

Photographs and manuscripts: working in the archive

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This essay opens out a series of questions concerning matter and materiality in the age of the digital via engagement with the literary papers of Australian writer Eve Langley (1904–74), held in the Mitchell Library in Sydney. Among those papers is a single black and white snapshot labelled ‘The Manuscript Cupboard, 1970’, which shows three shelves of a household cupboard filled with exercise books, folders and paper-wrapped parcels. The same collection also contains a series of colour snapshots showing Langley’s manuscripts arranged in a variety of tableaux laid out across her untended lawn. That Langley should have first taken and then preserved such photos is perhaps not surprising given her deep attachment to material conditions of writing and, in particular, to manuscripts and paper. For Langley, to write was quite simply to inhabit paper and she framed the experience of writing as one of immersion, not just in ideas and words, but literally in paper. Framed by a consideration of the anxieties around materiality provoked by the emergence of digital technologies, this essay explores paper’s presence as an integral dimension of the experience of being in the archive and working with original materials.

Keywords: Eve Langley; manuscripts; materiality; paper

Introduction

This essay opens out a series of questions concerning the literary papers of Australian writer Eve Langley (1904–74), held in the Mitchell Library in Sydney.¹ I seek to highlight how the failure to think through the materiality of those papers has meant crucial aspects of Langley’s innovation and creativity have gone unacknowledged in ways that have diminished her reputation. Further, I use Langley’s archived papers to launch a speculative discussion of what a focus on materiality may offer researchers that more conventional approaches to archived literary papers cannot and how it might help us to consider alternative relations not only between writing, creativity and publication, but also between literary creativity and scholarly research. Langley has largely dropped from sight following a flurry of scholarly interest in Australia’s interwar women writers across the 1980s and 1990s, which saw the publication of Joy Thwaite’s biography, *The Importance of Being Eve Langley* (1989), and the republication of Langley’s prize-winning novel, *The Pea-Pickers* (1942), a picaresque account of two cross-dressed young female field labourers wandering across Gippsland in the 1920s. While various scholars have drawn attention to the quality of her early poetry, to the richly innovative nature of her prose, and to her personal and professional links with writers such as Douglas Stewart, Ruth Park, Hal Porter and Robyn Hyde, her contribution to both

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Australian and New Zealand literary culture of the interwar and immediate postwar years continues to be under-appreciated.²

Among Langley's literary papers are several significant series of personal photographs.³ When I called up the box listed on the catalogue as PXE 1333 I was unsure how useful or revealing its contents might be. The box contained a number of the better-known and frequently reproduced studio portraits (Figure 1) undertaken for the release of Langley's second novel, *White Topee* (1954). These show the middle-aged author dressed in heavy fur coat, sandals and solar topee; eccentric images that have generally fostered more interest in Langley's cross-dressing, her history of institutionalisation and her obsessive identification with the writer Oscar Wilde than in her achievements as a poet and novelist. Indeed, critics suggest it has been 'almost impossible to side-step the biographical data that often obscures discussion of her work'.⁴ What caught my attention, however, was not a photo of Langley but one presumably taken *by* her.⁵ It was a serendipitous find. After all, Langley is a writer whose archive substantially outweighs her published work and I had been thinking through how to engage



Figure 1. Eve Langley, publicity photo for *White Topee* (1954). Eve & June Langley collection, State Library of New South Wales. PXE 1333.

with that archive in terms of its materiality – that is, as an accumulated body of paper. Here was a photo of paper or, to be more precise, of Langley’s manuscripts (Figure 2).

