

Literature Review

SOMEWHERE BEYOND CUSTODY

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This article aims to place a bookmark in the archival testament. It explores the shifts that are occurring in archival ways of thinking and practising as we move beyond custody. The context is the emergence of new paradigms as the networked society displaces the information age. The evidence is drawn from recent Australian literature which forms part of the evolving international discourse on electronic records management and from records management and archival action at the coalface, insofar as that is reflected in the literature.

The visits of David Bearman and Terry Cook to Australia in 1993 have brought Australian archivists face-to-face with the phenomenon which Cook has described as the post-custodial paradigm shift. In this article we selectively review some recent Australian contributions to the evolving discourse on electronic records management, and to the literature of records management and archival action at the coalface, with reference to the observable shifts in thought and emphasis which are occurring internationally.

It can be successfully argued, as Gerald Ham has done, that archivists began to move into the post-custodial era in the 1980s in response to the need to incorporate information management perspectives on new technologies into their thought.¹ This in itself does not constitute a paradigm shift, as it is possible to incorporate these new perspectives without any fundamental re-casting of established frameworks of thought. However, there is no doubt that in recent years a real shift has been occurring within which new or re-discovered recordkeeping theories are emerging as a fresh discourse, and equally that there are members of the recordkeeping profession(s) now looking to see how archival perspectives can inform the conceptual models of other information professionals. Indeed, this issue of *Archives and Manuscripts* is part of that process.²

The Post-custodial Discourse

The new discourse has a new language, and is grounded in a new provenance theory. Structure no longer means only organisational structure; it can now mean the structures in which transactions are captured as records, including documentary forms and recordkeeping systems. Context no longer means only record creators; it can now mean the agents of transactions operating in the context of their functions and activities. Functions and activities are no longer defined simply in terms of organisational charts; jurisdictions, competencies and operational realities must be considered. The goal is accountability, as it should always have been, but at the front end this can take on a fierce political dimension, while at the historical end it relaxes into an attempt to get the story as straight as the archival documents can tell it. Part of the meaning of the word 'description' is being transferred to the word 'documentation', and in that domain there are new terms like metadata and locator systems. 'Continuing value' is supplanting 'permanent value' in archival thought, and old principles for appraisal such as legal, administrative, fiscal and historical values are dismissed as mere taxonomy, disguising the need in organisations for proper analysis of activities, and in archival authorities for real thought about why they exist. Archivists are starting to talk about the recordkeeping profession(s) even if they are unsure about how many recordkeeping specialisations there are.

And of course custody is being questioned as the major focus for archival activity — except perhaps in Australia where the post-custodialists think of custody in terms of the defence of the record, not possession.³ Indeed Australian archivists since Maclean have taken Jenkinson's vision of a role for archivists based on the moral and physical defence of the Archives and transferred it out beyond the walls of the archival institution, as in this recent re-presentation of the archival role:

Some shifts in archival thinking are required. We should use elimination processes in our disposal work and appraise for continuing value rather than *permanent value* ... We should look to our roots as assessors and providers of evidence not mere information. We must get involved with the *moral defence* of *virtual* records and concentrate less on embracing physical custody ...

Above all, however, the primary challenge is to adapt information management planning to include the essence of archival theory. The archivist must adapt the traditional role of keeper, develop beyond the outside perceptions of undertaker, and define as core mission a role as auditor on the IRM team...⁴

It is not all deconstruction, particularly for Australians. Twin pillars, appraisal and documentation, have emerged on which the practical architecture of the new discourse can be reconstructed and many parts and practices can be reconnected to the new. As Barbara Reed points out there is much in the Australian experience which makes solid connections with the new ways of thinking, an observation supported by other contributors, and by the best practices of our major institution, Australian Archives, which has pursued with varying determination holistic approaches to recordkeeping, with links through to accountability, ever since Maclean's days as Commonwealth archivist.⁵ Reed also refers to the significant experience of the in-house records manager/archivist and to the existence in Australia of a group of records managers and archivists who have a continuum-based notion of their inter-relationship.⁶

A significant part in the reconstruction, indeed the first step, has been the re-definition of archival documents. Elsewhere we have written about unitary and pluralist views of information. The former defines information as recorded data, facts, opinions *or* knowledge (have its proponents never reflected on T.S. Eliot?) and sees information work as essentially concerned with 'facilitating the transfer of information from the point of origin to those who need it'.⁷ Within a pluralist construct records are defined as particular types of recorded information which come into being in particular contexts — those of business transactions — and belong to a particular class of documents, their individual forms being determined, within the limitations of any given technology, by the nature of the transactions

that form their immediate context of creation. With reference to this construct, it is possible to define a role for records managers and archivists within the broader world of information and communications management. The role has its own particularity, defined by the attributes of the type of recorded information for which it is responsible.

