

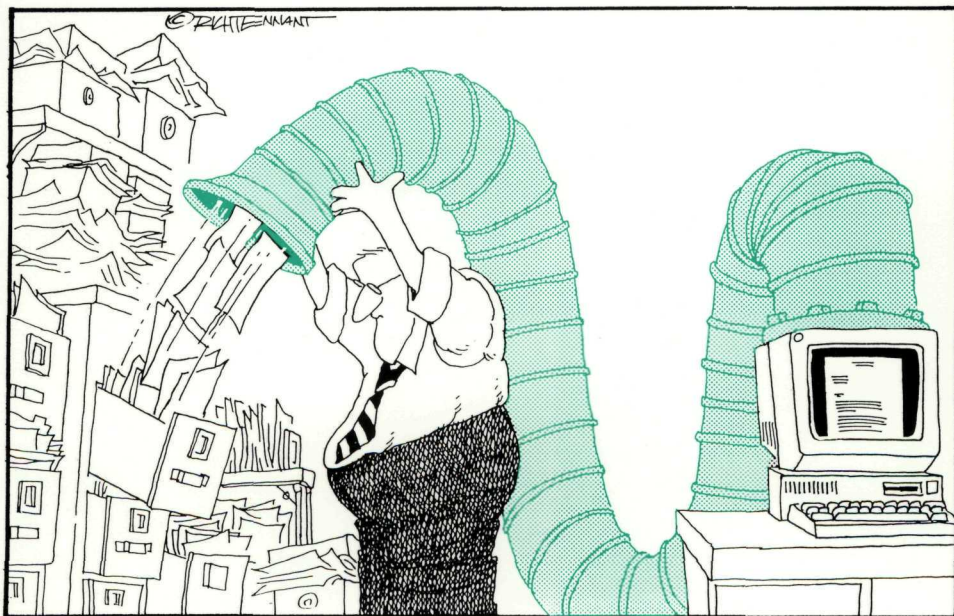
The American Archivist

Volume 58
Number 2
Spring 1995

Downloaded from <https://prime-pdf-watermark.prime-prod.pubfactory.com/> at 2025-07-02 via free access

ON AUTOMATED RECORDS

SAA COMMITTEE



AND TECHNIQUES

SPECIAL ISSUE ON CASE STUDIES



The Society of
American Archivists

The American Archivist

Richard J. Cox, *Editor*, University of Pittsburgh

Teresa M. Brinati, *Managing Editor*, Society of American Archivists

Nancy Fleming, *Copy Editor*

Mitchel Bjerke, *Editorial Assistant*

Barbara L. Craig, *Reviews Editor*, University of Toronto

EDITORIAL BOARD

Terry Cook (1994–1997), *National Archives of Canada*

Anne Gilliland-Swetland (1994–1997), *University of Michigan*

Joan D. Krizack (1994–1995), *Northeastern University*

Lawrence J. McCrank (1994–1996), *Ferris State University*

Robert S. Martin (1994–1998), *Louisiana State University*

James M. O'Toole (1994–1998), *University of Massachusetts at Boston*

Victoria Irons Walch (1994–1996), *Consultant*

Maxine Trost (1994–1995), *University of Wyoming*

The Society of American Archivists

PRESIDENT Maygene Daniels, *National Gallery of Art*

VICE PRESIDENT Brenda Banks, *Georgia Department of Archives and History*

TREASURER Lee Stout, *Pennsylvania State University*

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Susan E. Fox

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Karen Benedict (1993–1996), *Consultant*

Susan E. Davis (1994–1997), *State Historical Society of Wisconsin*

Luciana Duranti (1992–1995), *University of British Columbia*

Timothy Ericson (1993–1996), *University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee*

Margaret L. Hedstrom (1992–1995), *New York State Archives & Records Administration*

Steve Hensen (1994–1997), *Duke University*

H. Thomas Hickerson (1993–1996), *Cornell University*

Sharon Gibbs Thibodeau (1994–1997), *National Archives and Records Administration*

Elizabeth Yakel (1992–1995), *Student*

About the cover: Many archivists and records managers have an immediate response to the words imaging or optical disc: they cringe. They have spent too much time with people who share the misconception about optical disc applications illustrated by the cartoon on the cover of this issue, namely, that simply running the contents of disorganized but over-stuffed filing cabinets through a scanner solves records management problems. The informal case studies in this special issue by the Society of American Archivists Committee on Automated Records and Techniques, provide context for the complex issues facing archivists in the "information age." (Illustration courtesy of Richard Tennant)

