Reviews

Edited by Adrian Cunningham

Adrian Cunningham (ed.), *The arrangement and description of archives amid administration and technological change: essays and reflections by and about Peter J Scott*, Australian Society of Archivists, Brisbane, 2010. ix + 392 pp. ISBN 978 0 9803352 6 2 (paperback). $88.00 (ASA members) or $99.00 (non-members).

Between 1978 and 1981 *Archives and manuscripts* published a series of articles 'Archives and administrative change: some methods and approaches', written by a consortium of authors under the direction of Peter J Scott. The articles became a landmark in Australian archival thinking. Scott and his co-authors are the founding fathers of the Commonwealth Record Series (CRS) System and forerunners of the Records Continuum. Twelve years before, in 1966, Peter Scott had written a most provocative essay, 'The record group concept: a case for abandonment', in which he undermined the Schellenbergian cornerstone of North American archival theory and practice. Despite the fact that the essay was published in *The American archivist*, little response came from North American archivists, with just one not-too-convincing letter to the editor by Meyer Fishbein, to which Scott responded in the next issue. In 1966 the Commonwealth Archives had already abandoned the record group concept and converted to the CRS System.

The above-mentioned articles, and a few more, have been brought together by Adrian Cunningham - not an easy endeavour; he says in his introduction: 'this book has been a long time coming' - and republished by the Australian Society of Archivists. An 80+ page introduction by Peter Scott himself, who retired in 1989, places the

collected essays in their historical context, adding great value to the publication. Indeed, the articles must be read from the right perspective – the struggle of archivists to cope with the ever-increasing quantity and complexity of records to be brought under their control. Similar circumstances had driven Schellenberg to his record group concept: a practical solution for the vast amounts of records transferred to the US national archives. Even the major archival principle, the *respect des fonds* – challenged by Scott and his followers – has its roots in daily practice, rather than in theory. In a way, all these principles, including the CRS System, are symptoms of paradigm shifts, as another landmark essay in archival theory, Terry Cook's 'What is past is prologue', illustrates very well.[1] How archivists may try to resolve new problems within the old paradigm was demonstrated by Michel Duchein, who, somewhat spasmodically, tried to save the classic interpretation.[2]

Where Schellenberg and Duchein, and with them most – if not all – archivists, continued to see provenance in the records-creating body, Scott and his fellow archivists moved towards an orientation on functions, considering these as a more stable locus of provenance, and actually paved the way for a paradigm shift.

Certainly, Scott's articles are worth a close re-reading (some of his writings have never been published at all), and Cunningham's initiative deserves a worldwide appreciation by all who are interested in the development of archival thinking. But the book contains more than Scott's original work, his introduction and Cunningham's preface and biographical notes. Two substantial essays – 'wonderful' in the editor's words – make the book even more valuable. For the remainder of this review I will particularly focus on these contributions, the first by a Canadian, Laura Millar, the second by an Australian, Barbara Reed.

Millar writes about conceptual issues and the influence of Scott's ideas outside Australia. Reed concentrates on what really came into being with the adoption of Scott's concepts within Australia. Millar acknowledges the impact of Scott on current archival theory, in particular the rigorous separation between descriptions of context and contents. Through Scott's archival heirs the international descriptive standard ISAD(G) not only lost some of its rigid hierarchy but, moreover, gained ISAAR(CPF), and later ISAF, to reflect much of the

concepts underlying the series system. Even if ISAD still has the *fonds* as the highest level, nothing keeps an archivist from starting with the series, and even abandoning the hierarchy. Millar stresses the origin of the series concept from its application in recordkeeping, not in arranging transferred archives. She asserts: 'Many European and North American archivists objected to a series approach, in part because their experience of archival description was not within an organizational environment'. To what extent European archivists refused to apply the system remains an open question, since the system for most of them remained unknown, but probably they would have objected, holding as much on the *respect des fonds*, as the American archivists did on the record group concept. Halfway through her essay, Millar seems to distance herself somewhat from the series system by putting the question 'Series and the *fonds*, both unnecessary complications?' Reflecting current ideas about provenance she expands context to creator (organisation and functions), recordkeeping and custody. She pleads for a direct linkage of records to the context - abandoning the series being nothing else than an archival construct, like the *fonds* or records group.

Having a concept is one thing; the application in practice is another. At the time that Scott et al. developed the series system, the technology for description was paper-based. Now, more than half a century after the ground-breaking *American archivist* article, we have database technology, hyperlinking, the Internet, and much more at our disposal. Not only can the original concept be easily implemented in automated systems, but so can Laura Millar's extensions. Commercial software packages are available at reasonable costs. Nevertheless, the picture that Barbara Reed paints in her contribution to the book is not all beer and skittles. Not all software packages meet the necessary requirements. Not all Australian archives embrace the series system, a fact, reminds Cunningham, that terrified our late mutual Canadian friend Kent Haworth, who had in Peter J Scott one of his archival heroes. But maybe even worse, maintaining the system in both an archival and records management context requires an effort that is likely to be beyond the resources of the recordkeeping community; it may require an embedding in the administration as a whole. Control of recordkeeping from the beginning requires more than flexible description systems

maintained by archivists. As Barbara Reed asserts, provenance or context is not physically established by creating *fonds*, record groups or series, but can be assured only through documentation - description. The CRS System, 'Australia's first contribution to the world's archival discourse', laid the foundation of such a descriptive building, but the realisation looks like Gaudi's famous cathedral *Sagrada Familia.*

To conclude: the importance of the publication is more than making available Peter Scott's writings, even more than the enrichment with accompanying essays; in my opinion its value lies in the insights it provides into the intellectual journey of ideas, in particular the Records Continuum, which becomes through this book much clearer for non-Australian readers. Above all, the book stimulates reflection and the further development of theories. The seven features of the system excellently explained by Barbara Reed are a useful framework for such tinkering: coherence across the whole of records; virtuality; inheritance; scaleability; recordkeeping system; adaptability/ flexibility; relationships. Isn't recordkeeping more than shelving?

