is not an archivist, curator, or librarian, *Bloodlines* has great relevance to the archival profession. The twists and turns of the typescript's provenance are fascinating, and Platt's arguments about the responsibilities of historical repositories reflect a nuanced understanding of the profession. As a case study, *Bloodlines* advocates for archivists and curators to act as historical and cultural stewards and clearly demonstrates the importance of confronting difficult institutional legacies.

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Electronic Records in the Manuscript Repository. By Elizabeth H. Dow. Lanham, Maryland: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2009. 208 pp. Index. Softcover. \$45.00.

Today's creators of manuscripts and other materials of historical value have, along with the rest of society, embraced the digital world. Manuscripts are composed in word processing programs and turned into PDFs or published on Web sites. Personal correspondence takes the form of E-mail, instant messages, and text messages more often than handwritten or typewritten letters. Wikis, blogs, and social networking have replaced journals and diaries. Some creators still may bang out manuscripts and correspondence on typewriters or even write them out in longhand, but most use computers. What does this mean for the archivist working in the small collecting repository? Unless archivists only handle collections crafted before the latter half of the twentieth century, they must learn how to ensure the long-term retention of the digital material that surely will find its way into their institution.

Elizabeth H. Dow states in the preface of *Electronic Records in the Manuscript Repository* that she wrote the book to assist the "Lone Arranger" in a collecting repository who now must wrestle with the electronic media accessioned alongside traditional paper records. Librarians, records managers, and archivists in large institutions continue to develop systems, tools, and guidelines for the long-term retention of digital material, and Dow sets out to show how the smaller institution can draw on that research and experience.

In her own words, Dow organized this "how-to" guide to move from the abstract to the practical, describing the concepts, tools, knowledge, and expertise required to ensure the curation of electronic material. The first chapter covers archival functions as they apply to both paper and digital materials, noting that while the survey, appraisal, acquisition, arrangement and description, public access, and preservation and long-term retention functions remain, some archival methods change when working with electronic records. She also introduces the concept of life cycle management for electronic records, with the archivist asserting guidance at record creation rather than waiting until the donor deposits the material. At the end of the chapter, she outlines steps to begin tackling the curation of electronic records.

Chapter two presents issues inherent to digital materials, including how electronic records depend on the technologies that create them, and how problems arise as those technologies change. Dow defines the digital curator as one who captures and maintains electronic records and makes them available to users. She also explains what makes a digital document "good"—the measures used to ensure authenticity, reliability, integrity, and usability of electronic records—as well as the specialized archival metadata required.

In chapter three, Dow describes concepts related to the information technology environments in which digital material is created and which an archival repository must support in order to maintain that material. Information architectures that must be understood include hardware (computers, storage media and devices, storage locations, and storage configurations) and software (operating systems, applications, and networking architecture). The archivist must be aware of the nature of the digital content, whether structured (as in a database), unstructured (as in a document), or a compound

digital object comprised of a mix of file formats. An overview of digital repositories is provided, including the components of the Open Archival Information System (OAIS) Reference Model and various types of digital content management systems.

Chapter four delves into the long-term retention of and access to digital materials. Methods explored include conversion from a digital to analog format—that is, printing to paper or copying to microform—and digital retention. The latter may include refreshment, migration, reformatting, normalization, and/or emulation strategies. Metadata also must be captured and preserved, including preservation metadata that documents the migration and emulation actions taken. Dow also discusses the need for establishing an access system separate from the long-term retention system to ensure the authenticity of the original files; magnetic and optical storage media options; and preservation issues and techniques for handling digital images, E-mail, Web pages, and Web 2.0-generated material.

With chapter five, Dow segues from concepts and abstractions to addressing practically the problems of accessioning and caring for electronic records. She raises the question of whether the archivist's institution should become a trusted digital repository (TDR) that commits to managing and providing reliable, long-term access to their donors' digital material. A TDR must fulfill the six components of the OAIS reference model: ingest, archival storage, access, planning for long-term retention, data management, and administration. Several research consortia and archival institutions have developed guidelines and checklists to measure TDR functionality in terms of "trustworthiness," such as the Trustworthy Repository Audit and Certification (TRAC) criteria from the Research Library Group (RLG) and the U. S. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). An in-house TDR requires an institutional repository system and tools to perform such functions as file identification and validation, metadata extraction and harvesting, file conversion/normalization, Web harvesting, ingest, and migration. A repository that does not fulfill TDR criteria still will need to assure safe retention of digital material. When a repository can accept and manage digital material but does not provide user access, it is known as a "dark archives." In some cases, the archivist may choose to employ an external TDR service to handle some or all of its digital repository functions.