The photo in question is a small black and white snapshot. It is an orphan image resembling none of the others filed alongside it and in this respect it reminds us of how even seemingly carefully preserved photos have histories as itinerant objects.⁶ The photo is a slightly off-centre close-up of the interior of a domestic cupboard and it has a 1:1 square format, which lends a certain concentration or focused intensity to the image.⁷ In it we see two evenly spaced shelves filled with exercise books, folders and paper-wrapped parcels. The upper shelf is slightly bowed with the weight of packed-in notebooks; the next one, with its downward-angled contents, hints at the faint possibility that the papers might spill outward. A third similarly stuffed shelf is just visible at the lower edge of the tightly cropped image. On the reverse side of the photo is Langley’s handwritten descriptive note which reads, ‘The Manuscript Cupboard, 1970’. As an archival ‘find’ the photo had for me a kind of intensity, although I recognise that ‘photographs are very difficult objects to talk about, let alone classify, describe, and essentially “own” as archival evidence’.⁸ Indeed, it is important to acknowledge how ‘the archive constitutes photographs in particular ways’.⁹ I had been pursuing Langley’s attachment to the materiality of writing and here was Langley apparently documenting the precious piled-up ‘stuff’ of writing. If ‘evidence’ is too problematic a term to apply to this photo, it might still be thought of as a suggestive trace – of an arrangement of paper which was once before the camera – and as a provocation to explore how pages and papers matter not only in the context of Langley’s literary archive but also within debates concerning researchers’ enduring preferences for working with original documents.



Figure 2. ‘The Manuscript Cupboard, 1970’. Eve & June Langley collection, State Library of New South Wales. PXE 1333.

Missing material

To focus on a snapshot photograph located via a physical search of an archive might be thought ironic given that both entities – snapshot and archive – are currently being transformed via the advent of new digital technologies. The snapshot photograph as a tactile object is disappearing in the wake of the new materialities and affordances of digital image making and networked image sharing.¹⁰ This is occurring at the same time as researchers are increasingly opting to access archival materials online.¹¹ However, what interests me and underpins my current engagements with Langley's literary papers is the manner in which this latter shift – the 'digital turn' in archiving – has been paralleled by a 'material turn' in literary research and scholarship. This provides the context for my broader exploration of whether a renewed sensitivity to the materiality and expressive potential of paper might offer alternative ways to approach archived literary collections and enable us to reconsider what it is we generally seek to measure or to weigh as 'evidence' in the conduct of archive-based literary research. This necessarily entails moving away from the ingrained habit of treating archived paper as an 'invisible' support and instead asking what *work* the paper is doing.¹² Such an approach is also in line with wider calls to engage with 'changes in *what the empirical is and how it matters*'.¹³ Thus, in what follows I elaborate on how paper matters in Langley's literary archive and on how Langley's own approach to paper and to the manuscript might provide a model for rethinking some hitherto under-examined aspects of being-in-the-archive.

When digitisation emerged as a new option for the reproduction and circulation of archived cultural heritage, the familiar experience of being-in-the-archive was suddenly destabilised. Impassioned arguments were advanced for the 'retention and preservation of textual artifacts', with significant emphasis placed on the importance of literary scholars' continuing engagements with the unique 'physicality' of original documents.¹⁴ This is perhaps not surprising given that in those early debates the process of translation into digital code was often viewed not as an alternative form of material instantiation with its own specific properties and capacities but as the loss of materiality itself ('dematerialisation').¹⁵ There were also fears that the presence of digital surrogates might constitute grounds for dispensing altogether with the preservation of analogue originals.¹⁶ Yet, rather than cancelling out or superseding paper formats, the introduction of new media into the archival domain has instead generated important and novel questions. As Mike Featherstone has observed, the digital archive 'presents new conceptual problems about the identity, distinctiveness and boundaries of the datum and the document'.¹⁷ These in turn have renewed interest among researchers in what it means to work with original documents.

Yet I would suggest that this same shift has also revealed how impoverished our approaches to some of these concerns have been. This is perhaps paradoxical since – whether we admit it or not – the promise of paper is what attracts so many of us to research in the archives. After all, physical contact with original documents is what has traditionally confirmed our status as privileged readers and generated that longed-for sense of intimacy with our research subjects. As Rimmer et al. observe, regardless of the availability of high-quality digital surrogates, the original physical object is 'apparently still regarded as the "gold standard" for study'.¹⁸ How is it then that we have largely neglected the theoretical, methodological, epistemological and ontological questions concerning matter and materiality that follow from this type of engagement?