Notes

[1] Terry Cook, 'What is past is prologue: a history of archival ideas since 1898, and the future paradigm shift', *Archivaria,* no. 43, 1997, pp. 17–63. Keynote address to the ICA Congress in Beijing, 1996.

[2] Michel Duchein, 'Le respect des fonds en archivistique: principes théoriques et problèmes pratiques', *Gazette des archives,* no. 97, 1977, pp. 91–6. English version in *Archivaria,* no. 16, 1983, pp. 64–82, 'Theoretical principles and practical problems of *respect des fonds* in archival science'. See also my own 'The last dance of the phoenix: the de-discovery of the archival fonds', *Archivaria,* no. 54, 2003, pp. 1–23.

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Adrian Cunningham (ed.), *The arrangement and description of archives amid administrative and technological change: essays and reflections by and about Peter J Scott,* Australian Society of Archivists, Brisbane, 2010. ix + 392 pp. ISBN 978 0 9803352 6 2 (paperback). $88.00 (ASA members) or $99.00 (non-members).

It's a celebrated moment in Australian archival history when Ian Maclean, then Chief Archivist of the Commonwealth Archives Office (now the National Archives of Australia), jubilantly exclaimed, 'That's it!!' as the intricacies of what has variously been known as 'the series system', 'the Australian system', 'the CRS system' and 'the context relationship system' were explained to him. Nearly 50 years later, I think I was just as jubilant as I read this incredible book.

This book is the first consolidated collection of Peter Scott's published and unpublished manuscripts. These range from his seminal 1966 article 'The record group concept: a case for abandonment', through the landmark series of articles from *Archives and manuscripts* describing the recordkeeping impacts of administrative change, to a range of fascinating unpublished lectures from the 1970s and 1980s examining such diverse topics as descriptive standardisation, the challenges for researchers of archival search techniques, functional analysis of the Commonwealth government and the development of governmental recordkeeping systems from 1199 to 1976!

This tremendous body of work is introduced by a new six-part essay written last year by Scott. In it, Scott re-examines the evolution and the role of the National Archives of Australia CRS System and explores the ongoing contemporary impacts of technological and administrative change on recordkeeping. Scott critically examines his legacy and, while humbled by its impact, is also inspired to re-engage and reassess its role and potential, 20 years after he was forced to retire because of ill-health.

The final components of the book are another two new pieces produced by Canada's Laura Miller and our own Barbara Reed. These authors offer a current re-appraisal of Scott's theories, looking at the impact of his work both internationally and through time and focusing on the ongoing relevance of his thinking. Both also offer thought-provoking suggestions for future research endeavours based on Scott's legacy.

These essays clearly highlight that this book has not been produced as a traditional valedictory honour for a professional great. The book is neither a hagiography nor a history. Instead, from a thorough reading of its contents it is clear that this publication is an active handbook for recordkeeping practice. This is a book for practitioners, a book

for those of us who are here and now dealing with the challenges of contemporary recordkeeping.

I cannot recall a professional publication that has inspired me as much as this one. Although the descriptive system it discusses was first implemented nearly fifty years ago and applied principally to paper records, this book's insights remain stunningly relevant and, as is argued by Reed in her essay, provide strong foundations for dealing with the complexities of digital recordkeeping that continue to challenge our practice.

This book is ample evidence of Terry Cook's observation that 'Scott's essential contribution was to break through ... the whole mindset of the "physicality" of archives'.[1] Records are records. They may be paper, they may be digital, they may be old, they may be new, but we cannot be constrained by whatever physical manifestation is placed before us. To Scott there are fundamental archival principles that are key to our profession – the importance of context, the value of original order, the understanding that records follow function and the conviction that 'an archivist concerns himself/herself ... above all with recordkeeping systems'. Scott's insight was the development of a descriptive means of respecting and maintaining all these principles irrespective of the physical, administrative and technological nature of the record or the volatility surrounding it. Scott distilled key recordkeeping principles to their essence and thereby provided the freedom to apply them in any time, in any framework, to any record. The book explores in fascinating detail the means by which Scott meticulously researched and developed these insights.

Also resonating through the book is Scott's belief that there are obvious dangers for archivists in neglecting current records. Together with his insistence on respect for fundamental archival principles, this has obvious relevance for contemporary archivists. In contemporary business environments, business systems are rapidly implemented, altered and upgraded with little coherent oversight. Administrative change continues and records are migrated between organisations and systems with little regard for the 'top numbering' and series amalgamation processes that are going on. Business is going digital, purpose-built systems are being rolled out and we as archivists

are not sufficiently aware of either the records being created or the recordkeeping systems supporting them. Metadata, today's equivalent of the indexing card, is proliferating. It has the capacity to serve many business and archival objectives, but we have not yet determined how to fully harness its potential. The lessons Scott discusses from detailed recordkeeping research and practice at the National Archives of Australia in the 1960s and 1970s have obvious parallels with the recordkeeping challenges we face today.

Scott certainly does not have every answer, and ongoing scholarship is required to ensure we can make best use of his insights in the digital environment but this is truly a wonderful book that every archivist can draw insight and inspiration from. Like me, while reading you will probably generate your own list of underlined points, quotations followed by several exclamation marks and extensive 'to do' lists identifying those of Scott's insights that have direct relevance to your world.

The one criticism that could be made is that this book has taken more than 30 years to produce. Scott's seminal publications were written between 1966 and 1981 and it is only now that they have been consolidated and presented as a comprehensive body of work. Although it is an issue that the theoretical model behind so much descriptive innovation within Australia and internationally has, until now, been very difficult to source (the National Archives of Australia CRS System and the international standard on recordkeeping metadata, ISO 23081, are just two examples of key descriptive models based on Scott's insights), it does also need to be acknowledged that the timing of this publication is perfect.

As a profession, we need this publication now. In an era where we are again trying to reinvent practice in response to environmental and technical challenges and are being confounded and overwhelmed both by the choices presented to us and the rapid evolution of those choices, this book offers real answers. This book is inspirational because it takes us back to what recordkeeping is all about. It reminds us of what is of fundamental importance to our profession and what is not. At a time when we are all buffeted by competing pressures, conflicting priorities and severe time and financial constraints, this book shines a very clear

beacon on what it is we do, where we provide unique value and why this has such ongoing relevance in the world today. It truly is thought-provoking and inspiring stuff.

