BOOK REVIEWS

Jeannette A. Bastian, Reviews Editor

Walter Benjamin's Archive: Images, Signs, Texts

By Walter Benjamin. London and New York: Verso Books, 2007. 311 pp. Illustrated. Hardcover. $27.95. ISBN 978-1-84467-196-0.

Walter Benjamin, philosopher, literary and cultural critic, social commentator, and translator, was born into a well-to-do Jewish family in Berlin in 1892. Although he studied at many universities in Germany, he was unable to secure an academic job and spent much of his adult life traveling from one country to another, supporting himself by writing articles while amassing quantities of research material relating to a wide variety of topics. His particular focal points among a universe of interests included social relations, Jewish mysticism, communism, the nature of art and literature, childhood development, the psychotropic effects of hashish, and the importance of ephemera as components of the documentary record. He is usually considered the wellspring from which postmodernism drew much of its inspiration. His works, neglected for fifteen years after his death, are now adulated to the point where no extant notebook, manuscript, letter, newspaper article, radio broadcast, postcard, or scrap of paper created or collected by him has gone unstudied.

This book is a description (lavishly illustrated by sample documents in high-resolution photographic reproduction) of the Walter Benjamin Archive, assembled from various donors. The archive is at the Institute of the Hamburg Foundation for the Promotion of Knowledge and Culture in the Academy of Arts, Berlin. This English-language edition is a translation by Esther Leslie of the German edition published in 2006 (with commentaries by Ursula Marx, Gudrun Schwarz, Michael Schwarz, and Erdmut Wizisla). The editors are silent about how much material is in the archive and neglect to indicate where other collections of Benjamin manuscripts can be found. Surprisingly, especially considering the circumstances of Benjamin's life, they make no attempt to delineate the provenance of the archive's holograph notebooks, files of clippings, carefully compiled troves of picture postcards, and other materials.

So apprehensive was Benjamin that the Nazis would track down and destroy his works that he systematically sent copies of his publications (and many unpublished research notes) to friends in dispersed locations to safeguard his legacy (pp. 7–8). He wanted to ensure that his intellectual output would endure even if

he himself fell victim to the Nazi juggernaut. Benjamin's approach to being an "archivist" was to sort publications and bits and pieces of material for future reference into envelopes and folders classified by theme as well as format. His classification scheme was systematic but highly idiosyncratic, based on subjective memory and meaning, having, he said, "a surprising coherence that is incomprehensible to the profane" (p. 8). As the editors note, Benjamin's "archives consist of images, texts, signs, things that one can see and touch, but they are also a reservoir of experiences, ideas, and hopes . . ." (p. 2).

The book is organized into thirteen sections, categorized as follows: Benjamin as archivist; collecting and dispersal; micrographies; Russian toys; his son's words and turns of phrase; notebooks; picture postcards; composing, building, weaving; graphic forms; *The Arcades Project;* arcades and interiors; riddles, brainteasers, word games; and mosaics in Siena. Each section contains an assortment of photographic reproductions of documents and their English translations.

One disorienting difficulty in the book's design is that the documents are identified in lists found at the beginning of each section, not near the items described, encumbering readers with too much flipping back and forth. Another problem is that texts end abruptly (there is only one facsimile page for each selection), and the translations are correspondingly cut short, often in midsentence. Readers are likely to be discouraged by their inability to turn the page to see how Benjamin's observations unfold or how his arguments develop. The snippets are best studied in comparison with the publications to which they are related. Nearly all of the author's published writings are now available in English translation,[1] but the original documents from which these truncated pages have been selected are not available elsewhere, absent a trip to Berlin. The choppy presentation results in a disjointed view of Benjamin's reasoning and pronouncements, which can be hard enough to follow even under the best of circumstances.

Archivists are most likely to be interested in Benjamin's ideas concerning the psychology of collecting, the classification of books, the ramifications of mechanical reproduction, and the nature of history. Unfortunately, these topics are not well represented among the documents chosen for inclusion. It would be instructive, for example, to see notes or drafts in support of Benjamin's expressed belief that a sense of disorder prevails in collections, a "chaos" that makes it necessary for order to emerge by means of cataloging or shelving. "[I]f there is a counterpart to the confusion of a library, it is the order of its catalogue. [T]here is in the life of the collector a dialectical tension between the poles of disorder and order."[2] It would likewise be useful to trace his views about "aura" back to their origins. Do original manuscripts have an aura similar to that

[1] Walter Benjamin, *Selected Writings*, vols. 1–4 (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1996–2003); and Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999).

[2] Benjamin, "Unpacking My Library: A Talk about Collecting," *Selected Writings*, vol. 2, 487.

Benjamin postulated for original art? How should this affect our views relating to diplomatics[3] and our ideas about provenance? "In even the most perfect reproduction," he states, "one thing is lacking: the here and now of the work of art—its unique existence in a particular place. It is this . . . that bears the mark of the history to which the work has been subject. . . . The here and now of the original underlies the concept of its authenticity."[4]

I have often wondered about the personal experiences that colored Benjamin's interpretation of Paul Klee's *Angelus Novus,* a drawing that he owned, as the "Angel of History." The outbreak of World War II certainly influenced Benjamin's perceptions about the direction of history, but what else fed his pessimism? Klee's picture "shows an angel who seems about to move away from something he stares at. . . . This is how the angel of history must look. His face is turned toward the past. Where a chain of events appears before *us, he* sees one single catastrophe, which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it at his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed, [but the] storm drives him irresistibly into the future, to which his back is turned. . . . What we call progress is this storm."[5]

The volume devotes too much attention to documents that in my opinion are relatively insignificant, such as brainteasers (pp. 287–301) and notes by Benjamin about childhood malapropisms and linguistic slips (pp. 109–49), none of which translate meaningfully into English. Too little space (pp. 251–65) is given to the author's monumental (but never to be completed) undertaking, *Passagenwerk,* usually referred to in English as *The Arcades Project.* Known when it was a work in progress as "Paris, Capital of the Nineteenth Century," *The Arcades Project* shows more promise of greatness than any other component of Benjamin's sprawling oeuvre. He believed that history in its truest light should be constructed from discarded fragments and that historians must learn the art of "rag picking" before they are positioned to approach the truth (pp. 251–53).

American historian J. Franklin Jameson, an influential advocate for the establishment of the National Archives, disparaged social history because it could not be based on materials "like statutes or other manageable series" handed down by authority, but must instead be predicated on "a vast blot of miscellaneous material from which the historian picks out what he wants."[6] Such

[3] Diplomatics is "the study of the creation, form, and transmission of records, and their relationship to the facts represented in them and to their creator, in order to identify, evaluate, and communicate their nature and authenticity." Richard Pearce-Moses, *A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005).

[4] Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility, Third Version," S*elected Writings*, vol. 4, 253.

[5] Benjamin, "On the Concept of History," *Selected Writings*, vol. 4, 392.

[6] As quoted in Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream: The Objectivity Question and the American Historical Profession* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 89–90.

traces have been recently referred to (favorably) as "sediment that has precipitated out of the lakes and streams of social patterns and human actions."[7] It is just such sedimentary material that Benjamin sought to incorporate in *The Arcades Project*. His net drew in thousands of examples of clippings, quotations, advertisements, and other cultural ephemera illustrating the commercial and social relations of Paris in the nineteenth century. In his first notes for the project he mused that "Abject poverty and insolent luxury enter into the most contradictory communication: the commodity intermingles and interbreeds as promiscuously as images in the most tangled of dreams" (p. 257).