Once a long-term retention strategy has been determined, the means to implement the chosen preservation software system and tools must be established. Chapter six offers suggestions on how to make the case to an institution's leadership for accessioning and managing digital material. Tips are presented on approaches to take during the development of the strategy, from the use of open source systems to leveraging the experiences of other institutions. Considerations in the creation of a repository include the development of cost models and policies, whether to develop in-house expertise or work with outside consultants, management of the organizational structure, roles of personnel, and a development strategy for information architecture and metadata.

In chapter seven, Dow confronts the heart of the mission of collecting repositories: working with donors. Citing examples from the U.K.-based Paradigm Project on preserving private digital papers and other sources, Dow emphasizes the need to identify donors early—ideally long before they donate their collections—so as to educate and guide them on how to best create and manage their digital material in anticipation of

long-term retention. Chapter eight reiterates the need for digital curatorship in the small collecting repository, warns that even more complex digital objects will make their way into archives in the future, and again encourages the archivist to get started on the implementation of a plan for working with digital donations and to remain abreast of new technologies and developments in digital curation.

Dow clearly states at the beginning of the book that she cannot provide the reader with everything one would ever need to know about the long-term retention of donors' digital material. To that end, she includes a wealth of bibliographic references and resources within each chapter as well as at the end of the book, even subdividing them into sections such as "Essential Tools," "Beginner Bibliography," and "Continuing Education Opportunities and Workshops" to make it easier to find items of interest.

With this book, Dow provides a helpful overview for the "Lone Arranger" or any archivist just beginning to work with digital material, as well as an excellent reference for the more experienced digital archivist. Her refreshing, clear prose includes some amusing turns of phrase that make for enjoyable reading of this complex topic. For example, in suggesting that the archivist develop a schedule with the donor regarding what to keep and what to destroy, Dow notes that such a system "will bring comfort to you both."

Due to the complexity of the topic and the volume of information conveyed, parts of the book can seem somewhat repetitive. The author could have referenced earlier or later sections rather than repeat the information. Although generally well organized, some areas in the text could have used a stronger editorial hand. In chapter four, for instance, subsections addressing the issues of preserving digital images, E-mail, and Web pages are found in a section entitled "Handling Common Types of Storage Media." These could have been placed under a more logical heading, such as "Preserving Non-Manuscript Digital Material."

Dow does a good job of providing a roadmap for the journey that must be taken by the collecting repository that has begun to accession electronic records. Working with electronic records is not easy, and the many interwoven, moving parts—the technologies, types of digital materials, and curation methods—will continue to evolve. But as Dow states in the summary to chapter four, the archivist has no choice but to get off the sidelines and act now to ensure the long-term retention of digital material. Her book offers a fine starting point.

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Managing Electronic Records, fourth edition. By William Saffady. London: Facet Publishing, 2009. 246 pp. Softcover. £52.95. \$75.00.

Information professionals have relied on *Managing Electronic Records* as an introduction to records management since the publication of its first edition in 1992. This new edition offers updated material within the familiar, seven chapter framework used in its previous editions.

Saffady begins with an overview of “concepts and issues,” such as hardware and software dependence and remote storage, that make the management of electronic records a special challenge. He follows this with two chapters devoted to a brief history and explanation of storage media and file formats. The next three chapters comprise the heart of the book, offering detailed introductions to record inventories, retention schedules, and the proper management of vital records. The final chapter surveys filing equipment, software applications, and the proper handling of media as physical objects.

The “Storage Media” and “File Formats” chapters have been updated to include current technologies. An occasional error slips in (“Blue-ray disc” instead of the proprietary name, “Blu-ray Disc”), but this part of the book remains a useful reference guide to the most common media and formats. The section on solid state storage is brief but sufficient, and the descriptions of image files and file compression are especially helpful for avoiding mistakes, such as confusing the JPEG compression method for the JFIF file format (which uses the “.jpg” file extension) (p. 73). Saffady is careful to distinguish proprietary from open file formats, and while he acknowledges that this distinction sometimes is “blurred” (p. 60) and that some proprietary formats have become “de facto” standards, he also addresses the problems they may present in terms of backward incompatibility and product obsolescence should the creator go out of business or decide to end support for a format. The two chapters now comprise nearly one-quarter of the book, which seems appropriate for an introductory volume, though a future edition might include a more detailed discussion of the PDF/A format, given its importance for the long-term retention of documents (p. 65).

