

# Reviews

Edited by Adrian Cunningham

**Nicholson Baker**, *Double Fold: Libraries and the Assault on Paper*, Random House, New York, 2001. 370pp. ISBN 0 375 50444 3.

This book had already received an incredible amount of publicity in the United States when I was given a copy to review. In fact I was aware of the many postings on the US archives listserv and had read Richard Cox's 'Don't Fold Up: Responding to Nicholson Baker's *Double Fold*' which was published in the *Archival Outlook* May-June 2001 issue. A search on the Internet will return literally thousands of hits that refer to the book in some way. In Australia the book has not received the same degree of publicity, certainly there has not been any postings (at the time of writing this review) on the aus-archivists listserv. RL Cope's review article 'Trusting librarians too blindly?' appeared in the *Australian Library Journal*, 50.3/2001. The Council of the Society of American Archivists has also put a response to the book on their website. The SAA statement, dated 7 May 2001, and the Cox and Cope articles are all available on the Internet at [www.archivists.org/statements/council-doublefold.html](http://www.archivists.org/statements/council-doublefold.html); [www.archivists.org/news/doublefold.html](http://www.archivists.org/news/doublefold.html) and [www.alia.org.au/alj/50.3](http://www.alia.org.au/alj/50.3) respectively.

So why is *Double Fold* the subject of so much publicity? Nicholson Baker is a novelist and essayist with two works of non-fiction. This book is highly readable, entertaining, with fascinating subject matter and the points made are referenced in great detail. In fact there are over 80 pages of notes and references supporting Baker's claims in the book. There is a very good index and 38 chapters of varying lengths with catchy headings such as 'Destroying to Preserve', 'Thugs and Pansies', 'Really Wicked Stuff', 'Burning Up', 'Going, Going, Gone', 'Unparalleled Crisis' and 'Slash and Burn'.

The subject matter concerns the library practice of microfilming newspapers and monographs for preservation purposes and then either selling off or destroying original copies. Baker cites a number of instances where newspapers in particular are no longer available through destruction and microfilm copies are illegible. Claims such as this undermine public faith in the ability of librarians and archivists to preserve cultural heritage.

It is little wonder that the book has received considerable attention from journalists who are highlighting the issues raised by Baker and from librarians and archivists defending and supporting past and current practices.

The topic is of particular relevance to both librarians and archivists and other recordkeeping professionals who copy to preserve or provide access and then destroy originals. Baker's belief that everything can and should be saved in its original state is a little naïve and is a fundamental weakness in his argument. There is no way that any archives or library could afford to keep both originals and copies. The issue of a conspiracy to deceive the public is also a little far-fetched although Baker's literary talents make it all very believable.

So while *Double Fold* has some flaws it is still very much essential reading in that it will force librarians and archivists to revisit and re-evaluate present preservation practices. There is also a need to develop a better understanding of the needs of users and to do a better job of promoting what we do. We need to emphasise that our major task is selecting not warehousing and we need some independent assessment of whether or not we are achieving what we think we are achieving with our preservation programs.

*Double Fold* looks primarily at the American library scene, although the British Library is mentioned as well. It would be really interesting to know what the situation is in Australia. Cope briefly mentions in his review article one 2001 decision of the Council of Australian State Librarians which falls into exactly the type of claim that Baker argues. I suspect the Australian situation would not be all that different from the rest of the world and for that reason every Australian archivist and librarian should read *Double Fold* and both the Cox and Cope review articles. It would be good to see a similar debate and publicity in Australia.

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**Helen Cross and Margaret Chambers**, *Sound Recordings in the National Archives*, National Archives of Australia, Canberra, 2001. 125pp. ISBN 0 642 34444 2. \$10.00 + \$5.00 postage. Available from [naasales@naa.gov.au](mailto:naasales@naa.gov.au) or online at [www.naa.gov.au/Publications/research\\_guides/sound\\_recording](http://www.naa.gov.au/Publications/research_guides/sound_recording).

This publication is a very welcome addition to the range of information on archival sound sources in Australia. To my knowledge, it is the first concise window into the vast sound recording holdings of the National Archives of Australia, and for that reason its advent is very important.

It is, of course, very much a 'topmost' view, revealing the tips of some enormous icebergs – such as the 666 metres of Australian Broadcasting Commission radio master tapes dating back to 1946 (page 23) and the 5349 metres of ABC television programs dating back to 1957 (page 29 – only a portion of which comprises audio tapes). One can imagine a lifetime of research in these two entries alone!