Among the book's strengths is a comprehensive bibliography of Benjamin's published works in English (p. 309). I have read Benjamin's writings with varying degrees of profit and frustration. Much of what he left behind resists understanding, even after careful study, and there is some evidence that he cared little for being understood. "Truth, bodied forth in the dance of represented ideas, . . . resists being projected into the realm of knowledge," he wrote,[8] and, as Susan Sontag complained, "His dense prose registers that resistance."[9]

Visually, *Walter Benjamin's Archive* is extremely appealing: seldom have I seen manuscripts so beautifully reproduced. Benjamin believed correctly that an accompanying picture alters the meaning of a written passage (p. 73). Likewise, images of the notebooks in which his meticulously coded thoughts found expression in cramped handwriting can color our interpretation of his words. Much of the handwritten material is so compact and tightly controlled that it seems ready to explode like a knot of twisted springs. As Sontag remarked about his published writings, he tried to pack everything into each sentence, and the ideas don't flow readily from one asseveration to another. His "essays seem to end just in time, before they self-destruct."[10] His notebooks contain diagrams illustrating his struggle to make connections: boxes establish thematic groups; connecting lines plot possible relationships (pp. 231–49).

At the time of his death in September 1940 (trekking over mountains separating France from Spain—he was attempting to escape the Germans and get to America via Portugal, but suffered a setback at the Spanish border), Benjamin was harboring a briefcase full of manuscripts. The writings have never been found. Did they, I wonder, include a comprehensive summa of the man's thought? Or merely more of the same dense thicket of verbiage pierced now and again by darts of brilliant insight? I wonder what a sporadically incandescent intellectual's last thoughts might have been as he contemplated the walls of a

[7] Daniel Lord Smail, *On Deep History and the Brain* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 61.

[8] Walter Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama* (London and New York: Verso, 1998), 29.

[9] Susan Sontag, *Under the Sign of Saturn* (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1980), 130.

[10] Sontag, *Under the Sign of Saturn*, 129.

hotel room in the Pyrenees, waiting for a carefully hoarded suicide dose of morphine to draw the curtain on his life. Was he panicked by the encroaching darkness? Did he dwell wistfully on the absence of friends, or remember a lost love? Was there a last notebook passage that, to his regret, could never be entered? Did he weigh these regrets against the fatigue and duress of his flight, soon to end, or against the horrors of arrest and interrogation? Did he most fear the Gestapo's thumbscrews and blowtorches, or the excruciating contingency that he might be forced by wracking pain to surrender his integrity and reverse his opinions?

I have been ambivalent about as well as intrigued by Benjamin's work for many years. *Walter Benjamin's Archive* is an interesting but less than satisfying stroll through a complex man's approach to collecting and organizing the raw materials from which his seminal thinking coalesced.

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Archival Internships: A Guide for Faculty, Supervisors, and Students

By Jeannette A. Bastian and Donna Webber. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2008. 126 pp. Available from the Society of American Archivists, $24.95 members, $29.95 nonmembers. ISBN 1-931666-26-1.

In twenty-eight years as an archivist, I have made many of the mistakes discussed in *Archival Internships*. By trial and error, I have had a few successes as well. My success rate would have improved considerably with a little expert advice.

Providing excellent internships is an essential part of training professional archivists who will be prepared to enter the workforce. A successful internship can be so profound as to solidify a student's decision to join the profession. A failed experience can be so confusing and frustrating as to call into question everything the student has learned in class and even his or her choice of careers.

Bastian and Webber provide an excellent roadmap for implementing successful internships. As the title suggests, *Archival Internships* is a guide for faculty who design, negotiate, and evaluate internships, and for supervisors who want to provide the best possible experience to their interns. Following the manual's suggestions will help archivists create productive experiences for their repositories and will guide students who wish to evaluate potential opportunities. By examining archival internships from the perspectives of faculty, supervisors, and students, the introduction states, "the authors will draw best practices and recommend professional standards. Through discussions of pertinent issues, case studies illustrating problems and solutions, and an array of sample forms and procedures, they hope to offer useful and practical guidelines for successful internships."

The authors succeed admirably. Because internships must meet the needs of all the participants, these unique educational experiences offer what is often the most complex aspect of a student's education. *Archival Internships* presents an eminently practical approach to the complex dynamics necessary for success.

The guide begins by treating internships as an integral part of the educational experience. The authors acknowledge the tension between practical experience and the classroom. They correctly place internships in the context of educating well-rounded archivists. Through a discussion of Benjamin Bloom's learning taxonomy, the authors explain clearly and concisely the ways in which practical experience complements classroom learning. This section is followed by a useful discussion of internships as social learning environments in which students not only apply knowledge, but also begin the process of learning to work in a professional environment. By discussing Bloom's taxonomy and the social/cultural aspects of internships, Bastian and Webber offer a well-rounded explanation of the diverse ways in which these learning experiences deepen student understanding. Their explanation leads to the logical and correct conclusion that the practical experience acquired in well-organized internships is essential to the learning process; without it, students may "know" basic archival concepts and principals, but will be ill equipped to apply them in real work environments.

The authors give due attention to all of the participants in the internship process. Three chapters focus on key participants (faculty, supervisors, students). These chapters are organized logically and enhanced by a variety of case studies that give each chapter a practical focus and sense of reality.

Throughout, the authors emphasize that success stems from close collaboration between academic advisors and site supervisors. The academic advisor is essential to the process of managing the program, identifying sites willing to support internships, nurturing those sites, and advising students. Advisors also assist with resolution of conflicts and evaluate the experience to ensure that the internship meets the educational goals identified by the faculty advisor. Step by step, the guide provides detailed advice to faculty charged with managing this aspect of the student's education.

In similar fashion, chapter 4 discusses the role of the site supervisor. Bastian and Webber have consciously created a guide that presents best practices, integrating them throughout the work. Not only in the main text, but in case studies and sidebars, they emphasize the role of the supervisor as a critical participant in the creation of meaningful experiences for students. A case study on "finding the right collection" is typical of the advice provided by the guide. This case study discusses the need to ensure that projects are of proper size and complexity to be completed in the time for which the student is committed. A second case study on "creating a quality internship" puts a fine point on the need to shape the internship into a meaningful experience and avoid treating the

intern as free labor to be allocated randomly to odd jobs during the semester. A final case study in this chapter provides a cautionary tale about the need for good communication between faculty, supervisor, and student. Sidebars and highlighted quotes from archivists and students about their experiences with internships complement key elements of the text. One sidebar, in particular, outlines the characteristics of a good site supervisor as someone fully engaged in the educational process.

It would have been all too easy for a guide such as this to focus on the "professional" audience and ignore the third participant, the student. Bastian and Webber avoid this oversight. In the chapter focused on student participants, the authors provide excellent advice to the student planning to take an internship. Clearly, student and work site share the responsibility of creating a productive experience. In a sidebar, students get practical advice about appropriate workplace behavior and their responsibility for a successful internship. More importantly, the chapter provides clear advice regarding the characteristics of a meaningful experience. By spelling out these details, the authors equip students with a perspective that will inform their understanding of the internship process and help to guide them to shape their own learning environment in a productive fashion. Ultimately, students who get the most out of their education are those who fully engage in the process of learning. This chapter makes it much easier for interns to do just that. It should be on the reserve reading list of every course related to internships.

In succeeding chapters, the authors provide excellent advice to archival institutions wishing to establish internships independent of academic programs and tie it all together with a summary of the elements needed for a successful program.

The appendices are well suited to a practical guide. They provide useful tools such as sample agreements, announcements, and evaluation forms that can be adapted easily to local programs. I was particularly pleased to see handouts containing workplace etiquette standards for students, and I wish etiquette handouts for faculty and site supervisors also had been included. These could be derived easily from the text of appropriate chapters. The etiquette handout for students reminds them that the internship is a "job," with all that entails. It is all too easy for faculty and site supervisors to assume that students understand their roles in the workplace. A site supervisor handout might provide a useful reminder to the supervisor that he or she needs to communicate actively, mentor the student in content knowledge and professional behavior, and include the intern in workplace events and meetings. A faculty handout would codify what is expected of the faculty advisor. Etiquette standards are designed to make it easy for all the players to know what to do and how to behave in the complex environment of an internship.