Profound thanks are due to Adrian Cunningham whose foresight, passion and determination galvanised this publication and saw it through to its conclusion. The Council of the Australian Society of Archivists also deserves sincere congratulations for having the courage to initiate this project and see it through to completion. Its boldness has been rewarded with a landmark publication. And, finally, true gratitude must be expressed to Peter Scott. Reading this book makes one even more aware of the extent of his contribution to our profession – his genius will resonate for many, many years to come.

Notes

[1] Terry Cook, 'What is past is prologue: a history of archival ideas since 1898, and the future paradigm shift', *Archivaria*, no. 43, 1997, pp. 38–9, quoted in Laura Miller's chapter of the book.

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Terry Eastwood and Heather MacNeil (eds), *Currents of archival thinking*, Libraries Unlimited, Santa Barbara, 2010. xiii +254 pp. ISBN 978 1 59158 656 2 (paperback). US$45.00.

Terry Eastwood and Heather MacNeil have brought together a collection of original essays relating to shifting historical and contemporary currents of archival thinking about the nature and purposes of archives, and the role of archivists and archival institutions. For the most part, the essays are based on reviews of the relevant literature. Although throughout the collection records continuum thinking and perspectives are referenced and discussed, many of the essays are written from a life-cycle perspective in that they focus on the archival stage of the records life cycle and on records selected for retention for their enduring value. From an Australian continuum perspective, this is a significant limitation as it precludes discussion of the currents in archival thinking that deal with the broader recordkeeping and archiving landscape and its multiple dimensions.

Stand-out exceptions are the papers by Geoffrey Yeo, Glenn Dingwall and Livia Iacovino.

The first section of the book relates to the foundations of archival theory. Although acknowledging that ideas about the nature of archives and records are interdependent, Terry Eastwood's essay is narrowly focused on archival science as the body of knowledge concerned with archives defined as records of continuing value. He reviews the rise of historical archival institutions and the associated emergence of ideas on the nature of archives drawn from the natural world, the characterisation of archives in terms of their inter-relatedness, uniqueness, authenticity and impartiality, and archival practice based on the principle of provenance and original order. Eastwood identifies changes in historical studies, the distinction made between current records and historical records that accompanied the rise of historical archival institutions, and the growing scale and complexity of organisational activity and recordkeeping as the impetus for new thinking about the nature of archives that emerged from the mid twentieth century. He touches on the implications for practice of new understandings about the mutability of archives and their social and organisational nature, and the questioning of traditional ideas about authenticity and impartiality. Disappointingly, Eastwood does not go on to consider emergent archival thinking influenced by late twentieth and early twenty-first century developments in digital technologies and social networking, deconstructionism and postcolonial theories, social justice and human rights agendas, and understandings drawn from non-Western traditions.

Jennifer Douglas's essay provides a useful overview of evolving ideas about provenance as organising principle, physical and intellectual construct, and socio-historical context. This section would be stronger if there were one or two more papers dealing with a broader range of recordkeeping and archival concepts, and discussing the interdependencies of archives and records.

The second section relates to the archival functions of appraisal, preservation, description and access. Ciaran Trace and Geoffrey Yeo review and analyse historical and contemporary literature relating to appraisal and description respectively. Although Trace references

Australian and other recent literature which includes records creation and archival formation in appraisal, much of her paper is concerned with appraisal as defined in life-cycle traditions as the evaluation and selection of records for retention as archives because of their enduring value. Within that narrower focus she provides an insightful discussion of enduring value – as intrinsic to the record, as determined by the significance of the creating agency, as defined by use now and in the future, and as socially and culturally constructed. She links changing ideas about enduring value to shifts in thinking about the nature and purposes of archives as historical sources, evidence, instruments of accountability, and a form of constructed social memory. Trace concludes with an overview of contemporary archival appraisal, referencing the impact of the findings of research projects relating to electronic records (the Pittsburgh, early UBC and InterPARES projects), the questioning of fundamental assumptions about the nature of archives and the meaning of appraisal associated with a shift from positivist to postmodern frameworks for archival theorising, the multidimensional, multiple perspectives of records continuum theory, and the implications of pluralism and ideas of multiple provenance, for example, in the development of participatory appraisal initiatives.

Yeo's essay takes a more continuum-based perspective on description, metadata and descriptive processes throughout the entire lifespan of records. This results in a more broadly scoped review of relevant literature and standards, and perceptive commentary on historical and contemporary themes and issues.

Michele Cloonan's essay deals with archival preservation defined as primarily concerned with the conservation and longevity of archival items and collections within a broader cultural heritage framework. It includes a very useful discussion of the relationship of archival preservation, so defined, to library preservation, an overview of the history of archival preservation and the evolution of conservation practice, and shorter sections on paper conservation, preserving new media and digital preservation.

Wendy Duff's paper explores access as archival mediation, drawing on research relating to traditional search room–based reference services, the reference interview, reference questions, and the role, knowledge

and skills of the reference archivist. The essay concludes with brief sections on virtual reference and the impact that digital and social networking technologies might have on reference services. Although Duff's paper is interesting in its own right, it seems misplaced as it does not engage directly with the collection's main themes relating to shifting currents of thinking, or discuss the potentially transformative effects of new technologies and archival theorising on what might in the future constitute archival mediation.

Papers in the final section relate to archival constructs and metaphors, especially those associated with the life-cycle and records continuum models. Glenn Dingwall explores in depth the historical context of the development of the life-cycle and records continuum models, and the implications for practice of continuum constructs, for example the transformation of recordkeeping and archival processes relating to appraisal and description.

Margaret Hedstrom focuses on archives and collective memory, arguing that their interrelationship is not well understood in archival science. She provides an overview of memory studies, referencing the 'fundamental questions about historical evidence and the role of archives in shaping memory' that 'lurk' in history vs memory debates (most apparent in the Australian context in the history wars). She concludes with a short review of the archival literature relating to memory studies, and suggests areas for future research.