Presentationally, the guide is simply but quite pleasingly laid out: the spiral-bound A4 format is easy and inviting to browse, so that one can quickly get an overview. The background notes and brief historical sketches are useful in providing context: they have been well researched, although inevitably people like me will notice errors of detail (for instance, it's unfortunately not true that a film record is preserved of every Melbourne Cup since 1896) which are, anyway, incidental to the main purpose of the publication.

The access arrangements for sound material are laid out in the introduction. Clearly, at this stage, there are some technical limitations: the appearance of this guide will no doubt increase access pressure and, hopefully, the scope of access options. By revealing the sheer quantity of material held by the National Archives, the guide implicitly raises questions about the size of the preservation task it faces, and the degree to which both access and preservation logistics can be coordinated with other institutions. Traditionally there has been only limited coordination with the National Film and Sound Archive, for example. Perhaps the appearance of this guide might be a trigger to reviewing some future arrangements and strategies.

Of course, the publication of this guide invites the next question: when do we get a similar bird's eye view of the National Archives' presumably equally vast holdings of film and videotape? Is the next one in the pipeline? To me the test of a good collection guide is whether it is a good read in its own right, and whether it thereby invites the reader to delve further into the resources it describes.

This guide passes that test, and I suspect, over time, I'll be following up some of the inviting prospects it raises. Looking at page 35, for instance, 'Chuck Chunder' sounds intriguing (though, to be honest, not all that inviting), but given the later careers of its creators, 'Nude Radio' has to be something of a gold mine. Who were its creators, you say? Well, why not look it up in the guide yourself?

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**Alan M Gahtan**, *Electronic Evidence*, Carswell Thomson Professional Publishing, Scarborough, Ontario, n.d. xvi + 184. ISBN 0 459 27070 2.

'Email systems are usually an excellent source of useful evidence for litigation' (page 58).

This is a frightening book. It shows how vulnerable organisations are when they operate in a litigious environment and do not properly manage their electronic records. Both the nature of the records themselves and the culture in which they are produced

have created significant challenges for recordkeepers, lawyers and information technology staff.

The author, Alan Gahtan, is a lawyer practicing in information technology and electronic commerce law in Canada and the United States. One of his aims in writing *Electronic Evidence* was to assist lawyers, judges and investigators to improve their understanding of the types of electronic evidence that may exist and how to locate it. Gahtan also sets out defensive strategies to mitigate the risks and costs associated in responding to electronic discovery. Importantly, these strategies rely heavily on organisations having proper recordkeeping practices, policies and training.

*Electronic Evidence* is set out in a logical sequence and is well furnished with quotes from relevant cases. While there is a natural North American bias to the book, the underlying principles are of wider relevance. The footnotes provide additional detail and examples of matters referred to in the text and the book itself has an extensive Table of Cases at the beginning.

Chapter one, Introduction to Electronic Evidence, provides a useful and powerful overview of the legal landscape in the world of electronic records. It would be salutary if read by many senior managers. Comments such as ‘Experienced litigators know that the outcome of a case is often determined during the discovery process’ (page 3) would concentrate their minds wonderfully on records issues. The dangers of email are referred to and there is an interesting consideration of the differences between paper and electronic evidence.

Chapters two, three and four provide practical advice on the discovery of electronic evidence, both in the legal sense of the execution of a court order, and the sense of finding something that is hidden or lost.

Chapter two contains detailed instructions on planning electronic discovery, practical matters concerning the search and seizure of computer systems (including the very useful advice of never allowing a ‘suspect’ to turn off his or her computer – ‘simply pull the plug’ – if you do not have an IT investigator present). Advice is also given on the selection and use of an IT forensic expert.

Chapter three, Sources of Electronic Evidence: Where to Look, and chapter four, Finding Hidden Sources of Electronic Evidence, should disabuse anyone of the thought that it is practically possible to destroy or hide electronic records. The book shows that attempts at such action, when revealed to courts, often result in more severe sanctions.

As one who has the responsibility for dealing with freedom of information applications, chapter four made me wonder what constitutes an adequate search when locating documents relevant to a request under the FOI Act.