Some of the Australian contributions to the literature of electronic records management at a theoretical level are part of the broader post-custodial discourse, and they reflect significant shifts in ways of thinking as well as important continuities with aspects of traditional theory. Australians have contributed to a new emphasis on transactionality and to a refocusing on the nature of records and recordkeeping in efforts to redefine the role of records managers and archivists. They have also strongly linked recordkeeping and the archival mission to accountability, for example in the context of the archival legislation reform movements of the early 1990s which followed revelations of systemic corruption in the governments of both Queensland and Western Australia in the 1980s. In the Queensland context for example, Glenda Acland wrote:

The government function of the strategic management of public records is best served by an authority responsible for the continuum of records. In the written submission to the [Queensland Electoral and Administrative Review] Commission which I co-authored with Philip Taylor, a refocusing of the mission of the State's archival authority ... was recommended. We conceived the new body ... as a pro-active participant in the machinery of government, focusing on standard setting, resource management and archival audit strategies in addition to the current facility activities of preservation, storage, and access and research provision. A change is needed here and the equilibrium adjusted to manage the records rather than the *relics*. The integrity of records is just as important as the soundness of finances in an accountable democratic government.⁸

In the 1980s and into the 1990s, there have been many difficulties for Australian records managers and archivists operating at the coalface because they have often found themselves in an information management framework dominated by a unitary concept of information.⁹ A critical issue has been how to retain a sense of identity and to bring into play recordkeeping perspectives in an environment essentially antithetical to them. Another problem, conversely, has been how to import into a recordkeeping framework understandings drawn from the information transfer model to assist in facilitating the use of records.

The post-custodial discourse in so far as it provides a 'language of purpose' for recordkeeping professionals and revitalises fundamental principles of archival science can assist those still attempting to operate within old information management frameworks.¹⁰ It may also be that the challenges of the networked society provide an opportunity

for the recordkeeping profession(s) in Australia to stop hitching a ride on a bandwagon they had no say in designing. More excitingly, therefore, the new 'language of purpose' may contribute to the emergence of a new paradigm for information management, and help underpin the specification of recordkeeping requirements for incorporation in the design of that paradigm's vehicles.

Moreover, the post-custodial discourse, in recognising that by giving effect to the new models archivists will need to work in an interdisciplinary manner, opens up new possibilities for co-operative action. One of the areas where a pluralist view of documentation provides considerable scope for such action is emerging in Australia in relation to librarians, and their brand of information science. Bearman and the University of Pittsburgh team are wrapping up the argument that an information system is not necessarily a recordkeeping system.¹¹ If their understandings can be successfully imported into a new information management paradigm, recordkeeping professionals will be able to more comfortably acknowledge that many of their recordkeeping systems need more attention to the basics relating to the use and channelling of information.

Another reason for greater comfort in future relationships with librarians is that the unitary notion of information may be undermined by newly developed process management models. As organisations start to look further at how to re-engineer their work processes, opportunities may arise to have them focus on how to draw upon the full diversity of information and to ensure that they create records as deemed to be appropriate to their goals, functions and activities. This involves a turning away from simplistic and indiscriminating concepts of information.¹²

Australian post-custodialists have been less successful in linking archival organisational and cultural roles. In cultural history and heritage models, the relevance of the new post-custodial approaches is certain enough and can be expressed with reference to the role of archival documents as sources of knowledge about past actions, and transmitters of culture across space and through time. In this context archivists' best efforts are directed at seeing that the story is as well told and as accessible as possible. However in their contribution to the new discourse, Australian archivists have not made the necessary links into cultural history, nor have they picked up on continuities in this context with the earlier writings of Bob Sharman, Peter Eldershaw, Peter Crush and Michael Saclier, to name some that spring readily to mind. There is no Hugh Taylor-type position being taken in our present contribution to the discourse. The Canadian example may point to the reason for the deficiency. Is it because one of the richest conceptual frameworks for thought in the area, a total approach to the historical record, has been denied to the Australian profession by the historical

separation between archives and manuscripts typified by the very name of the journal in which this article is appearing?¹³

