

Eckert begins by looking at the legal status of the confiscated records in the fourth chapter, 'Negotiation Marathon'. She then moves on to discuss the negotiations between the governments of England, the United States, France and West Germany. Eckert notes that by the 1950s the 'issue of the captured documents had turned into one that everyone said they wanted to see resolved but for which no solution was forthcoming' (p. 219).

The final chapter, 'Ad Fontes: The Captured Documents and the Writing of History', examines the publication of the multi-volume publication *Documents on German Foreign Policy*, which chronicled the foreign relations of the Third Reich. Produced by a select group of British, American and French historians, the absence of West German scholars was decried by the West German press and German scholars themselves. They objected not only to their exclusion from the publication of the diplomatic records but also to the vast project undertaken by the Americans to microfilm the captured documents.

In examining the history of the documents and archives, once collectively known as the captured German records, Eckert reminds us that this collection has its own 'biography'. As she puts it, 'they stand for an unprecedented situation in which the "documentary material covering all aspects of a nation's life during a whole era" had fallen into the hands of its wartime enemies' (p. 12). For historians using this collection, this post-war history adds an additional layer to their understanding of the records.

Finally, the book's genesis as a dissertation is obvious in the copious footnotes on almost every page. A lengthy bibliography includes archival sources from the United States, Great Britain and Germany, document and source editions, memoirs and diaries, an extensive list of secondary literature and an all-important index. *The Struggle for the Files* would be a welcome addition to the bookshelves of archivists and historians alike.

Endnote

1. Society of American Archivists, '2012 Fellows and Award Recipients', Waldo Gifford Leland Award: Astrid M. Eckert, *The Struggle for the Files*, available at <<http://www2.archivists.org/node/17719>>, accessed 13 December 2013.

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Marta Werner and Jen Bervin with a Preface by Susan Howe, *Emily Dickinson: The Gorgeous Nothings*, New York, A Christine Burgin/New Directions Book published in association with Granary Books, 2013. 272 pp. ISBN 978 0 811221 75 7. USD\$39.95.

The Gorgeous Nothings is a work of such beauty and curiosity that the phrase 'facsimile edition' falls well short of capturing the achievement and interest of this volume. It takes its title from an excerpt of Emily Dickinson's manuscript A 821, 'the gorgeous | nothings | which | compose | the | sunset | keep'. The 'nothings' at stake here are Dickinson's envelope writings, fragments of text written late in the poet's career on a series of

opened-out envelopes. This volume presents all the known examples of the envelope writings, which are held, with one exception, in the Archives and Special Collections of the Amherst College Library in Massachusetts. Initially published in 2012 as an exquisite limited edition artist's book, this follow-up trade edition of *The Gorgeous Nothings* still retains the sense that this is a precious project. Fifty-two envelope fragments are presented in a series of full-scale, colour images carefully cropped to show only these oddly shaped ephemeral slips of paper. This creates the impression of these images as floating above the white pages of the book, at the same time as offering the reader (or researcher) an almost forensic level of visual clarity. Individual photographs are accompanied on opposing pages by delicate outline drawings presenting a transcription of the text just as it sits on each paper fragment. The volume also contains a guide with a bibliographic directory for the envelope writings and a series of visual indexes. Commentary on the envelope writings and on the form of the edition is provided through a preface by celebrated poet and Dickinson scholar Susan Howe, artist Jen Bervin's introduction and a further detailed essay, 'Itineraries of Escape: Emily Dickinson's Envelope Poems' by Marta Werner.

The Gorgeous Nothings is a work of meticulous scholarship and, as Susan Howe observes in her preface, it is also 'a work of art' (p. 7). While Werner modestly suggests that it 'serves only as a first point of entry into Dickinson's envelope writings' (p. 243), it is difficult not to see this volume as a substantial and exciting intervention, not only for scholars of Dickinson's later work, but also for anyone interested in debates concerning the materiality of the manuscript page or who is wanting to think about how to work with – and produce editions of – unique collections of archived paper in the era of digitisation.