A number of explanations might be offered for this. Many researchers doubtless follow what Alice Yaeger Kaplan identifies as the ‘conventional academic discourse [that] requires that when you write up the results of your archival work, you tell a story about what you found, but not about how you found it’.¹⁹ This inevitably deprives us of reflexive accounts of locating, handling and working with original documents and, consequently, of opportunities to interrogate questions of method. Interestingly, these limitations are further reinforced through the prevailing standards of archival description. Ala Rekrut, for example, in making the case for enhanced ‘material literacy’, highlights how ‘existing archival descriptive structures do not explicitly support recording physical characteristics as evidence that contributes to understanding the records, their creators and custodians’.²⁰ Those seeking to approach specific collections with these elements in mind will usually find only perfunctory accounts of linear metres of shelf space, numbers of boxes or folders, numbers of pages. While fields such as medieval and early modern manuscript studies might claim to have paid more attention to questions of textual materiality, this work, with its focus on the minute cataloguing of a text’s physical features, has often remained at the level of ‘descriptive literalism’.²¹ Then there is the fact that literary researchers working within archival collections have invariably been trained to focus on the ‘strange and banal exercise’²² of transcribing documents word for word. This way of operating encourages us to ignore the material instantiation of the texts with which we work, to separate meaning from materiality and to invest in the idea of archived papers and pages as seemingly neutral containers or platforms for the transmission of words from which meaning can later be extracted. Indeed, Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht points to the manner in which the ‘absolute dominance of meaning-related questions’ across the Humanities has ‘long led to the abandonment of all other types of phenomena and questions’.²³ Gumbrecht suggests that it is precisely our understanding of the ‘materialities of communication’ which has suffered as a consequence of this dominance and he speculates as to whether the new digital communication technologies ‘may turn out to be instrumental in reawakening a desire for presence’, something he defines in terms of the impact of the ‘tangible’.²⁴

Paper’s presence

If archived paper might be thought of then as that which all too frequently fades from view just when it should come into focus, Langley’s photo of her stored manuscripts offers a timely prod in the direction of recognising both the presence and the productivity of paper. Interestingly, the neatness and order of Langley’s ‘manuscript cupboard’ has the potential to displace a particularly entrenched narrative of excess and incoherence that has become entangled in critical and biographical accounts of her life and death. Joanne Winning argues that ‘part of Langley’s lack of favour, to be sure, is a result of this perceived “taint” of auto/biographical “excess”’²⁵ and this extends to her manuscript legacy. Much has been made, for example, of the fact that Langley sent thousands of pages of typescript to her publisher, Angus & Robertson.²⁶ Surviving memos from Angus & Robertson’s in-house editorial staff record their encounters with apparently ‘shapeless’ manuscripts full of ‘superfluous matter’ to be ‘sheared away’.²⁷ These thousands of pages now rest in the Mitchell Library in Sydney, alongside diverse personal papers, correspondence, notebooks, drawings and photos. Some of the manuscripts and correspondence came to the Mitchell Library as part of the Angus & Robertson publishing collection,²⁸ while other papers that were in Langley’s possession at the time of her death were subsequently handed in to the Library for safekeeping.

Various items contained in this latter group of papers are in poor condition showing traces of water damage and mould. The papers also contain odd and potentially eccentric items (for example, shopping lists written on narrow strips cut from cereal boxes). The nature and condition of these papers, together with the sensationalism that has attached to key episodes in Langley's life and more particularly to her death – her body surrounded by odd, elaborately wrapped (empty) paper parcels lying undiscovered while rats gnawed her face away – has only heightened the suspicion of her extensive and unwieldy manuscript body as little more than the troubling extension of her own apparently abject and unruly form. This is despite the fact that a brief analysis of the provenance of the collection suggests many of the features (disorder, water damage, mould and so on) responsible for the abject or pathological taint that has attached itself to her papers may have little to do with the state or arrangement of them during the author's lifetime and result instead from their neglect following her death.²⁹