In concluding the last chapter, "Putting It All Together," the authors urge faculty and site supervisors to think "outside the processing box." In what

is perhaps the only major failing of the book, Bastian and Webber offer this message as an afterthought, rather than as a significant topic of discussion. Most internships probably should focus on processing because students will experience the concepts unique and essential to the profession in the course of processing a collection or series. Nonetheless, readers would have been well served by a chapter dealing with alternatives to the traditional processing-based internship. For example, at the Wisconsin Historical Society, we wrestle regularly with how to create a meaningful reference experience for student archivists when providing reference service requires deeper understanding of access systems and collections than can be expected of a student. Similarly, creating EAD finding aids or participating in digitization projects might meet the interests of some students, but may have different requirements than a processing internship. The general lessons of this guide regarding the characteristics of a good internship are applicable to these kinds of projects, but it would have been useful to explore nonprocessing options in a separate chapter. Such a chapter would help archivists adapt to the many needs and interests of student interns.

I am an unabashed supporter of the Guidelines for a Graduate Program in Archival Studies and of internships as an integral part of the educational process. The guidelines state that archival education "includes both original research and experiential learning." Any sound education program not only requires a full curriculum of courses, but also the practical experiences that serve to convert knowledge into practice. In the chapter focused on faculty advisors, the authors pose two questions: 1) Should an internship be a "capstone or introduction to a career?" and 2) Are internships "supplementary or complementary to classroom knowledge?" To both questions, I would answer an emphatic "Yes!" For students to get the most out of their education, they need the practical experience provided when internships are an integral part of the educational experience and not an afterthought. Processing internships should be built into the early stages of the curriculum and designed to seat basic knowledge and understanding in the student's mind. Educational programs should also be encouraged to develop internship opportunities that are more varied and serve to deepen student knowledge in areas of particular interest to the student. This form of internship would be particularly useful to students in the second year of their education.

Archival Internships provides an easy-to-use roadmap that leads to better internship programs that will supplement and complement the student's classroom knowledge. This guide should be on the bookshelf of every archival educator, archivist supervising interns, and archivist contemplating participation in an internship program.

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Archives and Justice: A South African Perspective

By Verne Harris, with a foreword by Terry Cook. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2007. xxviii, 447 pp. Index. Available from the Society of American Archivists, $40.00 members, $56.00 nonmembers. ISBN 1-931666-18-0.

For over a decade, South African archivist Verne Harris has contributed a compelling voice to international archival discourses, sharing professional experiences from the vantage point of his native country's transition from an apartheid state to a democracy. In 2004, he became the project manager for the Nelson Mandela Centre of Memory and an honorary research associate at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, where he teaches postgraduate courses on archives, memory, and society. His archival career has been multifaceted. He entered the profession as an archivist with the South African State Archives Service in the 1980s, and was affiliated with that institution and its successor, the National Archives of South Africa, until 2001. Following South Africa's transition to democracy, Harris served as that institution's liaison with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. He next worked for the South African History Archive, a human rights organization that documents the movement against apartheid and promotes access to information and with which he remains active in his current capacity. While Harris has been characterized as a postmodern thinker, he himself eschews that label, in part because, "So wide and indiscriminate has its application been, that its meaning has lost all coherence" (p. 61).

Archives and Justice: A South African Perspective is a compilation of writings drawn from Harris's post-1994 essays, speeches, and conference presentations (several of the pieces are co-authored). That date holds special significance, Harris writes, because, "For South Africa, that year marked the formal ending of apartheid. For me, as an archival thinker and writer, it marked my release from a straitjacket" (p. 3). Though, as the title indicates, this work is rooted in its author's experiences as a South African archivist, its messages are profoundly relevant to the archival profession, to a growing number of academic disciplines, and to society as a whole. With *Archives and Justice,* Harris invites the reader to enter into an ever-evolving and unfolding dialogue about the nature of the archive, records, and memory; their significance in the lives of individuals, communities, and societies; and the roles and responsibilities of archivists.

Terry Cook's foreword, "Archival Music: Verne Harris and the Cracks of Memory," provides a fitting context for *Archives and Justice.* As a mentor and friend to Harris, Cook sheds insight into Harris's evolution as an archivist and a thinker (we learn, for instance, of the central role that music—jazz in particular—has played in Harris's life, and of his career outside of archives as a novelist). Cook assesses this work as one that defies neat categorization, blending within its pages elements of professional autobiography in process, advanced archival theory, the

politics of archival work, ethics, and philosophy (pp. xii–xiii). Cook rightly credits Harris with providing an anthem for the professional work of twenty-first-century archivists: "The anthem that Verne would have us sing as the 'group' called archives is one for justice, to find in the inexorable calling to justice our central 'responsibility,' or else *we* are 'nothing at all' " (p. x). This notion of justice incorporates hospitality, the inviting of story, into archives, through openness to the "other," those who are different from us. It entails welcoming multiple voices into archives and embracing diverse ways of seeing and knowing. It resists the privileging of dominant and mainstream narratives over those of the marginalized. While acknowledging the human tendency to slip into the metanarratives of the powerful, this justice challenges us to guard against that instinct. In *Archives and Justice,* Cook writes, "Verne gives us the poetry and music of a new archive, and so many rich arguments for freeing ourselves from constraining shibboleths so that archives may be transformed for justice" (p. xxviii).

How are we, as a profession and as a society, to achieve this justice, this hospitality that Harris envisions? We must look for the cracks. "There is a crack in everything. That's how the light gets in." With this epigraph, borrowed from Canadian singer, songwriter, and poet Leonard Cohen, Harris points the way toward transformation. In the brief introduction, "Reaching for Hospitality," he exhorts archivists to resist insularities, which tempt us to privilege dominant assumptions, concepts, practices, and stories above others. Instead, Harris urges us to situate professional dialogue and work within the realm of broader public discourses, consciously identifying those "cracks" that let the light in; actively welcoming in the light (with its multiple stories, perspectives, and ways of knowing and seeing); and inviting, through hospitality, an engagement with the other. The essays in *Archives and Justice* achieve this objective on multiple levels, challenging archivists to be open to ongoing reconceptualizations of their notions about the archive, archives, and the archival endeavor.

Archives and Justice is organized into five sections, the first four consisting of five chapters each, and the final one composed of a single chapter of op-eds based on versions originally published in South African newspapers. The first section, "Discourses," illuminates Harris's engagement with writings and discussions related to archives. "Narratives," the second, "explores the stories that archivists tell in certain domains of professional work—appraisal, electronic recordmaking, and arrangement and description" (p. 4). The third and fourth sections, "Politics and Ethics" and "Pasts and Secrets," respectively, recount and reflect on events and issues with which Harris has wrestled as a South African archivist. The op-eds contained in the final section, "Actualities," provide evidence of Harris's "deliberate endeavors to bring awareness of archive to popular debates in South Africa" (pp. 1–2). Perhaps appropriately, given the heavy deconstructionist orientation of *Archives and Justice,* it is a work best apprehended around themes rather than structure, as Harris's exploration of

archive and record, memory and forgetting, and justice and hospitality runs throughout the entire volume.