The International Literature

Turning now to an examination of a few specific international expressions of the post-custodial paradigm shift, the best starting point is probably the *Management of Electronic Records: Issues and Guidelines*, published in 1990.¹⁴ This report from the UN Advisory Committee for the Co-ordination of Information Systems (ACCIS) argues that little that had been previously written had grappled with the 'really fundamental challenges ... posed by the emerging electronic information society', and it lives up to its promise to address fundamentals.

The report is the first one to view the information society from a coherent recordkeeping perspective. Organisational accountability is established as a clear mission (the capture, maintenance and preservation of the records that tell the story). A post-modern directive is given to archivists and records managers to promote an electronic records culture in their organisations since the emphasis on electronic information cannot be denied, and at least by participating in the introduction of new technologies they can influence the way the technologies are used. The programs to be pursued are developed around the twin pillars of appraisal and documentation.

The report contains much that is readily identified with one of its main authors, David Bearman. There is the familiar emphasis on records systems and the capture of records, on the need for metadata to give coherence to the various elements of the program, the importance of defining the record itself as a starting point for any program, the need for documentation of organisations, and the development of appropriate work unit levels of control, the importance of the collaboration of archivists, records managers and information technologists, and the multiple choice strategy of systems design, systems implementation, standards and policy options.

More generally Bearman's writings exist in the discourse as an unavoidable presence of obvious significance. They may be feared as being iconoclastic, visionary, and unimplementable, but to ignore them is impossible. His presence shows through in another landmark in the literature, Charles Dollar's report on the conference at Macerata in 1991.¹⁵ This report is more academic than the ACCIS report and extends the exploration of networking as a fundamental challenge to records managers and archivists. The report, because it reflects international discourse, has a special importance. It expresses the shared concern of archivists about the changing nature of documentation in electronic systems, spreads the move to find more

rigorous definitions of the record, refers to the non-custodial models of storage in which the archival institution is a place of last resort, and emphasises metadata as an archival tool.

Within the Macerata report the post-custodial paradigm shift is juxtaposed with the early information system based responses of the 1980s. Thus the changing methods of work are discussed in terms of information flows rather than the impact of changing technologies on processes and the need to capture records within work flows. It retains an emphasis on information transfer standards without any strong pointers to the need for recordkeeping standards. It also manages to bring forward from the custodial era the records life cycle concept. In respect to preservation an emphasis on GOSIP as a data transfer mechanism seems to be a major strut. In summary Charles Dollar has brought together the many views of the participants within the one cover, and provided the profession with a yardstick with which we will be able to measure subsequent trends in archival thought.

In November 1994, Australian Archives will be sponsoring visits to Australia by people with program responsibilities and international reputations in the electronic records management area, including Margaret Hedstrom from the State Archives and Records Administration in New York and John McDonald of the National Archives of Canada. For 'paradigm shift watchers', there is an interesting time ahead. Whereas Macerata provides us with a cross-section of views at a particular point in time, Hedstrom and McDonald will be able to talk of trends at the coalface through time.¹⁶

New York State, in 1988, produced another of the landmarks in our literature.¹⁷ It dealt with the preservation of electronic records and recordkeeping, helping to set the language for those that have followed. It did not, in its final report, really get around to defining records with rigour and it occasionally lapsed into the argot of the 'machine-readable' generation. It set out a very strong custodial program, the best of the decade within the literature, and addressed the issues of the transfer of information through time. By 1992, in its up-date report the State Archives and Records Administration of New York was beginning to plan for a 'decentralization of archives', and it noted its need to re-define records. As a recent article by Wallace on metadata specifications demonstrates, New York remains a pacesetter at the coalface, within a shifting view of the nature of their task.¹⁸

John McDonald, at the National Archives of Canada, is also at the coalface in an area of rapid change. He has been a leading figure in the development of office automation approaches in his country.¹⁹ He has clear views on the need to link information and communications technology with business planning and organisational goals. He has also been aware of, and a participant in, the great North American hunt for 'recordness' as his review in this issue indicates.

