

Reviews

Edited by Adrian Cunningham

Australian Society of Archivists, *GLAM: Different Professions, Common Goals* – Australian Society of Archivists Annual Conference, Adelaide, 18–20 September 2003

Those colleagues who know me well will be aware that, though I claim an undocumented connection with Melbourne, I have a 'special' relationship with Adelaide also. Thus it was with anticipation and trepidation that I headed west for this year's ASA conference. As I steeled myself for the days ahead, I was confident that any conference committee containing the infamous Jenny Scott would have the GLAM (Galleries, Libraries, Archives, Museums) theme well under control.

The formalities kicked off with the Annual General Meeting in the Matthew Flinders Room. Archival living legend, Bob Sharman moved a motion of condolence for Ian Maclean, the first Commonwealth Archives Officer. Later, upon adjourning to the State Library for the Cocktail Party, I was privileged to witness my young colleague Jon-Paul Williams receive a Mander Jones award. It occurred to me that JP is an example of just the kind of innovative spirit that characterised the early years of the profession in Australia.

The conference proper commenced with the traditional welcome from the indigenous Kurna inhabitants. After this, keynote speaker Michael McKernan, challenged us with the initial vision of Redmond Barry for the State Library of Victoria, of a place 'open to all who come with clean hands and a desire to learn'. His argument that the language of the cultural institution sector is too often exclusive of the public was a wake-up call. He reminded us of the centenary of federation, in which Australians expressed their relationship with their history in tributes to ordinary people who made a difference in their communities. The

message: the national conversation, in which we aim to have a place, must be conducted in a language that is inclusive and embraces the public.

The next session discussed custodial issues and trends, in which a panel of speakers addressed varied issues. Margaret Anderson of the History Trust of South Australia reminded us of the dangers of regarding what has survived automatically as a representative sample of the past. Ross Latham advised on how to rally public support through the judicious use of 'for sale' signs. Rob Pilgrim, from the National Motor Museum gave his unique perspective on stakeholders, one which judging by the terrorised looks in the audience struck a chord. For those interested, the three characteristics of stakeholders are:

1. They stand behind you all the way.
2. They own a stake.
3. They're prepared to tie you to that stake, should you dare utter the words 'de-accession policy'.

Gail Greenwood, Phil Reed and Jenny Timms provided invaluable insight on how to use your collections to extract resources from the community and parent organisations.

At this point, we adjourned for the day in preparation for a landmark development in the history of the archives profession. I'm referring to the Beer Special Interest Group, the first meeting of which convened at the Queens Arms Hotel. On this occasion, participants in the exciting new initiative were pleased to receive the enthusiastic support of National Archives' Director-General Ross Gibbs. The commitment and dedication of the group was clearly evident in the tired faces the next day.

The session on politics of identity for the GLAM sector was interesting, at times moving. Surprisingly, for me, it concerned itself with social identity and did not address the question of the professional identity of GLAM. Next three giants of the profession in Gavan McCarthy, Rowena Loo and Stephen Ellis tackled the concept of the 'next big thing'. All spoke from their experience at the Frontier of Recordkeeping, and predicted initiatives of significance over the coming years.

All up, there were three sessions on Frontiers of Recordkeeping, and although these were of interest, I would question their practical value to

the broader profession. As one who has worked in government, non-government, large and small archives, it occurs to me that those in the schools, churches, small unions and community groups may have left these sessions devoid of the practical strategies and solutions they so often need desperately. To labour the 'wild west' aspect of the frontiers metaphor, we risk sending people out on the ranch with no horse, no gun and no lasso.

In the session *Is the Future of GLAM on the Line?*, Stephen Cassidy, Chris Nobbs and Derina McLaughlin discussed online provision of access to GLAM collections, evaluating the success of these initiatives, and predicting future possibilities of web technologies. It was agreed that as a profession we are still to reach the full potential of online access.

The final session saw interesting wrap-ups on the content from Jackie Bettington and Elizabeth Dracoulis, while Michael McKernan returned to the podium to encourage us not to be afraid of making emotional statements in our programs. 'At the heart of things', he said, 'we are telling the human story'.