The issues with which *Archives and Justice* grapples are impossible to discuss without reference to the work of Jacques Derrida, which has inspired Harris's ways of viewing and interacting with the world. His reading of works by Derrida (as well as those about him) extends far beyond the popular 1996 *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression.* While this influence permeates the whole, readers wishing to gain insight into how Derrida has shaped Harris's thinking will find chapter 3: "A Shaft of Darkness: Derrida in the Archive" and chapter 5, " 'Something is Happening Here and You Don't Know What It Is': Jacques Derrida Unplugged" particularly informative. In the latter, Harris suggests that "This is . . . the central challenge that Derrida poses to archivists. How do we make our work a work of justice? How do we practice a hospitality to otherness, a hospitality to every other?" (p. 77). Harris presents that same challenge to us throughout *Archives and Justice,* conceding that such a challenge is impossible, yet exhorting us to be open to—and to reach for—the impossible in our work and in our lives.

Above all else, Harris urges us to question, to contest, to trouble, to undefine and redefine, our professional and societal assumptions, stories, and narratives. He calls us to participate in dialogue. "I wish to stimulate your imaginations rather than persuade you by argument, open a discussion rather than define one, get us asking questions rather than finding answers" (p. 101). What Harris suggests, in essence, is that we as a profession learn to love the questions, even when they lead to uncomfortable answers. This marks the point at which transformation can occur, if we have sufficient will to work toward it. *Archives and Justice* provides us with glimpses of an archive, a profession, and a society always in transformation, in the process of becoming, as together we as archivists and the "other" (creators and users of records, diverse users of archives, cultural heritage professionals of all types) strive to achieve Derrida's (and Harris's) vision of an impossible, ever-coming justice.

A reinvigorated, re-imagined professional discourse that reaches beyond rationalist traditions is vital to this type of change. Harris laments "the absence of dance in archival discourse" (p. 228) and anticipates the possibilities that arise if we make space for dreaming, mystery, and imagination as well. He challenges the profession to reassess long-standing and deeply ingrained ideas of the archive, archivists, and the archival endeavor. He calls upon it to trouble positivist notions of records as mere by-products of process and reflections of reality. Instead, he postulates, "Whatever else it is, or might be, 'the record' is always already the bearer of mystery. And, in its opening to the future, the (limitless) bringer of mystery. Unless archivists . . . cherish and tend this mystery, they risk reducing themselves to arid (and dispensable) functionaries. Worse, they risk becoming archons, hostile to contestation and comfortable in the exercise of power" (p. 122). Harris questions the Jenkinsonian legacy of

archivists as impartial recordkeepers, suggesting that archivists are instead recordmakers, and, as such, "are, from the beginning and always, political players" and "active participants in the dynamics of power relations" (p. 241). His belief that "the call of justice—which comes from outside of 'the record,' outside of any archival or recordmaking theory—is a calling more important than any other calling" (p. 248) leads to a conviction that we must strive toward a just politics of recordmaking, wherein "the work of recordmaking is justice and resistance to injustice" (p. 257). This is a politics animated by an ethics of hospitality, which incorporates inviting in—and listening to—the many voices of the "other."

Yes, in *Archives and Justice,* Harris is calling on archivists to do the impossible. But then again, haven't we, as archivists, always embraced the impossible? Our work is at the same time one of remembering and forgetting, of memory and mourning. The decisions we make in appraisal are impossible, determining those "stories [which] will be consigned to the archive and which will not" (p. 104). That fundamental activity of archivists, contextualization, is impossible, as contexts shift, change, and reshape in the telling. Context is elusive, ever partial, always interpreted. And yet, as a profession, we continue to tell stories, because to do so is human and because stories are worth telling. Let us then, with Harris, strive for the impossible: a just politics of recordmaking, animated by an ethics of hospitality to the other. Let us welcome multiple, competing voices and stories into the archive, valuing their richness and diversity. The true gift of *Archives and Justice* to the archival profession is that it frees us—individually and collectively—to make space in our work and in our discourses for mystery, dance, imagination, and passion.

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Keepers of the Record: The History of the Hudson's Bay Company Archives

By Deidre Simmons. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007. 360 pp. $80.00. ISBN 9780773532915.

In Deidre Simmons's history of the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) Archives, we have one of the richest accounts of the nature of one company's recordkeeping over a remarkably long time (more than three centuries) and of the work of various individuals (and various kinds of professionals) to maintain its archives. This is what she promises us in her book's title, with its play on keepers of records and the history of the archives. Most archivists, especially those in North America and the United Kingdom, know something of this archival story.

Founded in 1670, the company's archives was packed and moved from London to Manitoba (in 1975) and formally deeded as a gift to the Province of Manitoba two decades later with the establishment of a hefty foundation generated by tax savings given the company for the donation. Most of us know something of the richness (in both breadth and depth—there are nearly 3,000 meters of records) of these records for understanding the history of North American colonization and economic development. And many archivists know that the HBC Archives at the Provincial Archives of Manitoba continues to serve as the corporate archives of a still vibrant company. This is an "archival success story" (p. 11), after all, even if the company only compiled its first inventory of records in 1796 and finally appointed an official archivist in 1931, already deep into its own history.

Simmons provides a rather simple purpose for her book: "This history of the Hudson's Bay Company Archives is an account of how the Company kept its records" (p. 3). We learn about how the company sought to administer its records while doing business over a large expanse of the world. We see how its London overseers sent blank journals to its agents, retrieved documents from its employees, and prepared and sent detailed instructions on how to keep records. (Simmons attributes the preparation of recordkeeping instructions as the main reason so many records survived.) Written by an archivist and consultant with sensitivity to archival issues, *Keepers of the Record* seeks to examine the evolution of the company's creation and maintenance of records and their use "in the context of the history of the Company, of the history of Britain and of Canada, of business history, and of the history of British and Canadian archival traditions" (p. 10). In general, the author succeeds, as I will discuss in the remainder of this review.

As one might expect, a good part of the book attributes the HBC's concerns for recordkeeping to legal and business reasons "rather than a strong commitment to preservation for historical purposes" (p. 5). But how the Hudson's Bay Company comes to recognize, slowly, the historical value of its records is the most compelling aspect of the book. Structuring the story around chronological divisions in the history of the HBC (divisions that are not altogether clear and seem a little arbitrary), Simmons follows both changes in recordkeeping systems and the administration of documentary sources. We learn about the early storage of records in large iron trunks, the frequent moving of the accumulated records, the occasional loss of records and the efforts to prevent such losses, the furniture and other storage devices used by the HBC, the use of copying to create multiple sets of records to protect critical business functions, and the increasing quantities of records as the years passed and the company's scope of business grew.

At various points in her study, Simmons provides insightful observations about the nature of corporate recordkeeping. She notes that in the period between 1800 and 1830, "there were no record-keeping standards at this time, but there were established formats for specific documents and stylistic regularities that make the archival records as recognizable as any modern record" (p. 88). Further

comparison of certain record forms over time would have helped make her argument clearer. *Keepers of the Record* also examines the history of the management of the company's records, describing a careful and systematic five-year apprenticeship system for clerks by the mid-nineteenth century. Simmons discusses the introduction of new technologies, such as the typewriter, carbon paper, the telegraph, and the telephone by the late nineteenth century, and how the adoption of new internal communications systems led to alternative means of keeping control of the corporate records. Her lack of consideration of the HBC's digital records is surprising, especially since the archives continues to serve as the archives and records management program for the company (although she glosses over records management in an effort, I assume, to focus on the archival records).

This analysis of the HBC suggests that the relevant recordkeeping systems were in place by the late nineteenth century and that they continued in place through the twentieth. Simmons argues, "With more efficient means of writing and copying reports and forms and the increased stratification of a departmentalized company, internal communication flowed through the organization. The historical context of the HBC's methods of communication and record-keeping is important to archival studies and to the study of business" (pp. 178–79). While we can all agree with the latter statement, I wonder what the impact of the telephone was on the records, how electronic mail has been used and captured (or not captured), and how the HBC has made use (or not) of the World Wide Web. *Keepers of the Record* focuses on traditional records systems, squandering the opportunity to consider how they evolved over three-plus centuries.