The Australian Coalface Literature

There is a recognised need, reflected particularly in the coalface literature, to have more rigorous understandings of the general principles and practices of data management, data administration, and information systems management (as defined within computer science), and of document management (as defined within library and information science). At the theoretical level the post-custodial discourse maintains that although these principles and practices may be applied to transactional records in relation to the attributes they share with other recorded information which takes a documentary form, it is essential for recordkeeping professionals to be aware that these areas do not constitute their area of expertise. A recordkeeping dimension is required when managing the attributes which distinguish records from other types of documents — their contexts of creation and their transactionality. Indeed there is concern in the literature with the danger of mistaking general principles and practices of data management, information management or document management for records management principles and practices. Conversely, it is seen as essential to explore how to apply them to manage records as authoritative resources — as evidence of social and organisational activity which supports the regulation of social and organisational relationships through time and over space — *and* as allocative resources, i.e. in order for recordkeeping systems to function well as recordkeeping systems *and* as information systems. Within the post-custodial discourse the concern of the recordkeeping profession(s) is clearly seen as being with the application of such principles and practices, as well as specialised knowledge of provenance theory and recordkeeping systems to:

- capture complete, accurate, reliable and usable documentation of social and organisational activity;
- manage it as both an authoritative resource, one which accounts for social and organisational activity, and an allocative resource or information by-product, by preserving it in its context of creation as long as it has continuing value to its organisation and/or its society, whether as evidence or as recorded information; and
- facilitate its use.

Are these and the other understandings being explored in the theoretical literature informing action at the Australian coalface?

There is some evidence in the literature that Australians are grappling with the elements that are coming together to form post-custodial approaches to recordkeeping as we move into the networked society. In general the coalface literature in Australia has been as informed by the post-custodial discourse as most of its international counterparts, but it has introduced different perspectives from outside that model. In particular, it has been locked into Australian ways of

thinking about the information age. It provides strong evidence of a determination to come to terms with the role of data management and administration, information systems management, and document management, but it does not always bring a strong recordkeeping perspective to bear.

Managing Electronic Records, the papers of a workshop held in October 1992 on 'Managing Electronic Records of Archival Value', largely reflects the efforts made by Australian Archives to come to terms with data management principles and their application to the management of electronic records of archival value, and to explore post-custodial approaches.²⁰ However the exploration of data management principles was not pushed further in the workshop context — they remain largely undigested and there is little attempt in the papers to translate them into a recordkeeping framework. Internationally Australian Archives has pioneered non-custodial strategies, and this is reflected in the workshop papers. There is also evidence of the work being done to explore networked access to electronic records of archival value kept alive in agency systems, although in the literature there is as yet no reference to this approach being extended to the development of an electronic records locator system which would apply regardless of the age of the records — perhaps because of an attachment to archival regulations by which records do not have to be available to the public for thirty years. Of course papers such as these cannot do justice to the full quality and diversity of Australian Archives' internal discourse, nor reflect the contribution of archival ambassadors like Steve Stuckey to the international discourse at forums such as the Electronic Records Committee of the International Council on Archives and to the local discourse at seminars and conferences. Elsewhere in this issue, Dagmar Parer and Keith Parrott provide insights into more recent developments in Australian Archives' strategies.

As noted above, the post-custodial discourse, while recognising the relevance of data management, document management and information systems management principles and practice to records management and archival concerns, has also noted the danger of failing to grapple with their application to the management of transactional *records* as opposed to data or documents.

The Commonwealth Government's Information Exchange Steering Committee (IESC) report, *Management of Electronic Documents in the Australian Public Service* (1993), is of some concern in this regard.²¹ Read as a basic text on electronic document management, there might be no cause for alarm. David Roberts has said elsewhere in this issue that it does not purport to be more than this. The treatment of the document life cycle brings up-front the existence of documentary forms within electronic information systems and is therefore

potentially useful. However it would be enhanced by reference to archival explorations of documentary forms, systems life cycle approaches and document discrimination processes. Many of the documents to which the guidelines will be applied in fact belong — or should be captured and managed in ways which qualify them to belong — to that class of archival documents known as Commonwealth records. The references to the sentencing of records and the registration of documents are therefore essential inclusions in defence of recordkeeping, but further work needs to be done on the metadata issues associated with capturing context of creation (structural and functional) and on the definition of when a record comes into being. The construct of work domain offered appears to equate where a document is stored with its status as a record of continuing value. Hopefully further thought will be given in the IESC forum to the processes of capturing records at the boundaries between work domains as defined with reference to the nature of the particular transactions occurring, not the space in which captured records are stored.