The photo of Langley's 'manuscript cupboard' tells a different story. It suggests an alternative framing of her manuscript legacy, one in which her archived papers are taken to operate not as a simple and transparent index of abjection, chaos and instability, but as a highly suggestive material measure of her creativity. After all, it is quite clear that Langley had a quite particular relationship to paper: that it was personally meaningful for her. This attachment to paper may have been a legacy deriving in part from time spent as a printer's devil in her youth and later as a book repairer for a public library following her release from Auckland Mental Hospital.³⁰ She did indeed demonstrate a fondness for pink typing paper, selecting it especially for the typing of her manuscripts. She described the experience of working with it thus: 'I was carried away with the fury of it. Each pink page was like a beautiful fire or jewel, a tapestry that I could embroider rapidly.'³¹ Her enthusiasm, however, was not shared by one of her editors at Angus & Robertson who appealed against this preference since 'that single spacing on pink paper is really so trying that only your most devoted admirers (such as myself) would persevere in reading it'.³² Langley also had a fascination for the appearance of words on the page. Looking over the original manuscript of a poem written decades before, she notices particularly how it 'lies on an old rounded palette like page of lined paper'.³³ And this is the striking quality of her as a writer: the way the physical page is always present to her. More than a mere neutral support to words and markings, the paper is alive in its history and in its signifying potential. She writes similarly of how a new bundle of paper she has been promised will soon be on its way to England with her words 'weighing it down'.³⁴ There was, she recorded, a 'peculiar power' to be found in words: 'What splendid visions and colored pictures lay behind them,' she wrote, marvelling at '[h]ow they colored [*sic*] a plain page of paper and made me feel the power of god.'³⁵ This latter statement suggests, moreover, that Langley may have experienced a form of synaesthesia such that words arrayed across a page evoked for her the sensation of colours. Certainly she describes herself elsewhere as 'full of stories like a caravan. I amble and wander across all the plains of fantasy. They're apricot coloured and my red caravan totters across it with painted wheels full of stories and poems.'³⁶

Langley's was without doubt a prodigious paper output and one marked by a growing imbalance across her career between what she produced and what she succeeded in publishing. She frequently reports in correspondence that she is endeavouring to make progress on multiple manuscripts simultaneously. In 1954, for example, she informs her editor, Nan McDonald, that she is 'writing five books at once, at present, and putting good work into all of them'.³⁷ Facing dwindling success, in later years Langley simply encouraged her editors at Angus & Robertson to see themselves as archivists rather than

publishers and in one letter she advises the distinguished editor Beatrice Davis to handle her manuscripts thus: ‘store them for me, at least ... don’t worry about publishing them’.³⁸ On the one hand, Langley’s manuscripts were clearly understood by her to be vulnerable physical documents deserving of considerable care. Ahead of her committal to Auckland Mental Hospital in August 1942, when Langley knew herself to be ill, she entrusted them all (‘a large cushion cover jammed with tightly rolled manuscript’) to her sister, June, with instructions to guard them ‘with your life’.³⁹ In the years following her release, Langley writes to Nan McDonald of her fears of ‘a fire out here in the ranges getting on to [her] draft’ and her desire that Angus & Robertson instead store her manuscript securely.⁴⁰ On the other hand, Langley also shows an awareness of their potential value and status, as demonstrated in her 1954–56 correspondence with noted bibliophile and collector Harry F. Chaplin, who was keen to secure her manuscripts for his collection.⁴¹ On several occasions Langley forwards him pink typescripts of recently published work, primarily poems.⁴² In the same correspondence, Chaplin refers to Langley’s account of having ‘50 volumes of assorted manuscripts being bound up’,⁴³ further indicating her substantial investment (both financial and psychic) in these papers.