Paper has been central historically to Dickinson scholarship as the poet did not write with traditional publication in mind and her work circulated outside the conventional print economy. As such, the manuscript form of her work has long been recognised as an end in itself, a hand-crafted state demanding quite specific forms of material literacy from critics and editors. We can recall, for example, Ralph W Franklin's work of investigating the pin-holes, folds and markings upon individual manuscript sheets as he worked to re-establish the original order of the *fascicles*, the multitude of hand-sewn packets that comprise the largest part of Dickinson's *oeuvre*. These envelope writings date from a later period than the *fascicles* when, as Werner notes, 'Dickinson no longer thinks of keeping what she acquires through the labor of writing' (p. 207) and is writing upon anything that chance provides, including chocolate wrappers, book margins and – we now learn – opened-out envelopes. In what may have been an instance of New England thrift, Dickinson preserved and carefully cut open envelopes received. What is significant, however, is the manner in which she manipulated the form of the page itself. As Howe notes, 'these envelopes have been opened well beyond the point needed to merely extract a letter; they have been torn, cut, and opened out completely flat, rendered into new shapes' (p. 9). With their oddly formed 'flaps' and 'wings', these small and sometimes awkwardly cut pages transform the mundane domestic object that is machine-made stationery into a series of 'private spaces' (p. 9) for literary and visual experimentation. We find upon them lyric fragments, rough-copy of poems and – more often than not – just the openings or endings of poems. They form part of Dickinson's ongoing experiments concerning the relationship between matter and meaning and, as such, these ephemeral slips cannot be dismissed as simple or inconsequential textual strays.

As objects and as manuscript forms, the envelope writings defy ready classification within conventional bibliographic codes. Indeed, this body of work ultimately begs the question of what an envelope is or can do. No longer the container for messages, these envelopes have become message in themselves and, Werner observes, ‘the inaudible *whirring* of the envelope is part of the message they are sending’ (p. 217). At the same time, these envelopes have never circulated as envelopes are traditionally destined to. Werner hopes that *The Gorgeous Nothings* will now perform the work of ‘launching them into circulation again and again’ (p. 219).

This is a striking book and one that should be enjoyed not only by those with an enduring interest in Emily Dickinson’s poetry and her manuscript legacy, but also by those with interests in literary ephemera, and in materiality and textual scholarship. *The Gorgeous Nothings* is also just plain gorgeous and – thanks to its large format and high production values – it will look mighty impressive on your coffee table.

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Patricia Franks, *Records and Information Management*, Chicago, American Library Association with Neal-Schuman, 2013. xii + 360 pp. ISBN 978 1 555709 10 5. US\$80.00.

I did wonder, when I first started reading this book, could it be all that it claimed to be? Could it equally emphasise the theory of recordkeeping and information management with the reality of business operations? Could the one book really benefit a newcomer to the recordkeeping and information management profession just as well as an old hand? And finally, could a book written by authors in the US, UK and the Netherlands deliver content sufficiently relevant to Australia?

Well, the answers to most of those questions, surprisingly, for me is generally yes. As a relative newcomer to the world of recordkeeping and information management starting around two years ago (my background is policy development), I found myself wishing I had read this book earlier. I was fascinated to learn about the origins of records and information management, including the history of parchment, paper and paper presses, those recordings of conversations by American presidents and the birth of email at MIT in 1965, to mention a few. And I could have been prepared for, or in fact avoided, the debate I had with other recordkeeping professionals about proposing the development of a lifecycle diagram to help employees at public authorities understand what happens to records over time. Instead, I learnt about the records continuum, developed by Australian Frank Upward, the hard way.

The book, in some parts, tends to focus on the United States. For instance, there are sections where laws and regulations are discussed (for instance, in chapters two and nine), making these parts less relevant for Australians. Nevertheless, the book refers to international standards and to de facto international standards such as the US Department of Defense’s *DoD 5015.02-STD: Electronic Records Management Software Application Design Criteria Standard*. The book intersperses references to Australia, mentioning the National Archives of Australia definition of a record and benefits of