Livia Iacovino explores the evolution of archival ideas about what she terms the 'continuum of accountability', and the role of archives and archivists (individually and collectively) as 'arsenals' and 'agents of accountability' respectively. She weaves a rich tapestry of changing social, political, technological and organisational contexts; the role that records and recordkeeping play in supporting good governance, corporate accountability, and historical accountability in terms of individual, organisational and social memory; and what constitutes accountable recordkeeping and archiving. She discusses the influence of ideas drawn from the disciplines of ethics, law, history, social sciences, auditing, risk management and computing, and refers to understandings drawn from diplomatics, postmodernism, postmodernity, continuum theory and cultural relativism. 'Challenges

to the archival arsenal' are discussed with reference to issues associated with government and corporate accountability, tensions between the right to know and secrecy, the impact of privatisation and outsourcing of government functions, electronic delivery of services, and the dispersal of records across time and space in distributed social and business networks. Iacovino's richly nuanced discussion of the archivist's continuum of responsibility for records in and over time profoundly challenges the perspective of many of the other papers in this collection which focus on what she terms 'a temporal role ... responsible for the small portion of documentation that has passed the archival threshold' (p. 182).

In the final paper in the collection, Catherine Hobbs traces shifts in thinking about personal archives with reference to manuscript and collecting traditions, Australian records continuum thinking, and constructs of the personal archive which challenge ideas about personal archives as 'evidence of me'. It is disappointing that Hobbs's critique of the concept of 'evidence of me' and much of the archival literature on personal recordkeeping and archiving is based on a narrowly legalistic understanding of the concept of evidence, and presents a simplistic interpretation of a richly nuanced discourse. She attempts to reinstate hard boundaries between personal and organisational recordkeeping and archives, personal and public domains, dealing in dualisms which overstate the unstructured, unsystematic nature of personal recordkeeping, and the highly structured, rigorously systematic nature of organisational recordkeeping. She considers the psychology of the individual creator as a driver in personal recordkeeping, but fails to take into account the role of organisational cultures, the diversity of both individual and corporate recordkeeping behaviours, and the psychology of people acting collectively as well as individually. Hobbs offers important insights into the nature of personal archives linked to the interplay of the personal and the professional, documentation from experience, the relationship between archives and documentation, and the fluidity of arrangement in personal archives. Unfortunately she does not recognise the value of her own insights to an understanding of the multiple forms that recordkeeping and archiving take in all their complexity and infinite variety.

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Jane Doulman and David Lee, *Every assistance and protection: a history of the Australian passport*, The Federation Press, Sydney, 2008. xvi + 256 pp. ISBN 978 186287 682 8 (paperback). $39.95.

Australians are inveterate travellers, and to facilitate our voyages across the world we possess passports certifying our nationality and personal identification. Apparently Australians acquire passports at double the rate of Americans, and they are increasingly common.[1] Passports not only permit us to travel to international destinations, they are also considered one of the prime instruments for the identification of individuals - as anyone applying for a home loan or a pension would attest. Along with birth certificates, they authenticate our identity and convey our rights as citizens of this country. In light of their increasing importance, it is very enlightening to learn in the book's introduction that this is 'the first historical analysis based on hitherto unexamined files held in the National Archives of Australia (NAA) relating to the Australian passport from the colonial period to the present day' (p. 3). A book on this subject is timely, and it is wonderful to see the importance of archives highlighted at the beginning of this book, ensuring the story is anchored in the preserved evidence of government activity.

From its outset the authors of the book declare it more than a story of foreign policy - 'it is one that touches the lives of many ordinary Australians' (p. 2). The introduction sets the history of the Australian passport in an international context, recounting the story of travel, and its control or otherwise, from the earliest recorded times. Chapter 1 focuses on the European settlement of Australia and makes the point that this occurred at the commencement of the consolidation of the 'Era of Free Movement' (p. 18) in the nineteenth century. This era saw great movements of people during Europe's industrialisation and also of facilitated immigration to Europe's colonies and the Americas. It also describes the return of travel documentation in the late nineteenth century when various places such as the Australian colonies became worried about the exclusion of 'undesirables', such as Asians. It also recounts moves for the introduction of passports in Australia between Federation and the Great War.

World War I saw the imposition of a compulsory passport as a temporary wartime measure, but the book details the opposition

to the central control of this task, and the measures taken by some to get around it. Chapter 3 details the introduction of the *Passports Act 1920* and, through the examination of Commonwealth archives, reveals the politics surrounding the decisions to extend what was a wartime measure to peacetime and some of the opposition to what was seen at the time as an infringement of the rights of British subjects. Chapter 4 details the passport entry system in the 1930s and its use to support restrictions to bar women from solo travel and the political activities of the Left. From here on the book really grabbed my attention. This chapter detailed some of the sanctimonious attempts by authorities to control the entry of single and divorced women thought undesirable on moral grounds, highlighting the somewhat prurient nature of the times; the cases are given as examples of the discretionary power of the relevant Minister at that time.

Chapters 5 continues the exploration of the Minister's discretionary power during the Cold War; chapter 6 is a related study of the case of Wilfred Burchett. This (in?)famous Australian journalist went into North Korea in 1951, at the height of the Korean War and the Cold War, resulting in him being labelled a traitor, and the Australian Government denied him a passport until 1972. The National Archives of Australia's holdings of records relating to Burchett are vital for telling this story. Chapter 7 details the change of view of the passport between 1948 and the 1980s, from being a 'badge of "British" nationality to a document that affirmed the bearer's membership of a multicultural Australian state' (p. 170). The archives from NAA referenced in this chapter clearly underscore the story behind these changes.

The book's final chapter details the history behind the enactment of the *Australian Passports Act 2005* and the rise of the 'biometric passport', occasioned by the importance of ensuring the true personal identity of passport holders is maintained and security concerns over the past decade or so. In his royal commission report of 1982, Justice Stewart detailed the scale of the abuse of the passport system in Australia, giving rise to reforms in passport issuing controls.[2] The 11 September 2001 al-Qaeda terrorist attacks in the United States are also seen as a catalyst for the introduction of the biometric passport to facilitate international police monitoring of travellers between countries. The 2005 Act is examined in detail in this chapter, and the balance between

the citizen's sense of entitlement to a passport and the strengthened legal basis for a greater amount of information to identify the applicant is explored, including the privacy concerns over biometric passports.

