7   A number of other Calls to Action also have the potential to impact archival practice. For archival scholarship on the TRC, see Lisa P. Nathan, Elizabeth Schaffer, and Maggie Caster, "Stewarding Collections of Trauma: Plurality, Responsibility, and Questions of Action," *Archivaria* 80 (Fall 2015): 89–118; J. J. Ghaddar, "The Spectre in the Archive: Truth, Reconciliation, and Indigenous Archival Memory," *Archivaria* 82 (Fall 2016): 3–26; and Greg Bak, Tolly Bradford, Jessie Loyer, and Elizabeth Walker, "Four Views on Archival Decolonization Inspired by the TRC's Calls to Action," *Fonds d'Archives* 1 (2017): 1–21.

8   Wendy Duff and Verne Harris, "Stories and Names: Archival Description as Narrating Records and Constructing Meanings," *Archival Science* 2 (2002): 263–85, 265–66.

Research in the Archival Multiverse

Edited by Anne J. Gilliland, Sue McKemmish, and Andrew J. Lau. Clayton, Victoria, Australia: Monash University Publishing, 2017. viii, 1,064 pp. Softcover and Open Access PDF. $99.95. Softcover ISBN 978-1-876924-67-6; Open Access PDF ISBN 978-1-925377-69-9.

A "multiverse," my dictionary tells me, is a universe or a number of universes that lacks a single ruling and guiding power. According to Frank Upward, one of thirty-nine contributors to this remarkable book, the term "multiverse" was invented in or about 1895 by the American philosopher William James; since the 1960s, the term has been adopted first by science fiction writers and then by physicists in the field of quantum mechanics. It has also acquired a number of figurative usages with reference to what the dictionary calls "spheres of very varied possibility." In 1993, for example, a science fiction scholar wrote that "postmodernist fiction . . . assumes that the world is not one, that we function in an ontologically plural multiverse of experience in which the classical subject is decentered and fragmented."[1] The term was introduced to the field of archival studies in the early years of the twenty-first century at the suggestion of the late Allison Krebs, to whose memory this book is dedicated. Notions of an archival multiverse have come to be associated with the Archival Education and Research Initiative (AERI) based largely at the University of California, Los Angeles, and will be familiar to many readers of *The American Archivist* from an article published in this journal in 2011, which addressed the need to develop culturally sensitive curricula for archival education.[2]

The book now under review emerges from and builds on the work of AERI in promoting and encouraging archival research. Much of the content of *Research in the Archival Multiverse* appears to be derived from papers given or topics discussed at AERI's annual "institutes" or workshops held at various universities in North America since 2009. The book was first heralded in 2011[3] and has been several years in gestation. It is divided into four parts: a seventy-three-page introduction

is followed by twelve chapters on "archival intellectual context and theoretical frameworks," ten chapters on the application of research methods, and eleven chapters offering research case studies. Four of the chapters are reprints of previously published essays; all the others are published here for the first time.

The editors, Anne Gilliland and Andrew Lau at the University of California, Los Angeles, and Sue McKemmish at Monash University, Australia, affirm that they see plurality as a hallmark both of archival research and of the larger archival multiverse within which such research is conducted. Their stated goals for their book include highlighting the diversity of research undertaken in the field and demonstrating the wide range of settings in which research is or could be undertaken, as well as exploring the challenges of working within a pluralized research paradigm. Many of the researchers whose work is showcased in the book share the editors' commitment to plurality and advocate expanded and nonrestrictive understandings of archives. In much of the book, the role of research in illuminating injustice and unsettling what McKemmish calls "the power imbalances embedded in the current records and archives landscape" is a persistent theme.

In his contribution entitled "The Archival Multiverse and Eddies in the Spacetime Continuum," Upward remarks that postmodernism—a highly fashionable label in scholarly writing in the 1990s and earlier—has lost its power and become a devalued term. As might be expected, few of the writers whose work appears in *Research in the Archival Multiverse* use the label explicitly, but the intellectual legacy of postmodern thinking is still very apparent in the work of almost all the North American and Australian contributors. Derrida, Foucault, and other apostles of postmodern indeterminacy are cited intermittently, and the book is well supplied with allusions to the need to break away from the resonances of positivism and acknowledge that the phenomena of archives are socially constructed.