The American Archivist

Volume 58 / Number 2 / Spring 1995

Committee on Automated Records and Techniques (CART)

Special Issue on Case Studies

From the Guest Editor

Fynnette Eaton / 120

Case Studies

The Role of University Archives in the Campus Information Environment / 124
Lee Stout

Managing Information in an Office Systems Environment: The IMOSA Project / 142
John McDonald

Group Work, "Groupware," and the Transformation of Information Resource Management / 154
Richard M. Kesner

Disc Players, the Records Manager/Archivist, and the Development of Optical Imaging Applications / 170
Michael L. Miller

Punch Card Records: Precursors of Electronic Records / 182
Margaret O'Neill Adams

The Freedom of Information Act in the Information Age: The Electronic Challenge to the People's Right to Know / 202
Thomas Elton Brown

Reviews

Fisher, ed., *Automation in Offices and Archives* and Hedstrom, ed., *Electronic Records Management Program Strategies*, reviewed by Brenda C. Weeden / 212

National Archives of Canada, *Guidelines for Managing Recorded Information in a Minister's Office* and *Managing Your Computer Directories and Files*, reviewed by Thomas J. Ruller / 214

ACLS Conference publication, *Technology, Scholarship, and the Humanities: The Implications of Electronic Information*, reviewed by Mary F. Cordato / 215

Losee and Worley, *Research and Evaluation for Information Professionals*, reviewed by Gregory S. Hunter / 217

Tibbo, *Abstracting, Information Retrieval, and the Humanities: Providing Access to Historical Literature*, reviewed by Tyler O. Walters / 218

Melnyk, *What's Cooking in Women's History: An Introductory Guide to Preserving Archival Records About Women* and Central New York Library Resources Council, *Documenting Community Organizations*, reviewed by Fernanda Perrone / 220

Jones and Cantelon, eds., *Corporate Archives and History: Making the Past Work*, reviewed by Elizabeth W. Adkins / 221

Caya, Beyea, and Hanson, eds., *Canadian Archives in 1992*, reviewed by Donald W. Jackanicz / 223

McKemmish and Upward, eds., *Archival Documents: Providing Accountability Through Recordkeeping*, reviewed by Tom Nesmith / 224

ALA, *Preparing for Accreditation: A Handbook for Academic Librarians*, reviewed by Susan E. Davis / 225

Reiman, *The Study of Modern Manuscripts: Public, Confidential, and Private*, reviewed by Philip B. Eppard / 226

Selected Recent Publications / 229

Editorial Policy / 231

Subscription Information

The American Archivist (ISSN 0360-9081) is published quarterly by the Society of American Archivists, 600 S. Federal, Suite 504, Chicago, Illinois 60605. Periodicals postage paid at Chicago, Illinois, and additional mailing offices. Subscriptions: \$85 a year to North American addresses, \$100 a year to other addresses. Single copies are \$25 for magazine copies and \$30 for photocopies.

Articles and related communications should be sent to Teresa M. Brinati, Managing Editor, Society of American Archivists, 600 S. Federal, Suite 504, Chicago, Illinois 60605. Telephone: (312) 922-0140. Advertising correspondence, membership and subscription correspondence, and orders for back issues should be sent to SAA at the address above. Requests for permission to reprint an article should be sent in writing to SAA at the above address. Claims for issues not received must be received by SAA headquarters within four months of issue publication date for domestic subscribers and within six months for international subscribers.

The American Archivist is available on 16 mm microfilm, 35 mm microfilm, and 105 mm microfiche from University Microfilms International, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346. When an issue is out of stock, article and issue photocopies may also be obtained from UMI. *The American Archivist* is indexed in *Library Literature* and is abstracted in *Historical Abstracts*; book reviews are indexed in *Book Reviews Index*.

© *The American Archivist* is printed on an alkaline, acid-free printing paper manufactured with no groundwood pulp that meets the requirements of the American National Standards Institute—Permanence of Paper, ANSI Z39.48-1992. Typesetting and printing of *The American Archivist* is done by Imperial Printing Company of St. Joseph, Michigan.