A further concern regarding the third chapter is whether its reliance on file formats in a survey of electronic records is on the verge of becoming too limiting. Records management in 2010 could include complex Web sites, collaborative documents, and records stored across distributed networks. Identifying discreet files in such cases is a more complicated matter than in the days of word processing documents and spreadsheets (or even databases). In addition, a traditional, hierarchical understanding of information may not be sufficient for managing records contained in Wikis and other environments that make use of nonlinear forms of navigation and organization. A future edition might merit a broader framework for this part of the book.

Chapter four moves on to the records inventory. Saffady recommends completing an inventory before drawing up retention schedules, but adds that a complete inventory of a large institution might take a great deal of time. If the manager is conducting an initial inventory, it might be wise in the beginning to limit its scope, possibly even to a single division or one organizational function. Of course, even a limited records management program may not succeed without “top management support,” and Saffady is wise to include a section with suggestions on how to earn support from above (p.

89). The chapter also includes advice for mapping an IT infrastructure and a detailed consideration of “questionnaire” and “consultation” survey methods, with recommendations on how to implement or combine them to best effect. Following this is an in-depth look at the survey questionnaire and the kinds of information it should collect.

The next chapter begins with a discussion of the benefits of retention schedules, a reminder that records managers may need to make a case for the time and expense required for their creation. To this end, Saffady also provides an updated list of record-keeping laws and regulations that accept electronic records in addition to, or in place of, paper and microfilm. The rest of the chapter turns to a discussion of the legal and operational criteria for retention that are most relevant to records management (scholarly criteria being left to books about archival administration). The revised material concerning legal matters includes expanded sections addressing the legal status of digital document images and electronic signatures; the process of e-discovery as defined in recent amendments to the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure; and a particularly useful section on admissibility, rules of evidence, and what a records manager should expect when dealing with federal and state courts. The material concerned with operational criteria is much shorter by comparison to the legal material, but includes a discussion of the life-cycle of information in an organization and a lengthy section about E-mail, with a list of rules for an E-mail retention policy. The chapter concludes with a cautionary reminder about the limited shelf life of storage media, noting that some retention periods may be longer than manufacturer estimates of media stability. In such cases, the records manager may have to migrate data to new media, and Saffady offers minimum requirements for a data migration plan. This chapter is one of the best, and longest, in the book, but it would benefit from the inclusion of sample retention schedules. These would serve as helpful examples for those who are new to records management and would make discussions of retention concepts and criteria less abstract.

Chapter six considers vital records, those records “containing information needed for mission-critical business operations” (p. 161). As he does in previous chapters, Saffady opens with justifications for a vital records management program, including a list of laws and regulations that demand the creation of such programs and the penalties an institution may suffer if it fails to implement one. After a brief section recommending a survey of vital records similar to a records inventory, the rest of the chapter turns to risk analysis and control. Risk assessments can be qualitative or quantitative, the latter distinguished by the use of “numeric calculations to measure the likelihood and impact of losses” (p. 176). Such estimates should be based on evidence and experience when possible and informed speculation when not. The risk control section includes lists of preventive and protective measures, which call attention to the need for security and recovery of records stored in distributed servers and workstations as well as those in centralized repositories. Saffady closes the chapter with strategies for backup regimes and a comment about the crucial importance of including customized code and in-house documentation in any disaster recovery plan.

The final chapter reviews other tools and resources available to records managers. By comparison with the rest of the book, the material in this chapter is largely the same as in earlier editions, and the sections on electronic content management and records management application software are not quite as detailed or in-depth as one would wish.

An expanded discussion of the DoD 5015.2-STD (Department of Defense Electronic Records Management Software Application Design Criteria Standard) requirements and a more formal list of desired features in Electronic Content Management (ECM) and Records Management Application (RMA) software would be welcome. However, the chapter does include useful information on the proper handling and labeling of storage media for those records managers who work directly with media as physical objects.

While the fourth edition of *Managing Electronic Records* would have benefited from a more comprehensive rethinking of some material and the inclusion of concrete examples, the book remains a valuable introduction to records management and a useful reference work even for experienced managers.

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Currents of Archival Thinking, ed. Terry Eastwood and Heather MacNeil (Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited, 2010). 254 pp. Softcover. \$45.00.

Currents of Archival Thinking is a welcome addition to the archivist's bookshelf. Coeditors Terry Eastwood and Heather MacNeil, archival educators at the University of British Columbia and the University of Toronto, respectively, have brought together a volume of ten original essays on key archival topics. Characterizing the volume's contents as 'currents' is appropriate—the contents reflect archival thinking that has moved and evolved over time, and continues to move, change, and go somewhere (although, in some cases, only after swirling around in an eddy for awhile). The contents also are current in the sense of being up-to-date, in that the contributors have traced the evolution of archival thought about each of these issues to the most recent thinking and the challenges that lie ahead.