That night, the conference concluded with a glam-themed dinner/dance. The GLAM party was complete with 1970s Elvis impersonator, a touch which seemed impeccably appropriate. As usual, my colleague 'Erik the Archives Box' chose the dance as his moment to shine, being among the first to get out on the dance floor and strut his stuff. Funnily, he had been conspicuously absent during the serious sessions. Typical Erik: all show, no content. Finally he overstepped the mark in attempting to get up on stage and usurp Elvis' big moment. It's fair to say that Elvis literally 'took him apart'. Oh Erik, will you never learn?

Now returned to the comfort of my home in Melbourne, I reflect upon the overall strength of the conference. We listened as Michael McKernan, and others from outside the profession, gave us their view on how it is, and how it *might* be. We occupy an uneasy place in the era of declared 'culture wars', but I feel I left reinvigorated, and determined to persist with this sometimes obscure, but nevertheless important, role we play in the national conversation, the human story.

Carolyn Hamilton, Verne Harris, Jane Taylor, Michele Pickover, Graeme Reid & Razia Saleh (eds), *Refiguring the Archive*, Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht/Boston/London, 2002. 368pp. ISBN 1 4020 0743 4. US\$117.00.

This beautifully designed and illustrated book was conceived in a 1998 series of thirteen seminars featuring South African and international speakers from a wide range of disciplines and professions.

The seminars, and a number of interrelated events including a major exhibition, dance and musical performances, film screenings and workshops linking the themes explored in the seminars to practice, were hosted by the Graduate School for the Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Witwatersrand, the National Archives of South Africa, the University's Historical Papers, the Gay and Lesbian Archives, and the South African History Archive.

The book, which focuses on the processes that shape and reshape the archive over time, is self-consciously positioned in relation to the imperative to refigure South Africa's archives:

The archive – all archive – is figured. Acceptance of this in South Africa has shaped fundamentally the argument – and the processes built upon it – that the country's archives require transformation, or refiguring. The figuring by our apartheid and longer pasts must be challenged, and spaces must be opened up in the archives by a transforming society (*Introduction*, p. 7).

As part of this refiguring, the book aims to introduce new 'ideas, influences, perspectives and values into South African archival discourse', specifically through a post-positivist critique drawing on Jacques Derrida's deconstructive perspectives. It also aims to explore 'the archive outside the archival inheritance of colonialism, and later, apartheid' – the oral record, literature, landscape, dance, art, artefacts and so on – as well as the engagement of the marginal with the mainstream.

The links amongst the papers published in the book, and between them and other texts, are captured in the intertextual design of the layout which intersperses, juxtaposes, supplements and parallels the papers with related writings and images. So, for example, commentaries by

Verne Harris and Sue Van Zyl on Derrida's *Archive Fever* are printed on alternate pages to Derrida's own presentation to the seminar series, 'Archive Fever in South Africa'. Bhekizizwe Peterson's essay on the exclusionary nature of mainstream South African archival traditions, the search for the archive of previously marginalised groups among their 'rituals, ceremonies, songs, literature, performances and popular culture', and the need to make archives accessible in dynamic and interactive community-based ways, is presented in parallel to a 1931 newspaper article on the Bantu which highlights issues of exclusionism and inaccessibility. Jane Taylor's curatorial reflections on the exhibition *Holdings: Refiguring the Archive* are accompanied by images of the exhibited material and installations – works by contemporary South African artists which explore issues of documentation and interpretation, and associated processes of selection, exclusion, ordering and classification.

