


photographs or letters or diaries in the first place? Does that relationship matter to them? If not, how do they imagine history comes to be?

One does not want to criticise someone's apple for not being an orange. But it is unfortunate that there is no discussion of how the average person understands not just history but the sources of history, and the institutions that protect and share those sources, from archives to libraries to museums to community centres.

If Clark did ask those questions, perhaps she will share her findings in another publication. If she did not ask those questions, then perhaps someday she will. They deserve to be asked. And the answers deserve to be heard. If archivists are to help the 'average Australian bloke' connect with both personal *and* public history, surely we need to help connect them more closely with the enduring evidence essential to constructing those histories in the first place.

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The No-Nonsense Guide to Archives and Recordkeeping, by Margaret Crockett,
London, Facet, 2016. xii + 212 pp., AUD \$85.00, ISBN 978 1 856048 55 2

In her 'no-nonsense' guide, Margaret Crockett has condensed into less than 200 pages (and an 18-page index) a wealth of practical information about recordkeeping, records management, archives management, archival preservation and the archival profession. The author, an experienced archives and records consultant, identifies her intended audience as those who have had little or no formal training in the topics she covers, but who want or need a clearer understanding of them. As I opened the book, I wondered about its relevance for archival professionals, but soon realised that it has real value in helping to bridge what can be a challenging communication gap between theory and reality, between jargon and plain language.

The book's first chapter introduces the concepts and defines the terms that – in the author's view – are essential to understanding activities involving records and archives. These concepts and terms are not new – record, record series, archive, provenance and so on – but the definitions are refreshingly simplified. For example, a record is 'recorded information in any media or format, providing reliable evidence of human activity' (p. 1). This chapter demystifies records management and archival work by describing where and how it is done and who benefits when it is done well. By populating the chapter's world of archives and records with an international variety of illustrative organisations and institutions, the author expands the dimensions of this world. Illustrative examples of interest to readers of *Archives and Manuscripts* include: the Australian Society of Archivists, The National Film and Sound Archive of Australia, and Records and Information Professionals Australasia.

In addressing the topics of managing current records and records management in two different chapters, the author distinguishes between personal and organisational responsibility and allows the reader to focus his or her learning experience. The current records chapter emphasises the importance of individual adoption and maintenance of systems that support the creation of purposeful, complete, usable, authentic and reliable records. The point is made, though, that responsible individual action achieves its best results when it is taken as part of a comprehensive organisation-wide records management program. The well-organised chapter describing such a

program relies heavily on the Australian-inspired International Records Management Standard, ISO 15489, for its content.

The two chapters devoted to the subset of records ‘selected for permanent preservation because they provide key evidence of [an] entity’s history’ (p. 4) cover topics well known to members of the Australian Society of Archivists. The conversational approach to explanation of such archival activities as acquisition, accessioning, appraisal and arrangement – to name just a few at the beginning of the alphabet – has the potential to assist many a professional in transforming disinterested parties into allies and advocates.

The numerous tables and checklists included in the guide enhance its usefulness as a quick reference and source of teaching material. This is indeed a well-stocked (and trustworthy) ‘one-stop-shop’ for archival and records management how-to.

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Archives in Libraries: What Librarians and Archivists Need to Know to Work Together, by JA Bastian, M Sniffin-Marino, and D Webber, Chicago, Society of American Archivists, 2015, 146 pp., USD\$69.95, ISBN 1 931666 87 3

Archives in Libraries: What Librarians and Archivists Need to Know to Work Together seeks to provide ‘an overview of the basic archival concepts, policies, and best practices for librarians and library directors, while also suggesting ways in which archivists working in libraries can describe their work and effectively advocate for archival needs’ (p. 5). The book focuses on the United States context, giving historical background to both the archive and library professions in the United States and outlining the core values of the professions as stated by their US professional associations. Covering examples of academic and public libraries that include archives, *Archives in Libraries* takes its place in the debate about the convergence of libraries and archives that has featured in professional discourse for a number of years.

The authors, all with varying experiences as archivists working within library environments, bring their experience in negotiating ‘gaps in understanding’ (p. v) between librarians and archivists to the publication. For *Archives in Libraries*, they interviewed a range of archive and library professionals to put together a series of examples and vignettes of some of the challenges that are faced by archives in libraries, and emphasise the need for better understanding between the professions.

While the title of the book indicates that it provides information for both librarians and archivists in order that they are better placed to work together, the purpose of the book as stated in its introduction (p. 5) and the content of the book are more focused on informing librarians about what archivists do and giving archivists working in libraries tools to better explain their role, rather than equally providing both professions with a better understanding of the other. The two chapters detailing ‘What Archivists Do’ (pp. 51–74) may be informative for librarians and administrators wanting to know more about archivists working within their organisations, but it lacked an equivalent explanation of what librarians do. If librarians will benefit from understanding what it is that archivists do, then the reverse must be true for archivists.