The American Archivist and the Society of American Archivists assume no responsibility for statements made by contributors.

©The Society of American Archivists 1995. All rights reserved.

Postmaster: send address changes to *The American Archivist*, 600 S. Federal, Suite 504, Chicago, Illinois 60605.

Postal Notice

The following statement of ownership, management, and circulation was filed in accordance with the provisions of Section 4369, Title 39, U.S. Code, on 29 September 1995, by Teresa M. Brinati, Managing Editor.

The American Archivist is published quarterly by the Society of American Archivists, 600 S. Federal St., Suite 504, Chicago, Illinois 60605. The managing editor is Teresa M. Brinati. The owner is the Society of American Archivists, 600 S. Federal St., Suite 504, Chicago, Illinois 60605. There are no stockholders, bondholders, mortgages, or other security holders in the organization.

The average number of copies of each issue printed during the preceding twelve months was 5,514; sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors, and counter sales were 0; mail subscriptions to members and subscribers were 4,925; total paid circulation was 4,925; free distribution was 119; total distribution was 5,040; and 470 copies were for office use, leftover, or spoiled after printing. For the most recent issue (Summer 1994), total number of copies printed was 5,547; sales through dealers and carriers were 0; mail subscriptions to members and subscribers were 4,925; total paid circulation was 4,925; free distribution was 121; total distribution was 5,046; and 501 copies were for office use, leftover, or spoiled after printing.

Guest Editor's Introduction

FYNNETTE L. EATON

***About the author:** Fynnette Eaton is chief of the Technical Services Branch of the Center for Electronic Records at the National Archives and Records Administration. She has been in that position since 1990. The predominant activity of the branch is the preservation of electronic files transferred to the National Archives. The major focus for the last three years has been the development of a PC-based in-house preservation system, which successfully enabled the Center to copy electronic records covered by the *Armstrong v. EOP* litigation. She has worked in the area of electronic records since 1986. She became a Fellow of the Society of American Archivists in 1995.*

ELEVEN YEARS AGO the Society of American Archivists (SAA) Committee on Automated Records and Techniques (CART) coordinated a special issue of the *American Archivist* focusing on the past, present, and future of automation. The members of CART had devoted a great deal of time and energy to activities associated with electronic (machine-readable) records and automated applications in archives. Although when this current issue was first contemplated, the dissolution of CART was not anticipated, it is perhaps fitting that another special issue of this journal document areas of interest that have been the focus of CART since the first issue was published.

One area of special interest to CART, education, was the focus of the summer issue of the *American Archivist* in 1993 (volume 56, no. 3). The Automated Records and Techniques Curriculum Project, a project that had been at the center of CART activities for several years, served as the focal point of this issue. The objec-

tive of the project was establishing mechanisms for educating archivists on the management of electronic records and the use of automated applications in archives. One of the outcomes of this project was the recognition that the archival profession needed to produce illustrative literature based on the experiences of institutions confronting the challenges posed by modern technology. One immediate response was CART's proposal to the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) in support of a case study project, which would be sponsored by SAA and would generate case studies on the management of automated records. The project, which successfully secured NHPRC funding, is scheduled to publish ten case studies for distribution by December 1996. The articles in this special issue, although not written in the classic case study format, can be viewed as a series of informal case studies that provide context for the complex issues facing archivists as

they confront “the information age”: outlining the role of the archivists who work with information produced by modern technology, integrating archival work within the broader context of information resources management, analyzing the impact of technology on archival principles, and advancing new approaches that archivists must be willing to adopt in order to participate in the modern information environment.

Lee Stout’s article, “Role of the University Archives in the Campus Information Environment,” highlights the issues involved in establishing an electronic records program in a university setting and the efforts Pennsylvania State University made to use the electronic records program to integrate the archives into the campus information environment. The results of the grant project, in which the archives sought to appraise, preserve, and make available electronic records created in the administrative computing division of Penn State, are not surprising to people who have worked in an electronic records program. They are instructive for the larger archival community, however, as institutions consider the possible methods for ensuring the long-term preservation of electronic files created by their host institutions.