The papers address three interrelated themes. Firstly, Achille Mbembe, Bhekizizwe Peterson, Jacques Derrida, Sue Van Zyl and Verne Harris present deconstructive perspectives on the nature of the archive. A highlight here is the transcript of Derrida's contribution to the seminar series, which includes an extended reflection on the notion of the death drive in archiving, as introduced in *Archive Fever*. Derrida sees it at work in two ways in the shaping of the archive of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission – in the drive to destroy memory in a way that no archive, no trace of the murder and violence is left, and in the desire to witness, to record the testimony, to accumulate the archive and keep it safe. For Derrida archiving in the sense of inscribing a trace in some location, external to living memory, is an act of forgetting that carries with it the possibility of deferred remembering. And it is because the radical drive to destroy memory without trace is always in play that 'the desire for archive is a burning one':

If there is a passion, it is because we know that not only the traces can be lost by accident or because the space is finite or the time is finite, but because we know that something in us, so to speak, something in the psychic apparatus, is driven to destroy the trace without reminder. And that's where the archive fever comes from (p. 44).

Archive Fever is particularly demanding of its readers. In *Refiguring the Archive*, we meet a much more accessible Derrida. The transcript of his contribution to the seminar together with Van Zyl's and Harris's papers

yield insights into Derrida's thesis, and why archivists need to engage with it. The accompanying commentaries further open up Derrida's engagement with the archive, in Van Zyl's case focusing on the importance of psychoanalysis to an understanding of the archive, and in Harris's, on ideas concerning the irrecoverable nature of the event, the notion that the archiving trace of an event both records and shapes the event, and the assertion that the archive is never fully formed or closed, is always being reshaped – refigured – and is always open to different readings, interpretations, and contestations.

Papers by Ann Laura Stoler, Patricia Hayes and colleagues, Verne Harris and Brent Harris explore the second theme of the book, the making of the archive(s), focusing on processes of remembering and forgetting, inclusion and exclusion, and the power relationships they embody, depicting archives as political sites of contested memory and knowledge, following Derrida's 'there is no political power without control of the archive'.

Thus, Ann Laura Stoler explores the insights into colonialism that can be gained through the 'ethnography of the archive', ie by studying the form of the archive, the processes that shape it, its systems of classification, and 'cultures of documentation', rather than its content. Challenging the view that colonial archives need to be read 'against the grain', Stoler suggests a reading 'along the grain' of these 'paper empires', not only to understand them as 'documents of exclusion and monuments to particular configurations of power', but also as 'telling prototype[s] of a postmodern [state], predicated on global domination of information'.

One of the most powerful insights comes from her discussion of the way archival notions of authenticity, reliability and trustworthiness at any given time are shaped by the 'evidentiary paradigms' of the day. Brent Harris's focus is on the intricacies of the relationship between the archive, evidence and history, with reference to the relationship between the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's archive, its formative processes and the 'new South African history' that it is producing.

Patricia Hayes and colleagues explore the visual archive of colonialism in Namibia, and the constitutive processes associated with images produced by 'the colonising camera'.

In Verne Harris's paper in this section of the book, which explores the relationship between the archival record and social memory in the context of the transition from apartheid to democracy, he famously describes the archival record, both oral and documentary, as 'a sliver of a sliver of a sliver' (p. 134). He goes on to challenge the positivist view that archives reflect process and events, or mirror reality, preferring Derrida's notions of the irrecoverable event and archive as trace.

In light of the renegotiation of the past and transformation of archives in South Africa, he urges archivists not to cling to positivist views of the archival endeavour that focus on custodianship, the physicality of records and archival places, and the record as a carrier of memory. Instead they should engage in 'processes of memory formation', embracing new technologies and postmodernity as well as indigenous meanings and conceptual frameworks.

Finally, there are a wide-ranging series of essays which push at the boundaries of what the archive might be – from the exploration by Himla Soodyall and colleagues of the value of the human genome as archive; to Graeme Reid's reflections on the role of Gay and Lesbian Archives in preserving, protecting and making accessible their existing holdings as well as in engaging in 'the excavation of material in other archives' to discover where lesbian and gay lives are recorded and how they are represented; to Carolyn Hamilton and Phaswane Mpe's papers on aspects of orality as archive; Sarah Nuttall's study of literature and the archive; Ronald Suresh Roberts's intriguingly titled paper, 'Keeping the Self: The Novelist as (Self-)Archivist'; and David Bearman's thoughts on how electronic recordkeeping can help constitute social memory and support participatory democracy, a view fundamentally challenged by Martin Hall's concluding paper which argues that 'the contemporary archive is part of the politics of global capitalism'.