Chapter six is the most important for recordkeepers. Titled 'Defensive Strategies', this chapter covers document retention, document management programs, policies relating to encryption and email, staff training, hardware and software issues, the segregation of privileged files and a brief summary of electronic discovery response programs. The advice Gahtan gives is excellent and the examples to the point. However, there is no unifying thread to his strategies. The author is a Canadian lawyer, providing practical advice to other legal professionals, so the reader should not expect his consideration of the management of electronic records to be based on the records continuum.

Gahtan does refer to records management and is clearly aware of some of the professional literature. In discussing records management Gahtan concentrates very much on records retention and destruction, as if they are the only relevant issues. Drawing together staff training, policy development and systems, with a discussion of the design of recordkeeping systems as an integral part of an effective recordkeeping regime, would have enabled Gahtan to provide a powerful overarching strategy for those seeking to protect their organisations from excessive risk or expense related to litigation.

Chapter seven, Disclosure Obligations Regarding Electronic Evidence, sets out the requirements of parties involved in litigation to identify or produce all documents relevant to the proceedings. Included amongst the important issues covered are: the form of disclosure, data as 'documents', and the scope and often not inconsiderable cost of electronic discovery. It is interesting to note that in North America the courts have taken the view that if an organisation chooses to retain a large quantity of electronic records it should be able to locate and retrieve relevant information when it is required. This discussion inevitably leads to a consideration of the sanctions for failing to produce evidence.

The final chapters, while of interest to the recordkeeper, are more directed to the North American legal practitioner. Gahtan covers some of the legal issues arising from the preservation, disclosure and use of electronic evidence in judicial proceedings in US and Canadian jurisdictions. The differences between evidence legislation in Australia and North America make some of the specific examples of limited value, although the discussion of general issues are relevant and useful.

If Gahtan's book indicates the way of future litigation in Australia many organisations are likely to suffer unnecessarily as a result of poor electronic recordkeeping. The lessons from it should be carefully noted and used to promote wider understanding of the importance of the role of corporate recordkeepers.

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**Thornton W Mitchell (ed.)**, *Norton on Archives: The Writings of Margaret Cross Norton on Archival and Records Management*, Society of American Archivists, Chicago, 1975 (third printing 2001). xxi + 288pp. ISBN 0 931828 17 1. US\$25.00.

The Society of American Archivists (SAA) has only published two titles in its Archival Classics Reprints series: TR Schellenberg's *Modern Archives: Principles and Techniques*, 1956 and this collection of Margaret Cross Norton's work. *Norton on Archives* was first published in 1975, with a second printing in 1979. This, together with the fact that the volume was reprinted without change some 25 years after first publication, is an indication of the Society's view of the significance of Margaret Cross Norton's work.

Margaret Cross Norton was Illinois State Archivist from 1922 to 1957. In his foreword to this volume, Ernst Posner claimed that 'the significance of the role she has played in the evolution and maturation of archives administration in the United States can hardly be overestimated ... Her words paved the way toward recognizing archives administration as an indispensable element of public service and hence entitled to full public support' (page vii). Posner referred to her collected work, which was originally published as short articles very often in *Illinois Libraries*, as the first American manual of archives administration. He went on to propose that it was the profession's duty to make Cross Norton's work more widely available, particularly as the teaching of archives administration was expanding in the United States.

The 30 articles in this volume of around 300 pages were written between 1930 and 1956. Norton's editor justified the publication of this compendium in 1975 on the grounds of their practicality, particularly for state archives, and their 'timelessness and currency that give them a continuing value many years later' (page ix).

How then, would this volume rate as an explication of the principles of archives administration today?

One of the most appealing things about the book is that Norton argues cogently for the value of archives to society at the same time as she provides practical and useable advice for archivists who had a significantly less developed literature in English than we enjoy today. She writes about the fundamental principles of archives work, strategies for developing archival programs and relationships with records management alongside quite detailed technical issues. In some instances she provides explanations and examples which would have been of considerable assistance to practitioners. While Norton smiles somewhat diffidently from her cover photograph, she was quite clearly passionate about her life's work and had a gift for sharing her enthusiasm and knowledge.

The broad scope of her interests is reflected in the chapter headings which include: the function, purpose, nature and operation of an archives; services and resources;

classification and description; records creation; physical properties of archives; repair and handling of records; microphotographic reproduction; disaster protection; disposal; and records management. The collection at least touches on all the major areas of professional concern. But despite Mitchell's attempts to turn Norton's writings into a satisfying whole, their origins as unconnected pieces written over a period of time do make for an unsatisfying and repetitive whole in some respects. In my view, the book would never have been entirely satisfactory as a manual of archives administration.

