

ARCHIVES  
and  
MANUSCRIPTS

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### **The Archivist's Mission**

Archivists ensure that records which have value as authentic evidence of administrative, corporate, cultural and intellectual activity are made, kept and used. The work of archivists is vital for ensuring organisational efficiency and accountability and for supporting understandings of Australian life through the management and retention of its personal, corporate and social memory.

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*Mitchell Whitelaw*                      Visualising archival collections:  
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In the age of digitisation, the question of how best to access digital collections is increasingly urgent. This paper presents a recent research project funded by the National Archives of Australia (NAA), investigating the interactive visualisation of an archive at various levels, from whole collection to individual item. Using collections data from the NAA, visualisations were created to provide a sense of large-scale structure, revealing patterns and relationships, and presenting archival material in its context in the collection. The outcomes of the project indicate that visualisation can be a highly effective tool in representing the complex structures of digital collections, and furthermore, that it has significant potential as a dynamic interface for accessing and exploring an archival collection.

*Anne-Marie Condé*                      Lives lived in silence: records and  
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Many writers have wondered why people, and people within organisations, create and keep records in the ways that they do. The factors that condition the recordkeeping behaviour of individuals have

been examined, and the question has also been asked: how does the act of records creation condition a life? But what happens in developed societies when people and communities have limited capacity to create and keep records? Abundance of records is a well-known phenomenon. Absence of records – records never created in the first place – has received less attention. My focus in this article is on lives lived without records, in silence. Analysing silence is not easy. Where does one look for evidence? A novel by the French–Algerian writer Albert Camus offers, I suggest, some useful insights.

*Shannon Faulkhead*                      Connecting through records:  
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Australia is a society where governance and learning preferences text-based information and knowledge. Preferencing text allows oral knowledge to be questioned resulting in a dichotomy between text and orality – a dichotomy that can impact upon cultures and communities where oral memory is a major source of knowledge storage and transmission. The effect of this dichotomy within Australia (and more specifically Victoria) is especially obvious and damaging on communities whose governance, learning and knowledge systems co-exist within the same space, such as Indigenous Australians. The aim of this paper is to look at this co-existence in relation to how narratives of Koorie people, culture and history are accessed, interpreted and integrated from records stored within two different sources – Koorie oral tradition and archival institutions. Through this paper key related issues such as the preferencing of some sources over others, reliability issues, and the role of forgotten narratives will be explored suggesting that this co-existence is on the terms of the mainstream systems. To move forward there needs to be acknowledgement of two equal, but different worldviews reflected in the narratives and records of Australia, and that respect of another culture’s knowledge system is vital for respectful cultural discourses to co-exist. Archival science and institutions are important for this social change to occur. This paper is based on a chapter of the author’s PhD thesis research ‘Narratives of Koorie Victoria’.

*Leisa Gibbons*

Testing the continuum: user-generated  
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The Web 2.0 phenomenon has created an online culture that is social, interactive and portable. Cultural production online using social media undergoes constant and rapid change and is connected to personal identity and memory-making. Cultural heritage institutions have begun to capture records of online social culture as cultural heritage, adding them to fast-growing and often massive collections of born-digital culture. However, the nature of the technology and the complexity of production challenges traditional archival concepts, and archival practices which have a long history of collection of artefacts.

In this paper I flesh out the complexity of online social media production as cultural heritage and introduce my PhD research concerning online moving-image video created in social media website YouTube. Drawing from media and cultural theory, I apply archival continuum theory to cultural heritage formation through an investigation of the capture and organisation of YouTube videos by three Australian cultural heritage institutions. The results illustrate that online cultural content is manifestly more complex than current archival practices allow and requires a conceptual shift in the approach to collection and representation of recorded digital culture.

*Danielle Wickman*

Measuring performance or performing  
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Recordkeeping professionals generally agree that recordkeeping is a shared responsibility throughout any organisation. It requires senior management support, competent administrators and compliant staff to ensure that full and accurate records of business are created and maintained. In contrast, performance measurement in an institutional setting normally requires organisations to report on their contribution to outcomes over which they have full control.



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