Every assistance and protection is a well-written book, making skilful use of the archives it references as the underlay for an interesting story. The style of citation used for the NAA's records in the book is not exactly that recommended by the NAA, but it is easy to follow the authors' research footsteps through the book. The book touches on the issue of the passport increasingly being used as an instrument of proof of identity and the privacy issues related to this, but perhaps this trend could have been explored a little more.

The book is illustrated with many photographs, including images of passports, most showing the standard expressionless images of the subjects, though Miles Franklin's 1923 offering on page 92 is the most endearing passport photo I've ever seen. Although I found the final chapter of the book a little more prosaic than those that preceded it, as a whole the book was an unexpectedly enjoyable read, with many interesting case studies to illustrate the story.

Throughout *Every assistance and protection* I was thoroughly engaged by the history of the evolution of the Australian passport, as revealed in the nation's archives.

Notes

[1] Andrew Leigh and Justin Wolfers, 'The best and worst of the US and how Australia compares', *OnLine Opinion*, Australia's e-journal of social and political debate, available at <*http://www.onlineopinion.com.au/view.asp?article=1444*>, accessed 20 March 2011.

[2] *Royal Commission of Inquiry into Drug Trafficking*, Interim Report no. 2, AGPS, Canberra, 1982.

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Elena S Danielson, *The ethical archivist*, Society of American Archivists, Chicago, 2010. 437 pp. ISBN 978 1 931666 34 2. $US49.00.

The Society of American Archivists (SAA) has an enviable reputation as a publisher of excellent texts on archival ethics, including Karen Benedict's *Ethics and the archival profession: introduction and case studies* (2003) and now Elena S Danielson's *The ethical archivist*.

Danielson has been researching and writing on archival ethics for many years and brings a wealth of knowledge to this topic. She argues that 'archival ethics are unique ... [and that] the archival profession is faced with ethical dilemmas that are intrinsic to the nature of the work' (p. 7). During each day, archivists make decisions that can have far-reaching impact beyond their own workplaces into the archival community and society in general. She notes:

> Archival work is linked with many complex transactions, such as visualizing the past and providing a baseline for measuring the present state of affairs. Ethical lapses have consequences that hinder these essential societal roles. (p. 22)

Danielson asks the reader to visualise the role of the archivist within the concentric circles of the law, professional standards (such as codes of ethics), and societal obligations/social accountability. The challenge is to 'harmonize' these three areas and thus create a 'trusted archive' which:

> should serve as a trusted source ... should have a baseline of truthfulness that will encourage a respect for factual evidence. It should serve as a corrective to the wild interpretations that periodically invade political and cultural discourse. The result is a community with a vivid but accurate shared memory, one that is periodically reconceptualized to enhance an awareness of social responsibility. (p. 296)

The ethical archivist examines the following: acquisitions, disposal, access, proprietary information, privacy, authenticity and displaced records. Each chapter is framed around a discussion of the area of archival practice with reference to the law, professional codes of ethics, societal responsibilities, and relevant case studies. Danielson does not provide a 'definitive' guideline, but rather encourages the reader into further consideration of the ethical issues by concluding each chapter with a list of questions. For example, the questions concluding the chapter on equitable access ask readers to evaluate their repository's access policy, the quality of reference assistance, access directions, the professional behaviour of staff, the promotion of the archives to the community, and so on.

The publication includes a comprehensive bibliography and a range of resources including copies of professional codes of ethics which relate to archives and cultural property, sample guidelines and policy on acquisition management, and a listing of US federal legislation affecting access to private information.

Danielson makes excellent use of a wide range of case studies from American institutions, Canada, South Africa and Europe. Many of the cases are fascinating: for example, the return of the North Carolina Bill of Rights after 143 years and significant legal arguments to prove the authenticity, retention, and archival custody of the document prior to its removal from the North Carolina archives in 1865; the de-accessioning of Canadian immigration records to illustrate the importance of policy and procedures, communication, and education as fundamental to the de-accessioning process; and the provision of access to the 'cigarette papers'.

The chapter on codes of ethics or formative guidance developed by professional associations was illuminating and makes a strong case for the importance of regular revisions of codes. Danielson summarises the history of the Society of American Archivists' code of ethics:

- developed in 1980 as a means to guide professional behaviour;
- revised in 1992 in response to controversies to include the potential to investigate complaints and issue sanctions; and
- following a case in 2001 which had the potential to embroil the SAA in litigation, further revisions (approved in 2005) which made the code more 'educative' and allowed the SAA to 'maintain ethical oversight' without exposure to risk and litigation (pp. 38–9).

The SAA Committee on Ethical and Professional Conduct has made further revisions to the code, which is currently under discussion with members of the society.

My one criticism of this excellent work is the narrow discussion of acquisition and disposal. For many Australian archivists, appraisal is more than just the selection of records for permanent retention as archives. Archivists, as front-end recordkeepers, are working

with recordkeeping requirements and business needs to determine which records should be created and captured and maintained as the organisational memory and, later, the societal memory. A worthy addition to this work would be to broaden the scope of acquisition and disposal to examine the involvement of archivists in recordkeeping within organisations and the ethical dilemmas they face in undertaking appraisal and ensuring evidence through records.

The ethical archivist will undoubtedly become a critical text on reading lists for recordkeeping and archives courses. It also has enormous potential for use within professional associations in stimulating and focusing discussion on key areas of archival practice. It is a very worthy addition to our professional discourse.

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Laura Millar, *The story behind the book: preserving authors' and publishers' archives*, CCSP Press, Vancouver, 2009. 224 pp. ISBN 978 097387 2743 (hardback). $59.95.