The SAA notes on the cover that its Archival Classic Reprints series demonstrates its commitment to making the very best resources available for professionals by using cost-effective techniques to reprint classic archival literature. The SAA is to be congratulated on making Norton's work available again for the wider study of the history and development of archives administration. Given Norton's significance to the American profession, it does seem a pity not to have provided a new introduction to set her work in its historical context and not to have linked it more closely to its series.

The work does, however, have a very special interest for Australian archivists because of Norton's acknowledged role in the development of the Australian series system. In the series of five articles on 'Archives and Administrative Change' which Peter Scott published with Gail Finlay and Clive Smith in this journal in 1978-81 there are six references to Norton's work.

In their discussion of the then Australian Archives method of registering agencies, that is providing a brief administrative history with clear links to its administrative context, they acknowledge 'a very great debt' to her 'pioneering writing' (*A&M*, vol. 7, no. 3, August 1978, p. 126). Norton provides a list of elements which an archivist should use as the basis for a classification scheme based on agencies, all of which are represented in the best agency registrations on the National Archives of Australia's RecordSearch database (pages 108-09).

Scott and Finlay also acknowledge Norton's 'genealogical charts for departments' as a contribution to their development of 'agency analysis charts' which are a means of showing the 'successive inter relationships between agencies over a period of time' (*A&M*, vol. 7, no. 3, August 1978, p. 126).

Scott, Smith and Finlay quote Norton in company with Muller, Feith and Fruin to support the idea that records follow functions which is the basis of their comprehensive discussion of the effects of administrative change on records. They also note that she was one of only three archivists whose work was available in English who had shown some interest in analysing the effects of administrative change (*A&M*, vol. 7, no. 4, April 1979, pp. 151-2).

There are also two further references to her work in their fourth article where the attribution of multiple provenance series is discussed (*A&M*, vol. 8, no. 2, December 1980, pp. 53–54).

All these references are drawn from a paper which Norton presented to the American Library Association's joint conference in which the Midwest Members of the Society of American Archivists participated in 1940. This paper, and indeed other parts of the book, has many resonances for Australian archivists, particularly for those who worked in the Commonwealth Archives Office and the Australian Archives (now the National Archives) in the 1970s when the practices of the Commonwealth Record Series system became well-established.

Scott, Smith and Finlay cite Mitchell's 1975 volume as their source. Norton is not cited in Scott's classic 1966 article 'The Record Group Concept: A Case for Abandonment' (*The American Archivist*, vol. 29, no. 4, October 1966, pp. 493–504), although coincidentally, an article on Norton's citation as Archivist Emerita of the Illinois State Library appears in the same issue (pp. 489–92). It would be fascinating to know when Scott first had access to Norton's work. Australian archivists like to demonstrate that their practices are grounded in the archival classics particularly Jenkinson, but also the Dutch trio Muller, Feith and Fruin. Norton's contribution is rather less well-known. It would be good to see a proper study of this Australian American archival relationship. In the meantime, Australian archivists will find that this book raises some interesting questions about the source of their own practices.

Mitchell tells us in his introduction that Norton referred to her articles as 'pot-boilers' (page xx), but this is a quite inappropriate term. They provide an insight into the professional concerns of Norton's day and a rich description of the practices of smaller American archives at that time. While they are no longer a substitute for a manual of archives administration, they remain an inspiration to archivists interested in the development of the profession.

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**National Museum of Australia**, *Frontier Conflict: The Australian Experience*, a forum at the National Museum of Australia, Canberra, 13–14 December 2001.

History as a blood sport. It's possible that many who settled into the lecture theatre in the still-new National Museum were there to see Henry Reynolds and Keith Windschuttle tear each other limb from limb. Given that Windschuttle was absent for much of the conference, and that he was vastly outnumbered at the conference by the historians whose work he has criticised, that was never really going to happen.



For those unfamiliar with the background, Windschuttle has published in a number of places serious criticisms of Reynolds' and others' work on estimating the number of Indigenous people killed in conflict on Australia's frontiers during white settlement. Windschuttle believes there is a school of history developing which is sloppy in its work, relying too heavily on earlier work rather than returning to original records, overstating interpretations and estimates, and putting too much faith in what he believes are dubious sources such as oral histories.