This study concentrates more on the HBC's growing recognition of the importance of its archives. Simmons ties this recognition, which had begun by the end of the nineteenth century, to the growing size of the records and increasing outside interest in them. By then, "its historical business records, its archives, were taking on a life of its own, having stimulated interest beyond the business community and become the subject of scholarly research. A hesitant willingness to grant access to some of these records to certain historical researchers indicates that the HBC had begun to realize that it could benefit from the favorable publicity generated by these authors" (p. 183). Tying the corporate archives program to the public relations function at the HBC echoes debates occurring in recent decades about the purpose of corporate archives programs, and some analysis in the book of such professional issues and their implications for the HBC Archives would have been interesting.

Simmons paints no rosy picture of the HBC's archives, although the ultimate solution is quite positive. Simmons notes, "When business was good, money was provided for staff to work on the old records. When finances were limited, commitment to the archives was also restrained and staff were redirected or eliminated" (p. 184). This is, of course, a common fate for business archives. As the HBC began to recognize the value of its archives, it granted

access to "well-known authors who might be expected to write favorable popular histories of the Company which stressed the 'romance' of the fur trade in a far-flung wilderness rather than controversial details of Company business practices" (p. 189). This is another common element when we think of the issue of access to corporate archives. Simmons describes very candidly some of the efforts the HBC made to deny outside researchers (such as the well-known historian Frederick Merk) access to its records, but the topic drops off the radar as the book enters the present. Issues around access to corporate archives are still familiar today, yet we learn little about the company's attitudes to more recent records or the use of its older records for potentially critical purposes.

It is difficult to be too critical of a company that has done so much to ensure the preservation of its archives and to allow many outside researchers to use them. The last quarter or so of *Keepers of the Record* follows the events leading to the successes of the transfer of the HBC Archives to Manitoba and the formal establishment of the archives program. Along the road to this destination, we read about the efforts by Arthur Doughty of the Public Archives of Canada in the 1920s to get the HBC to provide better care for its archives, growing pressure by academics and other scholars for access to the company archives, and the emergence of a documentary publications program. Finally, in 1931, the HBC appointed its first archivist and opened the portion of its archives dating before 1870, although the company still maintained a strict system to approve researchers and what they were allowed to see. Hilary Jenkinson consulted in the creation of the HBC's modern archives program, which ultimately engaged in microfilming projects, assisted in the transfer of the archives to Canada, provided broader access to the HBC archives, and adopted newer archives and records management standards and practices.

Without question, *Keepers of the Record* is the most comprehensive history of a corporate archives we have, trumping the rather thin literature on corporate archives in general and making a nice addition to the scholarship on the history of archives. After a half-century of calls for more attention to archival history from Lester Cappon, Frank Burke, Barbara Craig, Tom Nesmith, James O'Toole, and others, it seems someone has listened. While *Keepers of the Record* reads a bit like an official history, and more attention to the contextual literature on the history of archives, recordkeeping, documentary editing, and information technologies might have enriched the story, this is an excellent study of a remarkable corporate archives.

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Rescuing Family Records: A Disaster Planning Guide

By David W. Carmicheal. Iowa City, Iowa: Council of State Archivists, 2007. 24 pp. $10.00. Available from www.statearchivists.org.

In 2007, a Red Cross survey found that only 7 percent of Americans had taken steps to prepare for a disaster. How many of them placed copies of essential records in their disaster kits, along with food, water, and extra batteries? Faced with the loss of important records, how would the other 93 percent recover from a disaster? David W. Carmicheal's *Rescuing Family Records: A Disaster Planning Guide* is a reader-friendly manual that offers a records-based approach to preparedness. As director of the Georgia Archives, Carmicheal led the Council of State Archivists (CoSA) in advocating for improved disaster preparedness after hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Proceeds from the sale of this publication support CoSA's Emergency Preparedness Initiative, launched in response to the 2005 hurricanes.

Rescuing Family Records begins with a simple question: "Are you prepared?" In a worst-case scenario in which all of your essential records are destroyed, how would you prove that you own your home or have insurance? Could you even prove that you are who you say you are? In straightforward language, this manual describes how records protect your identity, rights, health, finances, and property; provides guidance on what records you need and how to duplicate them; and includes a checklist of essential records. The reader who works through the checklist will know what records are essential and why, whether a duplicate may exist elsewhere (e.g., in bank or insurance company records), and the location and dates of his or her own duplicates. Carmicheal makes it clear that it is not enough to read *Rescuing Family Records;* the checklist must be completed and then updated regularly.

In its two dozen pages, *Rescuing Family Records* treats its subject succinctly and comprehensively. Carmicheal puts records into three categories: essential (records you will need immediately after a disaster, such as birth certificates and insurance records), high-risk (records, such as mortgages and property deeds, you will need to resolve problems later), and irreplaceable (letters, photographs, and other family mementoes). The distinction between "essential" and "high-risk" records is especially helpful in prioritizing what might otherwise be an overwhelmingly long list. Throughout the manual, the author defines terms, gives examples, and describes the consequences of *not* being prepared: "Be aware that a simple photocopy may not be enough to prove your legal rights or satisfy a skeptical bureaucrat. Many records must be certified before they are accepted by a court or government office. A copy of a birth certificate, for example, is not considered legal proof of birth in most states unless the copy is certified by a government agency and bears a raised (embossed) seal. A photocopy or printout will not do!" (p. 18).

The format of *Rescuing Family Records* is generally well suited to its purpose. The manual is short enough not to deter readers but substantial enough not to come across as a throwaway brochure. The 8½ × 11-inch format allows for effective workbook-style presentation of the essential records checklist. Other formats would make this print publication even more useful. For example, CoSA distributes a protective Tyvek envelope for its Pocket Response Plan (PReP) for use by repositories. A similar water-resistant envelope could hold a copy of this manual's checklist. An online version of the checklist would be a natural extension of the manual, as would a large-print edition and editions in languages other than English.

By covering both active records and irreplaceable items, *Rescuing Family Records* fills an important niche between the guidelines for general disaster preparedness and guidelines for archival preservation that are available to the public. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) website and the Department of Homeland Security's Ready.gov mention the importance of protecting records but do not offer anything like Carmicheal's thorough checklist. The Red Cross's "Disasters and Financial Planning: A Guide for Preparedness" came out in 2004, so it lacks the urgency of post-Katrina guidelines and is less up-to-date regarding the digital media that many people will use for duplicating records. In the archival field, the American Institute for Conservation's "Caring for Your Treasures" and NARA's "Caring for Your Family Archives" and "Disaster Response and Recovery" provide important preservation information, but their focus is not on protection of active records.

Ultimately, the value of a manual like *Rescuing Family Records* depends on successful outreach. On the inside back cover, Carmicheal lists other online resources, including Ready.gov and the Red Cross. Unfortunately, when *Rescuing Family Records* and Council of State Archivists/CoSA are entered in the search fields of the Ready.gov, FEMA, and Red Cross websites, no results appear. If this useful manual is not being recommended on those websites or on blogs such as www.incaseofemergencyblog.com, then word is not getting out the way it should.

In "Asleep at the Switch" (*Washington Post,* 18 May 2008), John D. Solomon, who blogs at www.incaseofemergencyblog.com, reported that at a 2007 gathering of three hundred state first responders, only nine turned out to have made their own family emergency preparedness plans. One wonders how a group of archivists or records managers would respond to the same question. For archival repositories, CoSA's manual would make an excellent text for an educational workshop during the Department of Homeland Security's National Preparedness Month (September) or National Archives Month.