A report from the coalface that contributes in interesting ways to the emerging paradigm, which has a coherent strategy behind it linked to concrete proposals for action, and attempts to come to terms with the international literature, is the Library and Information Service of Western Australia (LISWA) publication, *Electronic Records: An Investigation into Retention, Storage and Transfer Options*.²² Although much of it consists of basic information about information systems and media,²³ the great strength of the LISWA report is that it has given us a series of recommendations which are the starting point for the post-custodial archives of the future, and is the first such listing we have seen in such admirable brevity.²⁴

The articles in this issue by David Roberts (on the work being done at the Records Management Office of NSW) and by Anne Picot and Barbara Reed (on approaches being taken by a number of in-house archivists/records managers) are noteworthy. For the first time in the Australian literature we have coalface activities discussed which explore the use of data management, data administration, document management and information systems management techniques in the context of broader electronic records management strategies which are being developed within the recordkeeping dimension of information management. They point the way to how the recordkeeping dimension, underpinned by the new provenance theory, might be worked into the networked society, and to how recordkeeping can be imbued with appropriate understandings drawn from computing science, information science and office systems management. Unlike some of the earlier literature from the coalface, these reports have a sense of archival mission and a coherence that comes from a conscious

engagement with the post-custodial discourse. As noted above, it is less clear how the issue of connecting current and historical recordkeeping, or organisational and cultural roles, will be addressed within this framework.

Terry Cook's contribution is particularly important in this regard as his writings provide models which hold together the organisational and cultural roles of recordkeepers. As Bearman has been drawn more and more into current recordkeeping issues and has come to be seen as the prophet of the micro-archivist/records manager, Cook has continued to explore the role of the macro-archivist. We have to consider Cook's frequent exhortations about the need for archivists in one sense to break the nexus with records management, creating one class of archivists which does not get bogged down with the micro-archival issues of records management. It is in Cook's approach, combined with an emphasis on accountability, that a continuing role can be forged for 'central' authorities as we move further beyond custody.²⁵

Conclusion

There have been archivists through the 1980s and into the nineties who have not let go of the recordkeeping view of their profession, and this is now starting to coalesce into the recordkeeping contribution to the emerging paradigm which we have mentioned often enough, but not yet defined. It is, of course, still in the process of defining itself, but some of its basic features can be outlined:

- a re-definition of records and recordkeeping as a starting point;
- appraisal and documentation programs as the twin pillars for archival programs focused on documenting functions and activities rather than the physical record;
- the power of provenance (structural and functional) as a fundamental principle for recordkeeping;
- the characteristics of documentary form linked to transactionality;
- an emphasis on recordkeeping systems and the capture of records as evidence of transactions;
- functional requirements for recordkeeping systems;
- metadata as a cohering force;
- new approaches to use and users — the power of the principle of provenance harnessed to use, not just to creation, maintenance and control;
- the archival institution as the hub of or node in a network, and maintainer of crucial locator systems;
- an emphasis on outcomes rather than outputs, linked to concerns with social and organisational accountability and the transmission of culture through time and space; and
- explorations of how recordkeeping can be imbued with appropriate understandings drawn from computing science, library and information science and office automation/systems management.

For Jenkinson, an archivist was a defender of the transactional record. Somewhere beyond custody recordkeeping professionals are reinventing their mission to establish and preserve for continuing use the record of social and organisational activity.