Geoffrey Bolton began proceedings in part by giving a big rap to Bob Sharman, who took great early strides in making official records available, particularly in Queensland and Tasmania, the locations of the most violent frontiers. Given the centrality of archives to the argument at this forum it is slightly odd that no archivist was asked to speak. Oral historians were represented, and in fact gave some of the most-reported papers of the forum. Given Windschuttle's distrust of oral history it was appropriate that a right of reply was afforded to its practitioners. Indeed, one could almost forgive Windschuttle for skipping much of the conference, given that he may well have felt the program was stacked against him. Having an archivist along may only have bolstered Windschuttle's arguments.

But, would any archivist have argued that archives always represent Truth, as Windschuttle seems to? Windschuttle seems at times to believe that if an event is not in the written record then it did not happen. His opponents point to oral history not as incontrovertible evidence of facts, but as a source of clues as to what else might have happened, and perhaps more importantly, evidence of how Indigenous communities have reacted to and coped with frontier conflict. Two different papers on oral histories gave examples of where iconic figures such as Ned Kelly and Captain Cook are used by Aboriginal oral history to stand for many people and many events. No historian believes that the Gurindji oral history of Captain Cook coming to the Northern Territory is historical fact. It is, however, powerful metaphor.

An archivist could have pointed out that the contemporary accounts Windschuttle favours are also filtered by the biases of the record-maker. An archivist would also have explained why there are great and irreversible gaps in the official record, created both by accident and by design.

These points were made obliquely in other papers where historians sought to explain both the sources and the interpretive techniques they had used. Lyndall Ryan, for instance, explained why she chose a different – and higher – eyewitness estimate of the number of Aborigines killed at Waterloo Creek to the one Windschuttle himself had used. Jan Critchett pointed out the discrepancies between official and private accounts, and suggests that this was because white settlers weren't sure if the killings would be punished or not. While killing Aborigines was, she says, accepted by the settler society, Victorian governors such as La Trobe did punish some killers. There is

a contrast here with Raymond Evans' account of the Queensland frontier where settlers wrote detailed accounts, and official reports in the United Kingdom deplored the colonial government's policy of extermination.

It would be a great shame if the papers from this forum were not published in full. There was not one that was not fascinating, both for their insights into historians' use of archives and for the compelling stories that each tells. The extremely limited time speakers had meant that many papers were rushed. There was much said – and not said – on which it would be useful to ponder with more care than is possible when listening to a spoken paper. A colleague who asked about papers was told that the Museum would be producing something based on the forum. I for one hope that this is in addition to and not at the expense of the full published proceedings.

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**Research Libraries Group and Online Computer Library Center, *Attributes of a Trusted Digital Repository: Meeting the Needs of Research Resources***, Research Libraries Group, Mountain View, California, August 2001. 56pp. Available at: [www.rlg.org/longterm/attributes01.pdf](http://www.rlg.org/longterm/attributes01.pdf), accessed March 2002.

*Attributes of a Trusted Digital Repository* is a report developed jointly by the Research Libraries Group (RLG) – [www.rlg.org](http://www.rlg.org) – and the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) – [www.oclc.org](http://www.oclc.org). It comes out of work undertaken by both organisations on the problem of digital preservation and is based on a perceived need for an infrastructure of trusted archives or repositories undertaking storage of digital materials in order for digital preservation to occur (page 3). Alongside this research, RLG and OCLC have also collaborated to draft a white paper on metadata for preservation (*Preservation Metadata for Digital Objects: A Review of the State of the Art*, January 2001, at [www.oclc.org/research/pmwg/presmeta\\_wp.pdf](http://www.oclc.org/research/pmwg/presmeta_wp.pdf)) and both organisations have been careful to maintain associations with standards creation bodies in the area (notably OAIS, the Open Archival Information System).

*Attributes* was drafted by a working group of international experts in the area of digital preservation. It is the intention of the creators of the report that it be reviewed by the international library and archival community and that its recommendations be acted on by the relevant organisations.

While primarily written for research institutions (specifically libraries and archives), the creators also believe that the report contains 'guidance and recommendations ... applicable to any organization interested in long-term maintenance of and continuing access to digital materials' (page 4).

The report is divided into four main sections plus a series of recommendations for further work.