Although I have lived in earthquake country most of my life, *Rescuing Family Records* reminded me that I am not prepared to respond to a disaster.

Are you ready?

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Using the Open Archives Initiative Protocol for Metadata Harvesting

By Timothy W. Cole and Muriel Foulonneau. Westport, Conn.: Libraries Unlimited, 2007. $45.00. ISBN 978-1-59158-280-9.

Timothy W. Cole is mathematics librarian, interim head of digital services and development, professor of library administration, and adjunct professor of library and information science at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. A member of the library faculty at Illinois since 1989, he held prior appointments as systems librarian for digital projects and assistant engineering librarian for information services. He is principal investigator for an Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) National Leadership Grant exploiting Open Archives Initiative Protocol for Metadata Harvesting (OAI-PMH) to build a collection registry and metadata repository for digital content developed under the auspices of IMLS grant programs. He is past chair of the National Science Digital Library (NSDL) Technology Standing Committee and a former member of the OAI Technical Committee. He has published widely on OAI-PMH, metadata, and the use of XML and SGML for encoding STM journal literature, and he has spoken about these topics at multiple venues. As an adjunct in the University of Illinois' Graduate School of Library and Information Science, he has taught and lectured on OAI-PMH, metadata, digital library systems, and the implementation of distributed information systems.

Muriel Foulonneau is a specialist in metadata and distributed digital library systems. She is particularly interested in information organization and the creation and usage of collections in digital environments. She works at the Centre de la Communication Scientifique Directe of the French Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (National Center for Scientific Research). She helps standardize open access and institutional repositories in Europe within the scope of the Digital Repository Infrastructure Vision for European Research (DRIVER) project (Networking European Scientific Repositories). She was the project coordinator at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign for the CIC-OAI metadata harvesting project, an initiative for developing common best practices for sharing metadata among the CIC group of research libraries in the United States. She is part of the Digital Library Federation and NDSL best-practices expert group on the Open Archives Initiative and sharable metadata, and she is a cochair of the DCMI Collection Description Application Profile Task Group.

The Open Archives Initiative Protocol for Metadata Harvesting (OAI-PMH) was created in 2001 so that repositories could easily share descriptive metadata about scholarly works, both pre- and postprint. Intentionally simple in design, OAI-PMH has proven robust and useful for a broad range of purposes. The authors note that one of the more interesting aspects of the protocol is the impact OAI-PMH is having on descriptive cataloging practice and on perceptions of how digital libraries should operate and interoperate. Much of this book

focuses on the implications of OAI-PMH for building digital libraries and creating and using metadata to describe and facilitate the sharing of digital information resources.

The book is divided into three parts: Introduction and Context, Protocol Implementation, and Sharable Metadata: Creating and Using. Chapter 1 summarizes the genesis of OAI-PMH and introduces a few of the basic concepts underlying the protocol. Chapter 2 explores in detail the key protocols, technologies, and best practices that comprise the foundation for OAI-PMH. Chapter 3 provides a general overview of the relationship and overlaps between OAI-PMH and selected other digital library and open-access initiatives. Chapters 4 and 5 provide basic, yet technical, details of how the protocol functions and what it takes to implement an OAI data provider service. Chapters 6, 7, and 8 discuss the implications of metadata sharing via OAI-PMH for metadata-authoring practices, aggregation procedures, and digital library service design. Finally, chapter 9 offers concluding thoughts on what has worked (and not worked) so far in its history and a look at emerging trends relating to OAI-PMH.

The strength of this book lies in its purposeful writing for the nontechnician. The reader does not need extensive experience with these protocols or technologies to grasp the potential of adopting OAI-PMH–compliant software into an institution's current infrastructure. However, some technical knowledge is assumed on the reader's part, as well as familiarity with metadata formats currently available, such as Dublin Core, U.S. MARC 21, MODS (Metadata Object Description Schema), and CDWA-Lite (based on the Categories for the Description of the Works of Art). It is technical enough, however, to illustrate the architecture behind the protocol to an IT professional. In addition, for both OAI-PMH data providers and/or OAI-PMH service providers, the book contains a great deal of information to help enhance and enrich the metadata for the end user. It suggests specific ideas and workflows to optimize the collaboration between data provider and service provider. The case studies help to illustrate the authors' points, especially when the discussion leads toward the problems of bringing together a wide, disparate collection from multiple sources.

It is also helpful to understand what the protocol is, and what it isn't. The authors note that although the protocol was originally created to help facilitate access to scholarly works, it was not intended to be simply "open access." The protocol can be used to find both free and fee-based content. Another important point is that it is not a standard or specification for archival practice in the scholarly sense; OAI-PMH is distinct and separate from the *Reference Model for an Open Archival Information System* (OAIS), a model of best practices for building digital versions of traditional archives. Many also believe that the protocol is synonymous with the simple DC metadata format or the Dublin Core Metadata Initiative (DCMI). While it does require unqualified DC as a "lingua franca," it is only meant as a starting point. Other metadata formats can be used quite

effectively with this protocol, and recent studies show that access to the minimal descriptive metadata alone is proving insufficient, necessitating a move toward richer, more robust metadata. Finally, it is not a protocol for real-time or arbitrary searching, as is Z39.50. Harvested results, as gathered by the OAI-PMH protocol, take advantage of the extra information found in descriptive metadata as well as "hidden" information at a repository not easily located by search engines, such as that found in a database.

The notes and references at the end of each chapter are a treasure trove of further information for the reader. In addition, the authors include questions and topics for discussion, as well as suggestions for exercises that could be used in a classroom or training session. This book would be an excellent addition to any reference library thinking of undertaking such a project, or as additional background information about the protocol itself and where it might be headed in the future.

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Structures of Image Collections: From Chauvet-Pont-d'Arc to Flickr

By Howard F. Greisdorf and Brian C. O'Connor. Westport, Conn.: Libraries Unlimited, 2008. 192 pp. $45.00. ISBN 978-1-59158-375-2.

"What's the use?" concludes *Structures of Image Collections: From Chauvet-Pont-d'Arc to Flickr*. Rather than an idiom of anguish, the phrase indicates that the purpose of an image in a structured collection should provide maximum usefulness to the viewer. Concepts for structuring image collections are a rich source of theoretical discourse and debate, state authors Howard F. Greisdorf, director of training at UniFocus in Carollton, Texas, and Brian C. O'Connor, a Library and Information Science professor at the University of North Texas. Using interdisciplinary theories and years of experience in image production, consulting, and academic research, Greisdorf and O'Connor outline image characteristics, describe applications, and explore image collection structures, based on cultural methods and historical examples. They argue that language-based image management should be reconceived with other practices to make collections more accessible to diverse users.

The oldest known cave paintings in Chauvet-Pont-d'Arc, France, and the photo-sharing website Flickr serve as the past and present of structured image collections. Both collections are digital, either by fingers across clay or by computer manipulation. The authors assert, "We are at once linked from twenty-first-century digital images to the digital images of our ancestors, reminded that

the computer-based use of the term is anchored in our very physical nature and reminded that construction of images is a purposeful act." Capturing an image is "photocutionary behavior," a phrase coined by the authors based on linguistic philosopher J. L. Austin's illocutionary speech acts. Austin's work can be summarized by stating, "to say something is to do something." When our ancestors depicted stallions on cave walls or when we snap pictures with camera phones, each image executes a function. Subsequent photocutionary behaviors by collectors or viewers also purposefully utilize images.