ENDNOTES

1. F. Gerald Ham, 'Archival Strategies for the Post-Custodial Era', *The American Archivist*, vol. 44, no. 3, Summer 1981, pp.207–216.
2. We gratefully acknowledge the access we were given by our special guest editor, Glenda Acland, to other articles in this issue when they were still in preparation.
3. This notion of custody is more akin to that of guardianship. For example, the Victorian *Public Records Act*, like its British counterpart, includes provision for the establishment of 'places of deposit' outside its walls for public records, but such records are still considered to be in the custody of the Keeper. This custody is exercised via the setting of standards and monitoring of their implementation in the place of deposit (usually, but not necessarily, another government agency) and the incorporation of information about the records held there into the archival authority's information system.
4. Glenda Acland, 'Archivist — Keeper, Undertaker or Auditor', *Archives and Manuscripts*, vol. 19, no. 1, May 1991, p. 14–15. In some ways, Australians are present in the post-custodial discourse as an interesting counterpoint, best illustrated by attitudes to Jenkinson. North Americans since Schellenberg (who gave a bad press in America to the man he labelled an 'old fossil', and was guilty of misinterpreting parts of his *Manual*) have reacted against Jenkinson's views on the 'objective' archivist and the importance of continuous custody. Today Bearman and Cook reject such thinking in justifying a more interventionist archival role operating within an expanded dimension of time-space. In Australia, on the other hand, Jenkinson's emphasis on the moral and physical defence of the Archives has been the 'light on the hill' for significant numbers of archivists, including post-custodialists, and Jenkinson together with Bearman and Cook are readily identified as 'defenders of the record'. Jenkinson defined the class of documents he called Archives both broadly — to encompass all transactional records, not just those 'selected as worthy for permanent preservation' — and narrowly to exclude those that had lost their quality of 'recordness'. In his day loss of continuous custody by records creators was perceived as one of the greatest threats to the physical record. As a defender of the (paper) record, Jenkinson stressed the importance of continuous custody to preserve physical integrity and attempted to defend its moral integrity through its physical preservation as part of the *fonds* (his Record Group), while today's defenders of the record, faced with the challenges and opportunities of the electronic age, stress intellectual means of preserving records of continuing value in their contexts of creation using metadata systems. Glenda, a self-confessed Jenkinsonian, states in the article cited that she believes the position she takes in it to be a 'logical progression of Jenkinson's views' (p. 13).
5. Maclean promoted an integrated approach to records and archives management. See for example: Ian Maclean, 'Australian Experience in Records and Archives Management', *The American Archivist*, vol. 2, no. 4, October 1959. It was also a feature of the Public Record Office Victoria under Hurley, and is present in the archival legislative reform movements of recent years in Queensland, WA and NSW.
6. See Barbara Reed's review article on Archives and Museum Informatics Technical Report No. 18, *Electronic Records Management Program Strategies*, edited by Margaret Hedstrom, in this issue.

7. Our earlier views on unitary and pluralist constructs of information are found in: Frank Upward, 'Archivist, Pluralism, and Information Policy', *New Zealand Archivist*, vol. III, no. 3, Spring/September 1992; and in Sue McKemmish, 'Core Knowledge and Skills for Information Professionals — Converging or Diverging: The Implications of Diverse World Views', *Proceedings of the 9th National Convention, Records Management Association of Australia, 8–11 September 1992*, RMAA, Sydney, 1992. Terry Cook quoted T.S. Eliot (Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge? Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?) when urging archivists to 'step back from being superficial McDonald's of Information or flashy Disney-Worlds of Heritage Entertainment' in 'Viewing the World Upside Down: Reflections on the Theoretical Underpinnings of Archival Public Programming', *Archivaria*, no. 31, Winter 1990–1991, p. 131.
8. Glenda Acland, 'Managing The Record Rather Than The Relic', *Archives and Manuscripts*, vol. 20, no. 1, May 1992, p. 58. This is the published version of an address originally presented at a public seminar organised by the Queensland Electoral and Administrative Review Commission in December 1991. Other speakers who brought a shared vision to the proceedings were Chris Hurley and John Cross, State Archivist of NSW. The accountability-recordkeeping link was further explored in the research papers published in Sue McKemmish and Frank Upward (editors), *Archival Documents: Providing Accountability Through Recordkeeping*, Ancora Press, Melbourne, 1993.
9. See for example, the Statement by the Board of Education of the Australian Library and Information Association on 'Library and Information Service Work' as published in *Incite*, no. 9, 1991. The unitary view was also evident in the findings of the House of Representatives Standing Committee for Long Term Strategies' Inquiry into Australia as an Information Society, as reported in *Australia as an Information Society: Grasping New Paradigms*, 1991. It has not of course been embraced by all librarians. For some, including our much loved and respected colleague, Mary Ronnie, the unitary approach was librarianship reduced to 'doling out a pound of sugar', showing little respect for the richness of the documentary forms librarians deal with.
10. Our first attempt at exploring with any rigour the transactional nature of archival documents was made in a submission to a parliamentary inquiry dominated by this paradigm — see endnote 9 and Sue McKemmish and Frank Upward, 'The Archival Document: A Submission to the Inquiry into Australia as an Information Society', *Archives and Manuscripts*, vol. 19, no.1, May 1991, pp. 17–31.
11. For a discussion of the work being undertaken at the University of Pittsburgh in relation to the functional requirements for electronic recordkeeping systems, see David Bearman, 'Record-Keeping Systems', in *Archivaria*, no. 36, Autumn 1993, pp. 16–36.
12. For those librarians, archivists, and records managers, however, who think that they can improve their status by becoming process engineers, we can only echo the statement made by Tony Poynton at the 10th National Convention of the Records Management Association (RMAA) in Hobart in September 1993 when confronted with such a proposition during discussion of his paper 'What Next?'. Poynton indicated that the questioner had missed the point — within process engineering the job of the records manager is *still* to capture the record!
13. A problem for archivists generally in linking understandings of the transactional record and the role of recordkeeping in society into the cultural history area is that of the terminology they use to label the transactional record. Use of the unqualified term record presents a difficulty within historical discourse in which the 'record' is legitimately viewed as the 'trace' — the imprint stored upon media, as per legal definitions. Within this model, one can argue that the 'record' is the remembrance, speak of oral records where the medium is the mind, and of the building or artefact as other forms of 'record'. While Australian historians are busy opening up a rich and plural definition of the 'record', archivists have been using the term to mean the