Immersion

As I have argued elsewhere,⁴⁴ for Langley, to write was quite simply to *inhabit* paper. She was fundamentally ‘at home’ in and with paper – at times quite literally. June characterises a 1952 visit to Langley’s lodgings thus: ‘bed, book, typewriter, dishes, manuscript’.⁴⁵ Langley framed the experience of writing as one of immersion, not just in ideas and words, but literally in paper. When attempting to start over on a partly completed manuscript, she writes of lifting down ‘the bag of rags that constituted the unwritten book’.⁴⁶ She describes her writing process in terms of how she would ‘sit down, with the manuscript around me, and begin’.⁴⁷ She offered Hazel de Berg a similar description: ‘When I wrote *The Pea-Pickers* ... I had an enormous amount of material around me, mostly old letters and jottings when I was working...’.⁴⁸ Interestingly, Langley’s practice of laying out the already written manuscript pages around her in order to engage with them holds distinct parallels with the activities of those researchers who opt for handling manuscripts in a reading room over the ‘less immersed’ experience of viewing digital surrogates from the comfort of their homes or offices.⁴⁹ Indeed, while Langley describes a process in which ‘about [her] are hundreds of papers, old writings’,⁵⁰ a similar experience is documented for researchers who appreciate the manner in which lifting, holding and browsing paper documents within an archive fundamentally aid their work.⁵¹ In both instances, the basic mechanics of paper allow for ordering and re-ordering, layering and the serendipitous discovery of new relations of association and proximity. As Helen Wood notes, ‘the user in a searchroom can order documents in whatever order s/he chooses; it does not have to be chronological’.⁵² Langley’s writing practice and that of the archival researcher appear even more explicitly aligned if we consider Arlette Farge’s account of working through swathes of archived documents and of how ‘slow work in the archives is, and how this slowness of hands and thought can be the source of creativity’.⁵³ Is it possible that Langley’s accounts of lifting and leafing through her papers – much in the manner that we now employ in their archived state – can return us to a sense of the significance of paper to the experience of being-in-the-archive and to a more explicit awareness of what Kiersten Latham identifies as ‘the tacit, assumed and taken-for-granted aspects of using original archival material’?⁵⁴

Langley's manuscripts evidently held a very particular status for her: as a body of papers they have the capacity to *do* things. More than a mere stage in a writing process leading to formal publication, they appear as vital or vibrant things in themselves. They are 'live presences', in Jane Bennett's sense of vital materiality, of things 'not entirely reducible to the contexts in which (human) subjects set them'.⁵⁵ Another set of photos is relevant on this point: a series of slightly ethereal colour snapshots dating from the early 1970s and which were located in the same box as the photo discussed above. In these latter photos (Figure 3) Langley appears to have laid out different manuscripts in a variety of tableaux on the untended lawn in Katoomba. Amateurish and just barely in focus, they are strange and haunting photographs. Various labels 'books', 'MSS books' or 'Books of Manuscripts 1972' on their reverse sides, their subjects – the manuscripts – are oddly and ambiguously placed to one side in each shot, making these images in some ways difficult to read or to classify. Significantly, these are images created at a point when Langley's writing has largely ceased to circulate within the print economy and yet what they capture is an act of making or creativity in which the manuscripts feature centrally. They recall, moreover, an earlier episode involving Langley's deployment of the papery weight of the unpublished manuscript of *Wild Australia*. Devastated by Angus & Robertson's delicately worded rejection of the book in 1954,⁵⁶ Langley the following year enthusiastically agrees to the manuscript being displayed as part of the Literary Show for Auckland's Arts Festival. She describes a dramatic assemblage that reorganises an otherwise failed or unwanted pile of paper into a sign or site of accomplishment:

The manuscript of 'WILD AUSTRALIA' is to be prominently placed and a copy of White Topsee beside it ... Those of the library staff who have read *Wild Australia* think it is remarkable. It will be examined and read by thousands during the Arts Festival Week, and if that isn't a good test for a book, I don't know what is.⁵⁷



Figure 3. Langley's manuscripts assembled on the lawn. Eve & June Langley collection, State Library of New South Wales. PXE 1333.

The manuscripts on the lawn presumably do not have ‘thousands’ of viewers (or indeed any readers), but nevertheless they are suggestive of a form of display as Langley assembles (by their shape) a literal body of papers. Indeed, the carefully laid-out manuscripts might be thought of as a series of installations: an immersive yet ephemeral form of art destined for dismantling, but capable of suggesting how things go together in that moment.⁵⁸ These installations beg the question of what a manuscript *is* or what a body of literary papers can *do*. Across the series of photographs we see different combinations and re-combinations of manuscripts, with the specific items included in a particular assemblage sometimes detailed on the reverse side, for example ‘25. Black Exercise books & Diary book’, ‘26. Black Exercise book and Dandenong book’. These photographs, moreover, not only suggest new ways to think about Langley’s literary papers, but they also critically open out the possibility of thinking differently about the creative dimensions of her later career, a period usually understood in terms of failure, madness and withdrawal. These photos and other series filed alongside them⁵⁹ are suggestive of a highly focused creative vision, one still very much anchored in the materiality of writing but freed from the conventional ends of print and publication.