The essays are organized into three parts: Foundations, Functions, and Models & Metaphors. The Foundations section consists of two essays that provide the broader context for what follows. The first is by Terry Eastwood on the nature of archives and the discipline of archival science; the second by Jennifer Douglas on the evolving nature of the core principle of our profession—the principle of provenance. Part II (Functions) contains a chapter on what may be considered the core archival functions: appraisal, preservation, description, and reference services. Ciaran Trace explores appraisal issues from the perspective of notions of value in archival thought. Michèle Cloonan looks at what it means to preserve records of enduring value, a topic that is more complicated than it may seem. In a chapter entitled "Debates about Description," Geoffrey Yeo recounts the evolution of the many complex issues that are a component of how we represent our holdings. If archivists represent our holdings primarily to serve their researchers, reference services also must be addressed, and Wendy Duff looks at reference services through the lens of mediation, and notes the need to better understand how the archivist brings together records and users in both the traditional and on-line environment. This part provides a stimulating discussion of the current state of each of these functions with all their complexities and uncertainties.

The third part—Models and Metaphors—contains four essays that cut across archival functions. Glenn Dingwall provides an insightful examination of the (sometimes competing) models of recordkeeping: the life cycle and the continuum. Margaret Hedstrom explores the metaphor of memory that so often is associated with archives, and provides a thought-provoking investigation into the complex relationships between archives and memory. Using the metaphor of an arsenal, Livia Iacovino discusses the role of recordkeeping in accountability, and the extent to which archives are or should be "arsenals of accountability," a broader responsibility for archives and archivists than traditionally has been undertaken. Catherine Hobbs addresses a matter of great current interest: the extent to which archival theory developed primarily to address the management of institutional records and how that can be applied to the records of personal endeavors. She also proposes new ways of looking at the particular characteristics of personal archives as a means of developing new archival strategies to deal with such material.

While this volume reflects modern thinking about a number of key archival issues, one of the richest features of these essays is their historical nature. Each chapter is, in part, a bibliographical essay that traces the evolution of archival thought and synthesizes the key themes, concepts, and positions around a particular issue. Each chapter includes an extensive bibliography that will be very useful for those wanting to further explore the most influential writings on a particular issue.

However, the volume is more than a historical treatment. The debates in archival discourse certainly have not been resolved; the contributors identify current areas of contention and suggest new approaches that may further our understanding of the issues so that we may advance archival practice and the foundations on which it is based. Some of the articles provide a sound basis for the beginnings of a research agenda (pp. 132–133). In other cases, the authors challenge archivists to expand their influence (p. 203).

This volume also undoubtedly will broaden many readers' horizons. In the first place, the contributors (who are from Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia) provide an international perspective; they also represent an interesting mix of practitioners and academics, some of whom bring fresh voices in the debates that characterize our profession. Secondly, in synthesizing the professional literature (past and present), the writers include references to the veins of rich European archival theory that has not been accessible because it is not in English. Furthermore, the writers also expose the reader to literature in other disciplines they may not have been aware of; see, for example, Hedstrom's discussion of the wide-ranging literature of memory studies (pp. 164–167). It often is difficult for busy professionals (despite the best of intentions) to keep up with the literature. This volume synthesizes the key archival ideas and presents them in a concise and clear format. Not surprisingly, many issues resurface in different contexts throughout the book, so the detailed index is much appreciated (and not always included in a volume of this sort).

Archivists tend to be rather insular, and preoccupied with tending their own gardens. *Currents in Archival Thinking* provides a thoughtful and readable account of where we have been as a profession and suggests paths for fruitful exploration of the many questions still to be investigated. The volume will be useful to the practitioner. It also will be useful to archival educators. Many of the contributions to this volume provide an overview of the evolution of key issues in the archival profession that will be useful to students and provide a starting point for a class discussion. While some may be frustrated that so many issues are still matters of debate (Eastwood describes our entire discipline as "a contested realm"), Dingwall notes that "It is a sign of good health for the archival profession to see new ideas rising to challenge the old" (p. 156). Eastwood and MacNeil are to be commended for bringing together a rich compilation of archival thinking presented by fresh voices. Readers may not agree with all that is written here, but it will get you thinking about our profession, what we do, and how and why we do it.

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