The editors insist that *Research in the Archival Multiverse* makes no claim to be comprehensive, and their preface discusses some of the aspects of archival research that they feel are omitted or underrepresented in their book. In particular, they are aware that the book is oriented toward Western (and specifically English-language) writings and toward research undertaken in academic settings; they discuss the recent widening of the gap between the academy and the field of professional practice, the underacknowledgment of practitioner-based research, and the consequences of the increasing dominance of English as the language of academic discourse. In fact, the book includes several essays by authors whose first language is not English or whose background is in non-Western societies, but, in every case, the author has either studied at an anglophone university or published a substantial number of previous works in the English language. China, Korea, Uganda, the Netherlands, and Scandinavia are represented, but

authors from countries such as France, Germany, Spain, and Brazil—where traditions of archival scholarship flourish in languages other than English—are not.

A particular problem for editors wishing to emphasize both the plurality of the archival domain and the diversity of research is to decide how much hospitality should be accorded to accounts of research by scholars for whom pluralization is not a primary concern or scholars whose understanding of archives is largely monistic rather than pluralistic. Some of the contributors to *Research in the Archival Multiverse* work outside an explicitly pluralist paradigm, but their essays seem to lack an anchorage in the book, which offers little sense of any larger research frameworks other than those promoted by the editors. More than half of the contributors have an association with the University of California or Monash, and the dominant picture offered by the book is of the world of archival research as it appears when viewed from Los Angeles or Melbourne. Viewed from Vancouver or Marburg, or from Beijing or São Paulo, the archival multiverse would probably look very different.

In line with the overall tone of the book, Gilliland takes exception to the positivistic reverberations of the term "archival science" as a label for our discipline or field of research and expresses a preference for "archival studies" or "archivistics," the term proposed by Dutch archival scholar Eric Ketelaar. In the mind of this reviewer, the book gives rise to a further question: what kind of discipline is archivistics or archival studies? In academic circles, disciplines have traditionally found homes in larger groupings such as arts, humanities, social sciences, or natural sciences; although groupings of this kind are always open to dispute, generations of scholars have found them useful. The editors of *Research in the Archival Multiverse* affirm that "research modes customarily associated with the humanities, arts, social sciences, and engineering and technological fields" (p. 19) might all be relevant to archival studies. Nevertheless, the book leaves a firm impression that the editors, and many of the contributors, have chosen to interpret the discipline primarily as a social science. Such a view seems almost inevitable when archival research is seen very substantially in terms of "making archives more relevant to society" (p. 370) or of shedding "a brighter light on . . . hidden parts of society that would otherwise be missed" (p. 368), as Kelvin White puts it in his contribution entitled "Race and Culture." The editors' emphasis on formal analysis of research methods, to which many chapters of the book are devoted, would seem to mirror the methodological anxieties that beset much mainstream social science; the importance they attach to reflexivity in research practice is characteristic of concerns prevailing in anthropology, a quintessential social-science discipline that has been severely racked by the crisis of liberal conscience that underlies many of the essays in this book. It should come as no surprise that the book is published as part of a larger series with the label *Social Informatics*.

This is not to suggest that approaches derived from social science are inappropriate; on the contrary, many of the essays in *Research in the Archival Multiverse* demonstrate how highly fruitful they can be. But it is a pity that other research modes, in which methodologies have sometimes appeared less problematic and formal discussion of them has been considered less vital, receive much shorter shrift in a book that stresses plurality. Research into archival history, for example, is represented only by two essays, and the editors comment on the paucity of scholars using historical methods who were willing to reflect on their intellectual process. Scholarly work in the humanities tradition is featured in the book—most notably in a fine essay by Heather MacNeil entitled "Deciphering and Interpreting an Archival Fonds and Its Parts"—but its status appears marginal in comparison with the much larger number of research ventures inspired by the social sciences. Perhaps the most unfortunate omission is of any essays offering a detailed analysis of current research in what might be called the engineering tradition. An essay by Gilliland on computer-mediated communications includes a brief discussion of the use of data mining in connection with the Twitter Archive at the Library of Congress, but the book as a whole pays little heed to the many applied research projects now seeking to use computational tools to respond to the practical challenges of the digital deluge.