Interestingly, the pattern of sifting and rearranging of papers captured in the photos is not entirely dissimilar to the manner in which researchers generally work their way through collections of archived papers, handling, sorting and highlighting different elements, and in that moment, as Farge observes, ‘a new “archive” emerges’.⁶⁰ That is, there is something that occurs in this engagement that is not about the uncovering or recovering of the latent content or meaning of documents but which concerns the productivity of paper in its very handling. Looking at Langley’s engagements with paper provides a way to think about why it matters that we still have access to and work with original materials or, put differently, the importance of marking paper’s *presence* as a critical dimension of the archival scene. In particular, it suggests how it may be paper’s emergent capacities – what it can *do* – more than its basic properties that we seek to hold onto. And it is perhaps this that we sense cannot (yet? ever?) be captured and/or reproduced successfully in a series of digital surrogates.

Conclusion

In this paper, via an engagement with Eve Langley’s manuscripts, I have opened out the question of how and why paper matters to researchers in literary archives. That it matters has been stressed as a general position in response to the rise of the digital, but we have been far less successful in making out the case for precisely how and why our engagements with those original materials matter. Here I have sought to show that approaching Langley’s literary archive with due attention to paper’s hitherto under-explored potential allows us to see Langley in ways that conventional approaches to writers’ literary papers – approaches structured by words and the textual – have not. My analysis enables us to think about Langley’s creative life as extending into the decades beyond her final published work and her creativity as exceeding mere textual production. This approach, with its focus on paper and materiality, challenges traditional forms of literary research conditioned by the practices of transcription and traditional forms of literary history structured around an individual author’s assumed desire for publication and their success or otherwise in achieving it. While Langley’s literary papers offer an especially rich site for theorising the significance of the material in the context of archival research, I nevertheless want to suggest the wider significance and application of these insights. Specifically, using the example of Langley’s own practices with paper, I have highlighted

how – as researchers – we too ‘think through paper’ and how paper’s various affordances, movements, histories, associations and assemblages condition our experience of being-in-the-archive. Thus I am arguing not only that we need to refocus our attention on what Kiersten Latham terms ‘the archive-as-experience’,⁶¹ but that we must understand that experience to be mediated by the materiality of paper.