Laura Millar has worked as a consultant for nearly three decades in the related fields of archives, records management and publishing. Not long after becoming the first graduate from the University of British Columbia's Master of Archival Studies program in 1984, she was commissioned by the Canadian Centre for Studies in Publishing at Simon Fraser University to examine publishers' records, resulting in *Archival gold: managing and preserving publishers' records* (CCSP Press, Vancouver, 1989). Fast forward 20 years and Millar's *The story behind the book: preserving authors' and publishers' archives* builds on her early book on publishers' archives by expanding the discussion, as she states, to 'the preservation of the documentary heritage of writing and publishing' (p. 13).

Chapters 1 to 6 of *The story behind the book* examine the value of literary archives and different types of records. The first chapter introduces the value of publishers' and authors' archives through examples of collections and institutions. Chapter 2 delves into the value of literary archives by defining terms, by describing archival institutions, training,

and work, and by offering examples of how archives have and can be used. Chapter 3 continues discussion on the value of literary archives by discussing how they tend to be used by researchers. Millar cites literary history, business history, biography, printing and book design, art and publishing, and children's literature, among others, as well as the many ways in which these records illustrate aspects of society. Chapter 4 examines what records to keep and why, the professional practice of appraisal, and kinds of records. Chapter 5 looks more closely at the kinds of records found in publishers' and authors' archives, including manuscripts, proofs, registers, correspondence, financial and legal documents, research materials, and journals and diaries. Chapter 6 concludes the first part of the book with brief descriptions of institutions with literary collections.

Having introduced publishers and authors to the world of archives in the first part of the book, chapters 7 to 12 provide them with practical advice on how to manage records and work with repositories. Chapters 7 and 8 provide guidance on how to select a repository and how to negotiate an agreement, touching on the sometimes thorny issues of copyright, restrictions and disposal. Chapter 9 deals with implementing a records management program and chapter 10, finally, introduces electronic records. Chapter 11 attempts to answer some commonly asked questions by authors and publishers, and chapter 12 concludes the book with a list of resources.

Millar has written a very readable book aided, for the most part, by interesting and popular examples of publishing and personal records illustrating the value of these materials, research uses, and varieties of institutions in which they can be found. It can seem at times, however, that Millar focuses too much on organisational records, at the expense of authors' papers, and the shifts in the discussion between the two cause some confusion. More importantly, as Catherine Hobbs points out in a review of Millar's book in the Canadian journal *Archivaria*, no. 70, Fall 2010, Millar 'centralizes records management techniques in her approach to creators' maintenance of records. She chooses not to ground the discussion in the archival concepts of provenance and original order' (p. 200). For archivists, this leads to problems with the text stemming from omission and misrepresentation of archival

concepts and practice. I direct readers to Hobbs's review for further discussion on Millar's application of 'records management techniques on personal archives' (p. 201) in order to make a couple of concluding remarks here.

In the chapter 4 discussion of proofs found in writers' archives and the chapter 5 discussion of manuscripts, Millar maintains that archivists will evaluate everything and typically look to retain only those proofs and drafts showing major changes, implying that documents showing minor changes, as well as duplicates, will be discarded. This is, in fact, contrary to archival practice, where, in the interests of preserving the fullest possible record of the creative process, proofs and drafts are rarely discarded (only duplicates and then only sometimes) and, increasingly, in minimal or baseline processing – the influence of More Product Less Process (MPLP) – not all items are evaluated anyway.

Millar also focuses her discussion on writing and publishing in English-speaking countries. This is an understandable limitation, but a real shame, as a number of institutions specialising in literary collections and materials have emerged in the past decade or so in Europe and other non-English-speaking countries, among them the Deutsches Literaturarchiv Marbach (DLA Marbach) and the Institut Mémoires de l'édition contemporaine (IMEC).

Finally, I have to confess my surprise and disappointment that the name of my employer does not pop up anywhere in Millar's discussion.

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Michael Nash (ed.), *How to keep union records*, Society of American Archivists, Chicago, 2010. 228 pp. ISBN 978 931666 35 0 (paperback). $US49.00 or $US35.00 (members' price).

This useful and interesting book has a long prehistory. A predecessor with the same title appeared as long ago as the late 1920s, when the American Federation of Labor recognised the need to provide advice to unions on the importance of preserving their records (p. 8). In 1992

the late Debra Bernhardt, labour archivist and historian, published a short (44-page) and simple manual *How to keep union records: a guide for local union officers and staff*. The 2010 book, a project of the Labor Archives Roundtable of the Society of American Archivists (SAA), with the SAA as publisher, is a very different work. It is much longer, consisting of 10 chapters, some with archival labels such as 'Appraisal' and 'Reference and access' and some specific to the union context, such as 'Unions and labor archives' and 'Consolidations and mergers: Implications for union archives'. It is also illustrated and has been revised for a different audience – professional archivists.

How to keep union records has a wider scope than the title suggests: it also provides plenty of sound advice about why union records should be kept and what to keep. Thus it is a guide not only for professional archivists who would be expected to know about records management strategies, appraisal, and reference and access, for example, but also for other partners involved in efforts to preserve labour archives including union administrators and decision-makers, labour historians and librarians and university administrators with responsibility for collections of labour movement records. The 'archival' chapters are written in language accessible to the non-specialist with a need to know. On the other hand, the chapters with a strong labour archives and labour history focus would be useful for archivists new to the labour movement, its history and institutions. The reader is also reminded about the relationship between healthy labour archives programs and the continuing availability of sources that enable 'history from below' to be written. The chapters on oral history and photographs serve as fascinating introductions to the rich and diverse historical and contemporary culture of the American labour movement. While the book's approach to records management is fairly conventional, there is some acknowledgment of the records continuum and recent appraisal theory and practice.