Images are as much perception (how we see) as conception (how we think). Images "induce humans to emit pheromones of meaning," derived from both the semiotic elements in the image and the personal, etymological, locative, experiential, and emotional perspectives of viewers. Depending on their roles, image creators, collectors, and viewers create a "mental triumvirate" of meaningful words. The creator has a purpose for generating images; the collector seeks images to complete a function; and the viewer has a use for browsing images. These expressions of visual engagement, formed by the duality of perception and conception, structure an image collection. Collectors can gain insight from embracing the perspectives of image creators and viewers because collection structure will affect the appearances derived from individual viewers.

The authors argue that, "current frameworks . . . tend to promote a measure of forced conformity that is not necessarily a stable characteristic of visual experience." Language application can introduce shifting semantic patterns among images. Cognitive psychologist Eleanor Rosch states that when people name an object in an image, they rely on cues from the image to place the object on a basic, subordinate, or superordinate level. This knowledge hierarchy is similar to art historian Erwin Panofsky's preiconographic, iconographic, and iconologic levels and traditional subject headings such as *broad term, near term,* and *related term.* When language applications change, image structures and relationships transform. As a result, the use of titles, descriptions, and keywords in image retrieval requires reinterpretation, since language cannot fully encapsulate an image's meaning. As Greisdorf and O'Connor state, "The efficacy of [evocative] words for achieving efficient and effective image collection structure . . . resides with the nature of language, not the nature of vision."

Image collection structure is conventionally based on the organizing authority of the collector and the cognitive authority of the viewer, which can be incongruent. Most collections are structured around the experience of looking *at* something, rather than looking *for* something, which entails greater cognitive effort. Another way to describe this perspective on visual engagement would be the "ofness" and "aboutness" of an image. "Ofness" is what an image objectively represents, as in Rosch's basic level and Panofsky's iconographic level, whereas "aboutness" is what it subjectively represents. For example, museums often use "ofness" groupings to organize their collections into categories of

art movement, style, or artist rather than ascribed viewer "aboutness" meanings such as landscapes, heroic acts, or the color blue. The authors question whether knowing about the image always enhances the visual experience of looking at something. Given that the purpose of a structured collection is to satisfy user needs, categorizing by "aboutness" can be just as helpful as "ofness": the inexperienced viewer has as much right to define what he or she sees as the professional viewer.

The authors note the limits of current practices for structuring image collections by lists, indexes, directories, catalogs, thesauri, taxonomies, ontologies, typologies, metadata, templates, or topic maps. Retrieval systems and digital asset management (DAM) software are based on language, particularly keywords, because words are extractable from documents. Images carry no language to extract, only language to apply. Keywords provide content-based access points to images because they label the photographed objects. To a lesser extent, they can also be concept based, detailing an image's features, attributes, and characteristics. Rather than designing more effective language-based algorithms, retrieval system designers should reinterpret keyword searches based on information-seeking behavior, cognition, and memory. Newer approaches such as tagging and algorithmic or heuristic browsing provide more search versatility. Browsing based on both content and concept and on images alone remains on the edge of discovery.

Online collections offer structuring inventiveness because digital images can belong to multiple categories simultaneously, whereas physical images cannot. Collections have evolved from mutually exclusive categories, often arranged in hierarchies, to digital images with any number of labels, allowing collectors to focus on interrelationships and cognition. Greisdorf and O'Connor should have more fully explored the possibilities of this emerging structure, using Flickr and similar sites as examples. With online collections, folksonomy, or social tagging, allows viewers to apply semantic keywords to images, which could cultivate deeper semantic associations between "ofness" and "aboutness" categories.

The back cover of *Structures of Image Collections* states, "Image collections can no longer be the result of ad hoc processes rooted in antiquated methodologies." Language-based approaches and analog collections are time tested if limiting, but not antediluvian. Digital collections offer better access to users with the potential of broadening their visual experiences. However, it is too soon to know all the digital preservation challenges—what may be an excellent digital collection today can become inaccessible or corrupted tomorrow.

The book covers theories discussed in Jacques Barzun's *The Use and Abuse of Art,* James Elkins's *The Object Stares Back,* E. H. Gombrich's *The Uses of Images,* and John Gilmour's *Picturing the World.* However, Greisdorf and O'Connor concentrate on digital-age photographic images, in part because billions are created daily with digital cameras. In 1859, Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote of the

daguerreotype: "It has become such an everyday matter with us, that we forget its miraculous nature, as we forget that of the sun itself, to which we owe the creations of our new art." Today, the ability to create and share photos instantaneously has made it a routine but underanalyzed process. In the book itself, the authors' own black-and-white photos and illustrations demonstrate this ease of construction and express their concepts elegantly.

Structures of Image Collections: From Chauvet-Pont-d'Arc to Flickr is recommended for information professionals who regularly engage with image collections, as well as those who are creating or restructuring a collection and need a foundation of image management principles. Although many of the concepts are familiar to those with art history backgrounds, naïve readers may have intuitively experienced the theories without their explicit expression. Some archivists may be disappointed in how the text expounds on the theoretical problems of language-based structures without suggesting alternative best practices and offering only the hope that the future portends for better image management and access.

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Record Keeping in a Hybrid Environment: Managing the Creation, Use, Preservation and Disposal of Unpublished Information Objects in Context

Edited by Alistair Tough and Michael Moss. Oxford: Chandos Publishing, 2006. Soft cover, $69.95, ISBN 1-84334-142-5. Hard cover, $99.95, ISBN 1-84334-186-7.

This book offers a collection of ten essays on different aspects of archives and records management. The contributors are all associated with Glasgow University's Humanities Advanced Technology and Information Institute (HATII) or its Archive Services. In their introduction, the editors note that the book is intended for "people charged with responsibility for record keeping, particularly those in mid-career."

The opening chapter, by Alistair Tough, introduces "useful tools and methodologies," primarily for records managers and archivists in institutional settings. Most of this chapter covers well-trodden ground, describing the Pittsburgh *Functional Requirements*,[11] the *DIRKS* manual,[12] and ISO 15489;[13] but,

[11] David Bearman and Ken Sochats, *Metadata Requirements for Evidence* (1996), available at http://www.archimuse.com/papers/nhprc/BACartic.html, accessed 4 July 2008.

[12] National Archives of Australia, *DIRKS: A Strategic Approach to Managing Business Information* (2001), available at http://www.naa.gov.au/records-management/publications/DIRKS-manual.aspx, accessed 4 July 2008.

[13] ISO 15489-1:2001, *Records Management*, Part 1: General.

more interestingly, Tough also offers an alternative visualization of the records continuum, reconstructing Frank Upward's familiar diagram on the basis of the early-twentieth-century Einstein-Minkowski lightcone model. Together with David Bearman's variation on Upward's "dartboard" and Brien Brothman's recent helical model,[14] we now have a variety of diagrammatic representations of the continuum alongside Upward's original. The work of Hermann Minkowski and Albert Einstein also inspired Upward,[15] but, oddly, Tough does not acknowledge this and presents the idea as his own. His visualization is intriguing, but his accompanying text provides only a cursory explanation.

Tough's contribution is followed by three further chapters that seek to give an overview of topics of current concern to records managers. Frank Rankin offers a personal view of electronic document and records management systems ("EDRMS") and their implementation, with many useful insights from his public-sector experience in the United Kingdom. The chapters by James Currall on information security and Azman Mat-Isa on risk management are less individualistic, giving solid textbook advice on a pair of related topics. Currall's chapter provides a succinct account of security threats from an information technology viewpoint, but offers little that is specific to records management. Threats to authenticity, for example, are dealt with largely in computer science terms, with an emphasis on digital signature solutions; the much wider ranging investigation by the InterPARES team[16] of the complex issues surrounding the authenticity of records is mentioned only in a brief footnote. Mat-Isa does little more than synthesize some existing published literature. His chapter is more closely attuned than Currall's to specific recordkeeping concerns, but he relies heavily on a 1992 text by Karen Sampson[17] and seems unaware of the more recent work by Victoria Lemieux,[18] which offers a sharper and more up-to-date perspective on risk management in a records context.