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Endnotes

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2. See, for example, Anita Segerberg, “‘Strangled by a Bad Tradition’? The Work of Eve Langley’, *Journal of New Zealand Literature*, no. 10, 1992, pp. 55–73 and Joanne Winning, ‘Wilde Identifications: Queering the Sexual and the National in the Work of Eve Langley’, *Australian Literary Studies*, vol. 20, no. 4, 2002, pp. 301–15.
3. Eve and June Langley pictorial material, c.1860–c.1979. This material is catalogued under: PXA 1612, PXD 1268, PXE 1333, MIN 492 and ON 492. There are approx. 684 photographs.
4. Cath Ellis, ‘Review: The Pea-Pickers (1942) by Eve Langley’ [online], *API Review of Books*, Network Review of Books, Australian Public Intellectual Network, Perth, October 2001, para. 9.
5. The catalogue contains the following note: ‘Most photographs are apparently taken by Eve Langley, but were received from June Langley together with June’s papers in February 1981 (MLMSS 3898).’
6. On photographic itinerancy see: Gabriela Nouzeilles, ‘The Archival Paradox’, in *The Itinerant Languages of Photography*, Eduardo Cadava (ed.), Princeton University Art Museum, Princeton, NJ, 2013, p. 42.
7. The square aspect ratio was popular in the 1960s and 1970s. In square format images, the eye tends to travel around the image in a circular fashion rather than ‘follow the longer edge of the rectangle from side to side (or up and down in the portrait format)’. Andrew S Gibson, ‘Shooting in the Square Format’, *Ephotozine*, 7 December 2011, available at <<http://www.ephotozine.com/article/understanding-square-format-18005>>, accessed 14 May 2014.
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9. Gillian Rose, ‘Practising Photography: An Archive, A Study, Some Photographs and A Researcher’, *Journal of Historical Geography*, vol. 26, no. 4, 2000, p. 558.
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15. See Marlene Manoff, 'The Materiality of Digital Collections: Theoretical and Historical Perspectives', *Libraries and the Academy*, vol. 6, no. 3, 2006, pp. 311–25 and N Katherine Hayles, 'Print is Flat, Code is Deep: The Importance of Media-Specific Analysis', *Poetics Today*, vol. 25, no. 1, 2004, pp. 67–90.
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22. Arlette Farge, *The Allure of the Archives*, Thomas Scott-Railton (trans.), Yale University Press, New Haven, CT, 2013, p. 16.
23. Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht, *Production of Presence: What Meaning Cannot Convey*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA, 2004, p. 16.
24. Gumbrecht, p. xv and p. xiii.
25. Winning, p. 301.
26. See, for example, Thwaite. One reader's report covered a total of seven submitted manuscripts and included reference by the editor, Nan McDonald, to 'still more to come'. Reader's report written by N[an] McD[onald] [c.1965]. Item 573. Angus & Robertson Correspondence and Readers' Reports, MLMSS 3269/383, Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW, Sydney.
27. Reader's report for *White Topee* by N[an] McD[onald]. [c.1952]. Item 137. Angus & Robertson Correspondence and Readers' Reports, MLMSS 3269/383, Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW, Sydney.
28. See Angus & Robertson Ltd – Business Records, 1881–1973, MLMSS 3269, Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW, Sydney.
29. According to staff at the Mitchell Library, Meg Stewart, daughter of the writer Douglas Stewart, a long-time friend and supporter of Langley, delivered the majority of Langley's personal papers around May 1975. She had been planning a film on Langley and it was she who reportedly discovered Langley's body. The library staff recorded how the papers 'were in the bush hut where Eve Langley died the year before. Conditions in the hut were very bad. [Stewart] dried out the water-damaged papers. Some other papers were so badly decayed they had to be left behind.' In November 1975 a 'further package of papers [was] handed in to custody of the Library which was "found among discarded material"'. Meredith Lawn (Archivist, Original Materials Branch, State Library of NSW), email to the author, 11 September 2013. This account suggests that some of the more eccentric (and suggestive) items in the collection (the aforementioned shopping lists) are likely to have been included more by accident than design, haphazardly gathered together in the effort to protect everything that may have constituted Langley's 'paperwork' from the elements. Stewart completed her experimental documentary film on Langley, entitled *She's My Sister*, in 1975 (dir. Meg Stewart; cinematographer: David Sanderson; distributor: Sydney Filmmakers Co-operative). She later made an ABC radio documentary entitled 'The Shadows Are Different'. See Meg Stewart Further Papers, MLMSS 5147 Add-on 2077/Box 19 and MLOH 249/3–4. *She's My Sister* is available through the National Film and Sound Archive (Canberra).
30. June Langley writes to Beatrice Davis that in her work at the Auckland Library Langley was 'putting into practise an art learned in her first work at Walker and May's [the printers] in Melbourne'. June Langley to Beatrice Davis, 14 March 1952. Item 183–5. Angus & Robertson Correspondence and Readers' Reports, MLMSS 3269/383, Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW, Sydney.