John McDonald has graciously agreed to have his essay, “Managing Information in an Office Systems Environment: the IMOSA Project,” reprinted from the proceedings of a meeting of office systems specialists and archivists sponsored by the Archivschule in Marburg, Germany. Although the paper was presented in 1992 and both McDonald and the National Archives of Canada have moved beyond the conclusions drawn from the IMOSA study, this essay provides institutions with an example of how functional requirements can be deployed in testing office automation systems. McDonald details how functional requirements, developed by the National

Archives of Canada working with other federal departments and private sector organizations in the FOREMOST project (Formal REcords Management for Office Systems Technologies), were tested by the development of a prototype application. With the IMOSA project, the National Archives of Canada began the difficult process of reexamining the traditional approaches to corporate filing and retrieval of business information. The article summarizes the main functions of the prototype and discusses two major observations that emerged from this project: that archival considerations can be addressed successfully only if they are considered in tandem with information management considerations, and that there is a need to reexamine the traditional approaches to recordkeeping. Although some of the information is dated, the observations discussed in this essay furnish an outline for individuals or institutions interested in seeking new approaches to old problems.

Two articles demonstrate how archives can use technology to gain recognition from other information professionals. In his article “Group Work, ‘Groupware,’ and the Transformation of Information Resource Management (IRM),” Richard Kesner argues that groupware is transforming IRM within modern organizations. He considers the implications of software products for archivists and/or records managers charged with preserving vital corporate information. He presents three case studies to illustrate his point: that in moving to groupware, organizations review and rationalize their information resources and services in line with their greater business objectives. In “Disc Players, the Records Manager/Archivist, and the Development of Optical Imaging Applications,” Michael Miller uses his experiences at the Environmental Protection Agency to explore the “how to” for employing digital imaging to increase efficiency in managing documents. Accordingly, he provides criteria by which

archivists and records managers can evaluate imaging applications and furnishes questions that can be asked to increase the possibility of successfully implementing a digital imaging system. His article provides an introduction to the substantive problems of image system implementation for both archivists and records managers. His intent is not to address long-term storage or transportability issues, but to lay out a useful road map to assist those interested in developing and implementing an optical imaging application in their institution.

The final two selections analyze the impact of technology on archival principles, appraisal, and reference. In her article, "Punch Card Records: Precursors of Electronic Records," Margaret O'Neill Adams examines the reactions of both archivists and agency personnel to the first form of electronic media, the punch card. In an interesting use of the National Archives internal records, Adams documents the National Archives' response to its first encounter with machine-readable records, as well as the Census Bureau's less than monolithic view of the "value" of these "records." Her review of the opinions of personnel in both agencies provides an insightful analysis of the confused reaction records creators and archivists have to the challenges posed by new media. The positions and actions taken both by the National Archives and the Census Bureau in many ways mirror the more recent positions and actions assumed by government agencies in response to challenges posed by the creation and use of electronic records. Clearly, the expectation that agencies would accept responsibility for maintaining records in a format that was not the accepted one for retaining records was not borne out by the actions of the agency. Adams provides a cautionary tale for archivists who presuppose an easy transition when agencies must accept responsibility for ensuring access to electronic records.

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), enacted in 1966, established a statutory right of access to government information. Thomas Brown's essay, "The Freedom of Information Act in the Information Age: The Electronic Challenge to the People's Right to Know," examines how federal agencies' use of computers has affected the interpretation of how the Act should be applied to information captured in these new formats. Brown reviews the ways that electronic records of federal agencies have been treated under the Freedom of Information Act, discusses some of the unresolved questions surrounding this topic, and outlines some proposed approaches to deal with these unresolved issues. He also discusses the critical issue of what constitutes a record under the FOIA and then goes on to illustrate some of the difficulties in dealing with this issue. In doing so he cites court rulings that require agencies to make information available but at the same time refuse to order the agencies to provide it in the formats sought by the requestors. An example of the current situation is the acceptance by courts of printouts as an electronic format in FOIA requests. The article clearly demonstrates the need for clarification and an understanding by courts, federal agencies, and, possibly, Congress as to the necessity of reexamining the purpose of the FOIA in light of the predominance of electronic records in agencies. What is not clear is how the changes will be accomplished.

The wide range of topics covered in these six articles is a testament to the knowledge, skills, and dedication of the CART membership, who over these many years have worked very hard to enlighten archivists and the SAA about both the challenges and the opportunities posed by electronic records and automated applications. This volume is dedicated to all those who worked so long to educate the rest of us in these rapidly changing areas of technology.