In short, *How to keep union records* lives up to the claim of its editor that it:

> addresses many issues that are of perennial concern for labor archivists: building relationships with the unions, developing collecting policies that support current labor

> history scholarship, adapting appraisal theory to the unique challenges of labor union archives, and arranging and describing collections so that finding aids speak to both academic and union audiences. (p. viii)

This brings us to the notion of a 'labour archivist'. Despite the major and continuing place of the labour movement in Australian political life, today we do not have any specialist labour archivists. In the non-government archives sphere, there appear to be few specialisations except for 'school archivist', 'university archivist', 'religious archivist' and perhaps 'business archivist'. There are institutions around Australia that hold union archives of national and local significance and there are archivists (and librarians) who ensure that the records of the labour movement are collected, preserved and made accessible for creators and researchers. However, it is now some time since the initiatives of archivists at the University of Melbourne and the Australian National University that produced the Trade Union Records Disposal Schedule (1998) and the Australian Trade Union Archives website (2000–01). Chronic underfunding is a huge problem, but the strong partnerships between archivists, their institutions and unions as depositors that this book advocates also seem to be missing. *How to keep union records* provides solid advice and good examples, many of which are capable of 'translation' on this side of the Pacific. It also provides – at a reasonable price – a basic primer to guide librarians, historians and others who want to know what we archivists are talking about.

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Laura Millar, *Archives: principles and practices*, Facet Publishing, London, 2010. 304 pp. ISBN 978 1 85604 673 2 (paperback). £44.95.

This book, by Canadian archivist, educator and international consultant Laura Millar, is one in the series Principles and Practice in Records Management and Archives from Facet Publishing, the publishing arm of CILIP (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals). The author states that *Archives: principles and practices* is written:

> primarily for records and archives practitioners, particularly those 'lone arrangers' working in small,

> inadequately resourced institutions, who may have inherited an array of archival procedures from their predecessors and need to understand whether these approaches still work and, if not, how to conceptualise new and different models.

The intended audience extends to students and anyone 'interested in or involved with records and archives' (p. xvii).

Laura Millar has written a stimulating and interesting text for an international readership. Her examples and case studies are drawn from different institutional and cultural perspectives, with an understandable basis in Canadian practice. 'What are archives?', the opening chapter, is a good introduction to the characteristics of archives and records and contemporary professional concerns such as archives as evidence and archives as memory (available online from the publisher's website). Chapter 2 on institutional history and culture takes a refreshing approach, and is inclusive of community and activist archives, both of which tend to be omitted from Australian overviews of the archival landscape. Chapter 3 'Archival service: a matter of trust' is a thoughtful and well-rounded discussion of the ethical and management responsibilities of archivists in policy development and in their relationships with those they serve both within and outside their institutional boundaries. This chapter and others like chapter 5 'Provenance, original order and *respect des fonds*' and chapter 8 'Making archives available' provide authoritative summaries of principles and practice, supported by realistic examples. Chapter 7 'Arranging and describing archives' is useful for those interested in comparative practice across different descriptive traditions. Some of the other chapters, such those on preservation and appraisal are less successful, possibly because it is more difficult to achieve an international consensus of practice on these topics. The bibliographic section 'To learn more' and the glossary are important in a work that has no graphics and a minimum of tables to support the text (the house style for Facet publications).

It is more the conception than the execution of this book that might raise concern among Australasian practitioners. The philosophy underpinning *Archives: principles and practices* is to maintain a separation between records and archives. Eventually in the chapter on

digital archives, Laura Millar states:

> the archivist can no longer be the passive recipient of 'old' records. The archivist must actively intervene in the records creation process or work closely with records managers and other information professionals as part of a team developing coordinated approaches to ensuring records remain accessible in the office and later when they are made available for wider use in an archival environment. (p. 210)

Here we are on common ground. This chapter is well structured and provides a valuable introduction for the intended audience, including students, to issues of terminology, policy and management for electronic records (the latter including the processes of emulation and migration, as well as digital repositories). However, coming as it does towards the end of the book, it could be concluded that archivists today might encounter electronic records only after they have worked through the key areas of practice with physical records.

Finally, *Archives: principles and practices* reminds us of the problems facing authors writing 'omnibus' hardcopy archival texts today. Despite the adoption of international standards and harmonisation of practice, efforts to write for a global audience often seem constrained by their national origins or they become so general as to provide insufficient guidance for a novice audience. On balance, this book avoids these pitfalls and is a welcome contribution to the archival literature.

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Melissa Mannon, *Cultural heritage collaborators: a manual for community documentation,* ArchivesInfo Press, New Hampshire, 2010. 258 pp. ISBN 13 978 0 982 72760 7. US$25.00.

Collective memory and community archives have become increasingly popular topics as archives and other cultural heritage institutions begin to explore new ways of capturing and sharing documentation of personal history and shared experiences. This interest is a natural outgrowth of the fascination with genealogy and local history that

has driven the work of archives, libraries, museums and historical societies for many years. Cultural heritage institutions are responding to the interests and demands of their user groups, and technology has created new opportunities for these endeavours, using both traditional practices and more creative and interactive approaches. As a result, these institutions are faced with a changing array of materials and ways in which these materials can be shared.

Cultural heritage collaborators: a manual for community documentation is offered as a tool for these organisations, many of which have traditionally operated in isolation, to work together towards combined and mutually beneficial goals in the area of building collections. The author is an archives and cultural heritage consultant who writes and presents on archives, records management and the importance of preserving cultural heritage, and provides advice to individuals on preserving personal and family collections.

The theme of this manual is collaboration, a concept most of us hold in high esteem, even though we fall short of acting collaboratively - or even cooperatively - because of the competing pressures exerted within our own organisations. Given the fact that the theme of collective memory and community archives is inherently collaborative, much of what Mannon has to say is really common sense, and she presents her advice in a down-to-earth way that would be non-threatening to less professional audiences. And this is clearly a labour of love - the book is self-published.

The book is organised into three chapters, all of which discuss aspects of collection development. The first chapter covers the rationale for collecting historical records; the second discusses approaches for implementation; and the third reviews the development of mission statements, collecting policies, appraisal and de-accessioning. Mannon provides several models throughout, based on case studies. A selected glossary of terminology and a bibliography appear at the end of the volume.

