

to encompass new technologies. It will need to take into account the fundamental changes which are happening in the nature of research – the so-called *Fourth Paradigm* – as well as the ways in which digital ubiquity is affecting the very concepts of social memory and historical evidence. The digital age is challenging the whole nature and purpose of libraries and museums; archives face the same challenges. The essays in this volume are a valuable overview of current approaches and issues relevant to personal digital collections, but they also contain some pointers alerting us to even more profound changes.

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**Mark McKenna**, *An Eye for Eternity: The Life of Manning Clark*, Melbourne University Press/Miegunyah Press, 2011. 816 pp. ISBN 978 052285 617 0. AU\$54.95.

Julian Barnes's recent novel, *The Sense of Ending*, quotes from a (fictional) French historian, Patrick Lagrange, that 'History is that certainty produced at the point where the imperfections of memory meet the inadequacies of documentation' (p. 17). This blurry, uncertain land mapped by the archive (the documentation of what happened), the history (the story of what happened) and the memory (the recollection of what happened) is the territory occupying Mark McKenna's wonderful biography of Manning Clark. The archive, the history and the memory are all seduced with the lure of nailing one of the great big eternal questions – what the hell happened? For the biography, the question to be looked in the eye is who was this person? And, from here, the almost inevitable corollary of who really was this person? (Where does this insistence come from? Is it left over from religion? Plato?) Who was Manning Clark really?

And where is he to be found? Though Clark left a well-tended personal archive of letters, press clippings, diaries, drafts, speeches and book annotations, McKenna is aware that the Clark of his archive is not the Clark of life. The task McKenna sets for himself, then, is how to balance the mass of the archive against the light of the living. For the lightness, he utilises the recollections of those who remembered – his voice, his movements and his teaching style. And this balances off the oppressive archive, the letters, the diaries, that is, for the most part, one of angst.

From this, emerges a Clark of many angles. The Clark of the establishment he so mocked – son of a minister, educated Melbourne Grammar, Melbourne and Oxford Universities, excellent cricketer and Carlton supporter. The unfaithful and needy husband and father; the drinker falling down in gutters in 1950s Canberra; the incredibly sensitive historian raging at critics; the public intellectual and Labor Party historian of choice; the inspiring teacher; and, not least, the author of the six-volume *History of Australia*. So what, then, is the real Clark? Of course, he is all of these people. Who is the *real* Clark? Real in the sense of what was the dominant theme, motivation or trait of his life? Well, from this biography, the real Clark is

the seeker. The seeker of the answers to the great questions of life – what are we here for? What is it all about? Clark is the emblematic man needing to believe in an age that lost its belief. His life is this struggle.

As with his life, so, too, with his history. Clark approaches history not as an academic historian seeking the neat and tidy run-of-the-mill historical explanations (economic, demographic and geographic, and so on) of what happened; he is seeking answers to the question of what Australia is for. What has Australia meant? What is Australia? And to get the answers, he goes beyond the documents and into – to use a suitably Clarkian expression – the heart of man. And what archive has the heart of man? Art. So Clark's inspirations were artists – Dostoevsky, Lawrence, White, Nolan – more than historians. Therefore, Clark's history is perhaps best seen less as an historical endeavour and more as an artistic work. It is for this reason that I think it will be read, and, where it is read, so, too, should this biography.

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**Cheryl Avery and Mona Holmlund (eds)**, *Better off Forgetting? Essays on Archives, Public Policy and Collective Memory*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 2010. xvii + 242 pp. ISBN 978 1 4426 4167 9 (hardback) CAN\$55.00; ISBN 9781442610804 (paperback) CAN\$24.95.

Both the synopsis on the inside front cover and the blurb from Ken Rasmussen of the University of Regina on the back cover of *Better off Forgetting? Essays on Archives, Public Policy and Collective Memory* gave me pause before I read this collection of essays. Both incorporated statements along the lines of 'no longer the preserve of historians and academics, archives are increasingly tools for accountability'. Surely our Canadian colleagues have not only recently been struck by this aspect of recordkeeping? Records are, indeed, first and foremost about evidence and accountability; it is what guides all aspects of our work. It was a concerning start to my exploration of this look into archives and their uses in Canadian society and beyond.

The essays are organised into five sections: 'The history of funding', 'Access and privacy', 'The digital age', 'Accountability and the public sphere' and 'Resources for the present'. The authors are drawn from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities, including Australia's own Tom Adami, who has been working in Africa with the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and, more recently, the United National Mission in Sudan. Some of the heavyweights of the Canadian archival profession are present, in the form of Terry Cook, Terry Eastwood and Tom Nesmith, and there are a sprinkling of non-archivists, including a former *Wall Street Journal* foreign correspondent (Robert Steiner), an assistant professor of art history (Mona Holmlund) and a lawyer teaching at the University of Saskatchewan's College of Law (Doug Surtees).