Despite these reservations, the publication of *Research in the Archival Multiverse* is undoubtedly an important landmark in the literature of archival studies. The editors aim to demonstrate the vitality as well as the plurality of archival research, and their book bears witness to the vibrant development of the field. A book of this kind would have been difficult for archival scholars to compile twenty years ago; forty years ago, it would have been impossible. Besides many essays about archival activism, social justice, and the foregrounding of previously disenfranchised communities, the book includes papers describing and scrutinizing research into bibliometric analysis, modeling methods, archival descriptive standards, user behavior, records management, and much else. I do not have space to review each of the thirty-four essays individually, but they are of very high quality and almost all of them will be essential reading for anyone—practitioners as well as scholars—interested in contemporary archival research.

I fully expect that my copy of the book will see heavy use; indeed, I doubt whether the flimsy paperback binding will be strong enough to survive the repeated handling it is likely to receive over the coming years. With more than a thousand pages, this is a hefty tome, and—although it includes a lengthy chapter on information retrieval—it has no index. Fortunately, most of the book is also available to download free of charge in PDF format,[4] and many readers may find it easier to consult the digital edition.

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NOTES

1 *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "Multiverse," http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/123653, citing *Science Fiction Studies*, November 1993.

2 The Archival Education and Research Institute (AERI), Pluralizing the Archival Curriculum Group (PACG), "Educating for the Archival Multiverse," *The American Archivist* 74, no. 1 (2011): 69–101. See also Anne J. Gilliland and Sue McKemmish, "Pluralising the Archives in the Multiverse: A Report on Work in Progress," *Atlanti* 21 (2011): 177–85; Anne J. Gilliland and Sue McKemmish, "Recordkeeping Metadata, the Archival Multiverse, and Societal Grand Challenges," in *DCMI '12: Proceedings of the 2012 International Conference on Dublin Core and Metadata Applications* (New York: ACM Press, 2012), 106–15.

3 Gilliland and McKemmish, "Pluralising the Archives," 182.

4 See http://www.oapen.org/search?identifier=628143. A few chapters are omitted from the open access PDF version of the book.

North of Dixie: Civil Rights Photography
Beyond the South

By Mark Speltz with a preface by Deborah Willis. Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2016. 160 pp. Hardcover. $35.00. ISBN 978-1-60-606505-1.

While historian Mark Speltz's book, *North of Dixie: Civil Rights Photography Beyond the South*, is not explicitly written for an archival audience, his words apply directly to principles of diversity and inclusion in archives. Choosing a hundred photographs to support and illustrate his argument, Speltz aims to "recast the visual narrative of the [civil rights] era by bringing the broad, nationwide struggle for black freedom into sharper view" (p. 3). Speltz succeeds in this endeavor, bringing to light civil rights photos largely ignored or even undiscovered. Focusing on these images from the North, he offers a comprehensive perspective on the stereotypical civil-rights-era representations of poverty and criminality in the South. As archivists grapple with defining diversity and consider issues of power and authority, *North of Dixie* makes a significant contribution to this conversation.

Organized chronologically, each of the four chapters, "Northern Underexposure" (chapter 1), "The Battle for Self-Representation" (chapter 2), "Black Power and Beyond" (chapter 3), and "Surveillance and Repression" (chapter 4), include succinct (about five pages) write-ups that contextualize the black-and-white photographs. Speltz effectively tracks the changing themes and use of photography of civil rights activities by over fifty photographers in more than twenty-five cities in the northern United States between 1938 and 1975. In particular, the photographs depict poor conditions in black neighborhoods, campaigns and demonstrations against racial discrimination, protests against