In the introduction, Mannon says that the book 'focuses on the role of archival resources in our missions', and that the audience 'includes anyone handling historical records, in any setting, at any level of employ' (p. 4). This is a tall order and accounts for many of the book's shortcomings. The book would not be very helpful to a professional

archivist because much of what she covers is pretty elementary. Yet the way she presents her information is repetitive and is likely to be confusing to a novice working in a local historical organisation. Her choices of what to include and what to leave out seem somewhat arbitrary and repetitive. The bibliography is particularly peculiar, combining citations to fairly 'advanced' readings and some outdated resources, but omitting many of the basic references that would support much of her content. For example, she discusses documentation strategies as a relevant approach, a fairly sophisticated model with which archivists have been struggling for 20 years without a huge amount of success. At the other extreme, she provides little guidance about what to do after materials are acquired. There are a few pages on appraisal and a bare mention of description and finding aids, without further direction. Although her focus is the collection development process, collaborative work among repositories depends on good descriptions of holdings to share and methods for sharing them. Technology, while not a strong point for many local cultural institutions, is totally overlooked.

Mannon's goal of providing clear and encouraging guidance to those in local cultural heritage institutions is laudable, and it is important to be able to cut across the professional boundaries of libraries, archives and museums. She is absolutely correct about the importance of documenting our culture and the ways in which documents tell us about ourselves as well as protect our rights. Unfortunately, this message gets lost in a repetitive manual that tries to serve all audiences and ends up serving none of them very well.

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Brian Matthews, *Manning Clark: a life*, Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest, NSW, 2008. 535 pp. ISBN 978 1 74175 446 9 (hardback). $59.95.

Roslyn Russell (ed), *Ever, Manning: selected letters of Manning Clark 1938–1991*, Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest, NSW, 2008. 552 pp. ISBN 978 1 74114 378 2 (hardback). $65.00.

As evidenced by the titles, these two books are about Manning Clark, one of Australia's most influential historians. Clark was the author of *A history of Australia*, the first comprehensive history, published

over six volumes and written over 25 years of research and writing. As a student of Australian history at the University of Queensland, I discovered that Clark was compulsory reading and I look back fondly on some of my tutorial sessions. I am very pleased, therefore, to have the opportunity of reviewing these two publications and to review them together, as the books complement each other.

Although I had read and studied Clark's scholarly works and had a broad understanding of who he was, I was not that familiar with Clark's personal life before reading these two publications. While living in Canberra, through the ACT Branch of the Australian Society of Archivists, I was privileged to visit the Clark family home, kept as it had been when the family lived there, and to even stand in Clark's own study and view his personal work space. Doing this review brought back many personal memories for me.

Brian Matthews spent more than a decade researching and writing Clark's biography and he is the first biographer to use Clark's own personal diaries, which I think is what makes this biography all that more interesting and, of course, revealing of Clark the man. Like most biographies, *Manning Clark: a life* follows a chronological thread from Clark's early years, his family, his studies, his marriage, his work and his later years.

There are two sections of photographs included in the book, and never having seen photos of the younger Clark, or Clark without his trademark hat, I was fascinated by the photos. A family portrait taken in Clark's Canberra study in 1954 shows Clark, his wife, Dymphna, and their four children just like any other Australian family. Other family photos and ones obviously taken in the course of his research all help to complement the story of Clark's life unfolding through the book.

The extensive notes section provide further reading and detail the relevant diary entries and references to Clark's correspondence with a wide variety of people. This correspondence is also held by the National Library of Australia as part of the Papers of Manning Clark collection. The select bibliography is almost seven pages long, and it is good to see a fairly comprehensive index which allows you to dip into specific areas of interest easily.

Having mentioned Matthews's use of Clark's correspondence as well as his personal diaries, it is interesting to look at Roslyn Russell's collection of Clark letters from 1938 to this death in 1991. This book also gives an in-depth look at Clark the man, as the letters reveal personal opinions and concerns. Russell is the perfect choice for this publication as she was once Manning Clark's research assistant and worked with him on a number of books.

Russell sets the scene in the 'Introduction: Manning Clark and his letters' by providing a brief overview of Clark's life and works. The book follows a chronological approach reflecting critical periods in Clark's life as reflected in the contents. For example, it starts with 'An Australian abroad: 1938–1940', and continues through 'Melbourne and Canberra: 1943–1955', 'Towards *A history of Australia*: 1956–1959', 'Facing the storms: 1960–1965', 'In the "Slough of Despond": 1966–1969', 'Turbulent times: 1970–1975', 'Speaking out: 1976–1979', 'Years of struggle: the 1980s' and ends with 'My world is shrinking: the 1990s'.

The extensive notes section provides background information on the various people Clark was corresponding with. I was surprised to read a letter from Clark to an archival colleague, Sigrid McCausland, and wondered what the connection was. Turning to the notes I was fascinated to discover that Sigrid was a former research assistant who worked with Clark and kept in touch afterwards. Next time I meet up with Sigrid, I know exactly what I will be chatting to her about!

There are two sections of photographs with family photos, one of a history tutorial at the Australian National University in the 1960s which made me envious, some travel shots, Clark at the cricket in 1986 and even one of Clark with Barry Humphries and one of his children in the 1960s. Photographs can also tell a story.

Other sections include a select bibliography, sources of letters held in libraries and archives, sources of letters from individuals and private collections, and a list of principal correspondents. There is an extremely useful chronology which clearly outlines the major events in Clark's life from his birth in 1915 to his death in 1991. His wife, Dymphna, died in 2000.

Having read both *Manning Clark: a life* and *Ever, Manning: selected letters of Manning Clark 1938–1991*, I feel that I now have a really good understanding of who Clark was, his hopes, his fears, and what made him who he really was. This is because both Brian Matthews and Roslyn Russell used Clark's own words, his diaries, his correspondence and photographs to pay tribute to him. These two books highlight the value of personal papers to future historians, scholars and writers, and it is terrific to see that so many individual libraries and archives have personal collections.

However, I find myself sitting here wondering about the future and whether there will be similar author collections kept in the world of emails, tweets, Facebook and other twenty-first century means of communication. How many people still use surface mail, or even write letters by hand? Drafts of authors' works these days are more likely to be electronic copies stored on hard drives, floppies or even USB sticks – will only the final copy be saved or will we be able to see the various drafts as a work develops? I confess to being somewhat of a Luddite but it has been fascinating and enjoyable reading these two publications and watching both authors create their works from original personal papers. It doesn't get any better than that!

Shauna Hicks