Section 2 outlines the primary attributes of a repository which can truly be conceived of as 'trusted'. It begins by giving a definition for a digital repository and then delineating the concept of trust. This discussion of trust is one of the most interesting components of the report as it brings together a number of converging understandings drawn from archives, libraries and computing (pages 7–11). The discussion ends with a listing of terms identified by the authors as being components of the concept 'trust' and the authors use these as a means of drawing together a definition for 'trust' based on this vocabulary (page 12).

The section then goes on to list six attributes which the authors posit as a 'framework for assembling the community's thinking about reliability and trusted archiving organizations' (page 12). The attributes are:

- administrative responsibility
- organisational viability
- financial sustainability
- technological suitability
- system security
- procedural accountability

The authors are aware that by themselves these attributes are not sufficient to guarantee trust. The section ends with a discussion of possible certification options so that organisations can be assured that digital repositories are indeed trusted (pages 14–16).

Section 3 is titled 'Responsibilities and Digital Preservation' but what it details are the problems which surround the task of digital preservation. The first is the sheer variety of digital material, which forms part of current collections and which will inevitably be collected in the future, and the problem for libraries and archives of controlling the quality or nature of these materials (page 18).

The second issue highlights the differences between digital and traditional material in that decision making about the preservation of digital material needs to be taken at, or close to, its creation point (page 18). Another issue is that of the large number of stakeholders involved in or concerned with the preservation outcome, ranging from 'content creators, systems developers, custodians and future users' (page 19). Ownership and related legal concerns can also be problematic in the digital environment and the report discusses some of the questions which have arisen in this context (page 19). The cost of preservation – especially ongoing future costs – is raised and

the report highlights some areas where costs could arise in the future and points to the need for more research to be done (page 20).

Section 4 is a summary of some of the international projects and models which have informed the report and which contribute to our understanding of digital preservation. Both the Cedars Project ([www.leeds.ac.uk/cedars/](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/cedars/)) and the NedLib Project ([www.kb.nl/coop/nedlib/](http://www.kb.nl/coop/nedlib/)) are discussed in terms of their study of a distributed model of archiving and preservation (page 22).

This section also includes a fairly detailed description of the Open Archival Information System (OAIS) Reference Model. OAIS was determined to be useful because it provides a clear functional model for the tasks which should be performed by a digital repository and an information model which describes 'the creation of metadata and supports long-term maintenance and access' (page 23).

Section 5 details the responsibilities of a Trusted Digital Repository which the report adopts (with one addition) from the work done by the OAIS community. The report states that 'a reliable digital repository:

- negotiates for and accepts appropriate information from information producers and rights holders;
- obtains sufficient control of the information provided to support long-term preservation;
- determines, either by itself or with others, the users that make up its designated community, which should be able to understand the information provided;
- ensures that the information to be preserved is "independently understandable" to the designated community; that is, that the community can understand the information without needing the assistance of experts;
- follows documented policies and procedures that ensure the information is preserved against all reasonable contingencies and enables the information to be disseminated as authenticated copies of the original or as traceable to the original;
- makes the preserved information available to the designated community; and
- works closely with the repository's designated community to advocate the use of good and (where possible) standard practice in the creation of digital resources; this may include an outreach program for potential depositors' (page 25).

*Attributes* ends with a set of 16 recommendations most of which call for further research and collaborative work (pages 35–6).

Overall, the report is an excellent survey of some of the major work conducted to date in the area of digital preservation. The set of attributes and responsibilities distilled from this survey are, to a certain extent, self-evident but the fact that this is so is undoubtedly due to the skill of the authors in clearly articulating them and in making the recommendations derived from them appear so plainly necessary.

There are, however, some aspects of the report about which an archival audience should be aware. The primary audience for the report is the research library community. This is undoubtedly due to the nature of the organisations which sponsored its creation and to the fact that the authors are themselves, for the most part, from this community. This is not necessarily a disadvantage, but it does inform some of the assumptions made.

For instance, the report assumes that the only model for long-term preservation is a distributed one, although the reasons for this assumption are not canvassed. This is most certainly due to the nature of the question which the report strives to answer, which is how is the future of scholarship to be ensured? (page 18). While scholarship plays a role in the mission of many archives, it is by no means the only one, and archival organisations are aware that outcomes which suit scholarship are sometimes not compatible with other archival imperatives.

Despite these slight criticisms, this report is most assuredly a useful one for anybody interested in digital preservation. It distills much that has been done previously and presents that in a clear and unambiguous way – something which is not always common in this field.

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