The topics addressed by Claire Johnson and Moira Rankin in the fifth chapter are perhaps more central to the traditional discourse on archives and records management. Johnson and Rankin discuss the changing roles and skills of the records professional, the impact of the regulatory environment on records work, and the meaning of professionalism in the digital age. Some of their discussion is inconclusive, and most of their detailed examples are specific

[14] David Bearman, "Item Level Control and Electronic Recordkeeping," *Archives and Museum Informatics* 10 (1996): 243; Brien Brothman, "Archives, Life Cycles, and Death Wishes: A Helical Model of Record Formation," *Archivaria* 61 (2006): 263.

[15] See Frank Upward, "Modelling the Continuum as Paradigm Shift in Recordkeeping and Archiving Processes and Beyond: A Personal Reflection," *Records Management Journal* 10 (2000): 115–39, especially 118–21.

[16] InterPARES Project, available at http://www.interpares.org/, accessed 4 July 2008.

[17] Karen L. Sampson, *Value Added Records Management: Protecting Corporate Assets, Reducing Business Risks,* 1st ed. (Westport, Conn.: Quorum Books, 1992).

[18] Victoria L. Lemieux, *Managing Risks for Records and Information* (Lenexa, Kans.: ARMA International, 2004).

to the United Kingdom; but the larger issues they raise are important and should be of equal concern to records professionals in North America and elsewhere.

By far the most authoritative chapter in the book is Seamus Ross's essay on digital preservation. Ross is, of course, an internationally recognized expert on this subject, and his chapter provides a definitive overview of approaches and solutions available in 2006. A further bonus is that, while emphasizing that digital preservation can be challenging, Ross does not assume that his readers will be able to call on the level of resources available in national archives services or wealthy research institutes, and his chapter concludes with a set of practical recommendations and "proactive steps" that archivists in smaller as well as larger institutions can undertake. This essay is essential reading for any archivist or records manager embarking on a digital preservation project.

Chapters 7 and 8 do not aim to summarize broad issues, but describe particular techniques and approaches developed by Glasgow University Archive Services. Chapter 7, by Rachel Hosker and Lesley Richmond, describes their use of functional appraisal methods and offers an "appraisal toolkit" in the form of a checklist. Chapter 8, by Victoria Peters and Lesley Richmond, sets out an approach to describing functions and activities in the higher education sector; it complements an earlier paper by Peters published in 2005[19] and elucidates some of the background of the development of the new (and potentially controversial) *International Standard for Describing Functions,*[20] which work undertaken at Glasgow strongly influenced.

The book concludes with essays by Ian Anderson and Michael Moss. Anderson's helpful and informative chapter on digitization has aims broadly comparable to the essays by F. Rankin, Currall, and others earlier in the book, seeking to provide readers with a summary of current understanding of a topical issue. Moss's contribution introduces a very different tone. His essay is entitled "The Function of the Archive," and it enunciates his view that the quintessential function of archives is as an ark, "a secure store where treasures are held fiduciarily on behalf of the community." This is no summation of professional consensus; the frequently strident arguments are very much Moss's own. However, as so often in Moss's work, several lines of thought operate simultaneously in this essay, which is characterized by numerous rapid changes of direction, most of them unsignposted. *Inter multa alia* the author expounds the alleged failure of archivists to engage with other disciplines, the influence of the audit culture on records creation, the varied responses to relativism in historiography, the

[19] Victoria Peters, "Developing Archival Context Standards for Functions in the Higher Education Sector," *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 26 (2005): 75–85.

[20] International Council on Archives, *ISDF: International Standard for Describing Functions* (2007), http://www.ica.org/sites/default/files/ISDF%20ENG.pdf, accessed 4 July 2008.

permeability of the boundary between libraries and archives, and the disintermediation of personal information collections in the Internet era. It might have been possible to weave these disparate threads into a coherent narrative, but this essay seems overly discursive and it is not easy to discern a clear line of argument.

Record Keeping in a Hybrid Environment is to be commended as one of very few non-Australian texts to address both archives and records management and to assist in demolishing the largely artificial walls that have divided records managers from archivists. But, despite Tough's visualization of the records continuum, the book does not espouse a continuum worldview of the kind promoted by Upward's disciples in Australia. Moss's suspicions of the Australian continuum model have been expressed elsewhere,[21] and in the subtitle of this book, the phrase *Creation, Use, Preservation and Disposal* sounds much like our old friend, the records life cycle. In fact, many of the contributors address only records management *or* archives. Mat-Isa considers risk as a records management issue, and Anderson addresses digitization from an archival viewpoint, although both of these topics could have been treated holistically. Nevertheless, several of the contributors take a wider view, and Peters and Richmond offer a salutary reminder that solutions devised for archives can be of value in a records management context. Among the authors whose work is represented in the book, Peters and Richmond are the strongest advocates of a continuum, but they disclaim affinity with Upward, asserting that their interpretation owes more to an earlier Australian thinker, Ian Maclean. The tone of the book as a whole seems closer to the kind of continuum associated with Jay Atherton,[22] in which the boundaries between archivists and records managers are crossed but not dissolved; and Johnson and M. Rankin's tabulation of the parallel skills of the two professional groups is reminiscent of models derived from Atherton's work that purport to show how "stages" in the work of records managers are matched by similar stages in the work of an archivist.

A weakness of *Record Keeping in a Hybrid Environment* is that its contributors seem to lack a shared perception of their target audience. Moss's essay has a broad frame of reference and assumes that readers will understand casual allusions to the work of cultural and archival theorists without further explanation. Some of the other contributors assume that their readers have little prior knowledge even of developments in the field of practical recordkeeping, and that they need basic advice about, for example, making the transition from paper to the digital world. It seems curious that one chapter provides midcareer records

[21] Michael Moss, "Jonathan Oldbuck's Cat," in *Managing and Archiving Records in the Digital Era: Changing Professional Orientations*, ed. Niklaus Bütikofer, Hans Hofman, and Seamus Ross (Baden, Switzerland: Hier und Jetzt, 2006), 115–26, especially 118–19.

[22] Jay Atherton, "From Life Cycle to Continuum: Some Thoughts on the Records Management-Archives Relationship," *Archivaria* 21 (1985–86): 43–51.

professionals with elementary introductions to metadata and the *DIRKS* methodology, while another presupposes that they are already familiar with the ideas of Francis Fukuyama, Anthony Giddens, Hayden White, and other conceptual thinkers outside our professional domain. The editors admit that drafts of other chapters were not circulated to all the contributors; a higher level of editorial coordination would doubtless have given the book a more coherent voice.

The stated aim of *Record Keeping in a Hybrid Environment* is to enable busy practitioners to become familiar with recent developments in theory and practice. Perhaps inevitably, this laudable objective is only partially achieved. With fewer than three hundred pages, and contributions only from a single academic community, the book necessarily addresses *selected* developments. For example, despite the references in the subtitle to "creation" and "use," it says little about detailed strategies for records creation and examines user studies mainly in the context of digitization. Current professional discourse is also unevenly represented. Some of the contributors mention the influence of postmodernism on parts of this discourse, but most of these references are perfunctory and the book as a whole is dominated by modernist perceptions. A few contributors allude to the uses of records as sources of cultural memory, or as evidence, but almost all assume that records are primarily or exclusively "information objects" and that recordkeeping sits within an information landscape. In view of the book's origins in HATII, its emphasis on information and on the role of technology is unsurprising. Delivering a fuller overview of current developments in recordkeeping would have required a larger book and a wider range of contributors.

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