archival document, which is legitimately rigorously defined as the transactional record. We have tried to avoid confusion by sticking to the term archival documents (and others have used business records or transactional records) in acknowledgement that what archivists have termed records are only one of the many forms of 'record' in the broader sense, and that just as documents are plural in their nature, so too is the 'record'.

14. United Nations Advisory Committee for the Co-ordination of Information Systems, *Management of Electronic Records: Issues and Guidelines*, United Nations, New York, 1990.
15. Charles Dollar, *The Impact of Information Technologies on Archival Theory and Practice*, Macerata, 1992.
16. Margaret Hedstrom and John McDonald will be speaking at Australian Archives' 'Playing For Keeps' Conference, and will be involved in workshops in Melbourne and Sydney jointly sponsored by Monash University and the University of New South Wales.
17. The University of New York, The State Education Department, and State Archives and Records Administration, *A Strategic Plan for Managing and Preserving Electronic Records in New York State Government: Final Report of the Special Media Records Project*, Albany NY, 1988.
18. David A. Wallace, 'Metadata and the Archival Management of Electronic Records: A Review', *Archivaria*, no. 36, Autumn 1993, pp. 87-110.
19. See for example, John McDonald, 'Information Disciplines: An Armada or Ships Passing in the Night', *Information Systems: The Records Management Perspective, International Conference organised by the Records Management Society*, London, September 1991.
20. Edited by Dagmar Parer and Ron Terry, it was jointly published in 1993 by the Australian Council of Archives and the Australian Society of Archivists, which sponsored the workshop with assistance from Australian Archives. It was reviewed by David Bearman in the November 1993 issue of this journal (vol. 21, no.2).
21. It is reviewed in this issue by John McDonald.
22. Library and Information Service of Western Australia, *Electronic Records: An Investigation into Retention, Storage and Transfer Options*, 1993.
23. Ross Harvey questions even the information systems aspects as being too media-centred in a review of another publication in this issue, while Roberts' review of Saffady's *Managing Electronic Records* (also in this issue) suggests that it is another example of the limitations of the sort of approach taken in much of the LISWA report.
24. This facet is brought out in the review of the report in this issue by Frank Upward.
25. Earlier we cited Glenda Acland's emphasis on the role of archivist as auditor in the IRM team. Elsewhere in this issue, when reviewing the LISWA report, Frank Upward questions the notion of a state archival institution taking responsibility for IRM audits. There is no contradiction here if we distinguish between strategies appropriate to micro- and macro-archival programs. The micro-archivist needs to function in an interdisciplinary fashion at the coalface; while the macro-archivist's role in this scenario relates to the definition and defence of recordkeeping audit processes.