31. Eve Langley interviewed by Hazel de Berg, 9 May 1964. Hazel de Berg Collection, National Library of Australia, available at <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.oh-vn201494>>, accessed 14 May 2014.
32. Nan McDonald to Eve Langley. Angus & Robertson Ltd, Publishers to Eve Langley, 29 July 1955. Eve Langley Papers 1920s–1974, MLMSS 4188 (6), Item 12, Correspondence 20 April 1954 – 8 November 1972, Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW, Sydney.
33. ‘The Letters of Steve and Blue from 1925 to 1931 Gippsland. Mt Buffalo. Wandin Yallock’. Angus & Robertson Papers, Box 146: Eve Langley typescript literary works, MLMSS 3269, Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW, Sydney.
34. Eve Langley to Father Colgan (?), undated [c.1941]. Eve Langley letters, 1937–1942. Uncatalogued MS. Presented by D Beirne, Archivist of Catholic Diocese of Hamilton, Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW, Sydney.
35. ‘The Letters of Steve and Blue’.
36. Eve Langley interviewed by Hazel de Berg, 9 May 1964. I am grateful to Dirk Baltzly for discussion on the question of Langley and synaesthesia.
37. Eve Langley to Nan McDonald, 6 February 1954. Item 273. Item 133. Angus & Robertson Correspondence and Readers’ Reports, MLMSS 3269/383, Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW, Sydney.
38. Eve Langley to Beatrice Davis, January 13, 1960. Item 461. Angus & Robertson Correspondence and Readers’ Reports, MLMSS 3269/383, Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW, Sydney.
39. June Langley to Beatrice Davis, 7 November 1950. Item 133. Angus & Robertson Correspondence and Readers’ Reports, MLMSS 3269/383, Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW, Sydney. This letter and its reply from Davis cover the matter of what is to become of the manuscripts and who should rightly act as custodian.
40. Eve Langley to Nan McDonald, 24 May 1954. Item 311. Angus & Robertson Correspondence and Readers’ Reports, MLMSS 3269/383, Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW, Sydney. Judging by the correspondence between Langley and Angus & Robertson, the publishers continued the practice of storing her manuscripts for safekeeping in what is variously referred to as their ‘strong room’ or ‘archive’ through until the 1970s.
41. Harry F Chaplin – album of papers concerning Eve Langley, 1938–c.1955, MLMSS 7154, Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW, Sydney. The correspondence indicates that Langley sent Chaplin a series of her manuscripts and typescripts across the period 1954–56.
42. These appear in the bound volume that comprises MLMSS 7154, Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW, Sydney.
43. Harry Chaplin to Eve Langley, 22 June 1954, Harry F Chaplin – album of papers concerning Eve Langley, 1938–c.1955, MLMSS 7154, Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW, Sydney. As Langley was working as a book repairer at Auckland Public Library across the period 1950–55, it is possible that she was either binding the manuscripts herself or having them bound in the library workshop.
44. See Dever.
45. June Langley to Beatrice Davis, 14 March 1952. Item 183–5. Angus & Robertson Correspondence and Readers’ Reports, MLMSS 3269/383, Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW, Sydney.
46. Eve Langley to Ruth Park, 11 October 1941. Ruth Park Papers 1938–1976, MLMSS 3128/Item 1/21, Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW, Sydney.
47. Eve Langley to Mary Dobbie, 10 October [1941]. Letters from Eve Langley to Mary Dobbie, MLMSS 7487, Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW, Sydney. Copies of originals held in MS Papers 8070–1, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.
48. Eve Langley interviewed by Hazel de Berg, 9 May 1964.
49. Rimmer et al., p. 1381.
50. Eve Langley to Ruth Park, 11 October 1941.
51. On this point, see Farge, p. 55 and pp. 62–3 and Kiersten F Latham, ‘Medium Rare: Exploring Archives and Their Conversion from Original to Digital. Part Two – The Holistic Knowledge Arsenal of Paper-Based Archives’, *LIBRES: Library and Information Science Research*, vol. 21, no. 1, 2011, p. 10, available at <<http://libres-ejournal.info/1039/>>, accessed 12 May 2014.

52. Helen Wood, 'The Fetish and the Document: An Exploration of Attitudes Towards Archives', in *New Directions in Archival Research*, Margaret Procter and CP Lewis (eds), Liverpool University Centre for Archive Studies, Liverpool, 2000, p. 38.
53. Farge, p. 55.
54. Latham, p. 1.
55. Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*, Duke University Press, Durham, NC and London, 2010, p. 5.
56. This episode led to Langley's fabled declaration, 'I AM OSCAR WILDE. AND YOU'RE KILLING ME.' Oscar Wilde [Eve Langley] to Nan McDonald, 12 April 1954. Item 269. Angus & Robertson Correspondence and Readers' Reports, MLMSS 3269/383, Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW, Sydney. Original emphasis.
57. Eve Langley to Nan McDonald, 24 May 1955. Item 311. Angus & Robertson Correspondence and Readers' Reports, MLMSS 3269/383, Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW, Sydney.
58. Claire Bishop, *Installation Art: A Critical History*, Tate Publishing, London, 2005, p. 6 and p. 10. I am grateful to Amanda Lawson for suggesting this way of thinking about the photos.
59. There are parallel series of images capturing Langley's desk and typewriter on the lawn.
60. Farge, pp. 62–3.
61. Latham, p. 1.