It is not possible in a short review to do justice to the richness and complexity of this challenging and intriguing work. I recommend that you experience *Refiguring the Archive* for yourself.

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Sam Kula, *Appraising Moving Images: Assessing the Archival and Monetary Value of Film and Video Records*, Scarecrow Press, Lanham, Maryland, 2002. 178pp. ISBN 0 8108 4368 4. US\$40.00.

In 1983 Sam Kula conducted a UNESCO RAMP study on guidelines for the appraisal of moving images. Kula has revisited this earlier work in his recent book on appraising moving images.

In fact, a substantial proportion of this recent publication replicates the 1983 RAMP study with minor updates and additions. The similarity of these two publications, almost a generation apart, begs the question: Is it possible that moving image archives are still dealing with the same appraisal issues as they were twenty years ago? And does this mean that these issues are still valid or do archivists need to catch up?

In these publications, Kula tells the history of moving image archives and their characters such as Henri Langlois, a moving image archive pioneer who declared that: 'any policy of selection was an evil that archivists should avoid at all costs'. Kula's history provides a useful understanding of the difficulties faced by moving image archives in gaining recognition within the archival profession despite the proliferation of these records. It also offers insight into why moving image archivists have not been able to develop an agreed approach for appraisal, with some moving image archivists still arguing that selection must be avoided.

Kula sets his discussion within the context of appraisal theory, explaining where moving image concerns are placed within the Schellenberg and Jenkinson debates. A strength of Kula's work is his elucidation of the predominately informational value of moving image records and how this value makes these records more difficult to appraise. Kula identifies the key issues involved in appraising moving images as he looks at the international environment and the recommendations of organisations such as FIAT, FIAF, UNESCO, the moving image appraisal practices of a selection of countries, and the form and function of moving image records and related documentation.

Kula's discussion is based on a life-cycle approach as he identifies the issues involved in selecting moving images following their creation and at the end of their business use. While Kula recognises that moving image records are subject to the same broad appraisal theories as other

records, he does not attempt to explain how moving image concerns fit within more recent appraisal debates. In particular, Kula, as well as the moving image archival profession he surveys, does not attempt to tackle how new continuum-based approaches may apply to moving image records.

In an interesting aside, Kula also looks at the issues involved in appraising moving image records for their monetary value. This section of the book is a new addition to the content published in the 1983 UNESCO RAMP study, and may provide Kula's recent publication with broader commercial appeal.

Kula's discussion of monetary appraisal is interesting and accessible as he presents the issues through the story of the Zapruder film, which in 494 frames captures the only known footage of the assassination of United States President John F. Kennedy.

In answer to the questions presented at the start of this review, the issues of appraising moving images today do appear to be similar to those of twenty years ago. There continues to be some reluctance within the moving image archival profession to accept the need for selecting and ultimately destroying moving image material. This reluctance has found greater voice in recent years with some archivists now arguing that the need for selection is fast disappearing as changes in technology are providing new solutions to old problems.

Kula introduces his text with the disclaimer that: 'what follows are essentially my own conclusions on a set of principles on which appraisal policies could be based'. In his recent book, Kula presents a discussion that is still relevant to contemporary moving image archive concerns and provides a strong introduction to the issues involved in appraising moving image records.

However, this text concentrates on the identification of issues of moving image appraisal and any strong conclusions or principles that could provide foundation for appraisal policies are difficult to find.

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A Lipchak, *Information Management to Support Evidence-Based Governance in the Electronic Age*, Public Policy Forum, Canada, November 2002. 70pp. ISBN 0 9732003 4 0. Available online at www.ppforum.ca/ow/ow_p_11_2002B.pdf.

Information Management to Support Evidence-Based Governance in the Electronic Age aims to explore the relationship between information management, in particular recordkeeping, and good governance. While it mainly focuses on the Canadian environment, it also mentions some international issues.

This report is one outcome of a project looking at the issues of governance and public sector reform sponsored by the Public Policy Forum, a non-profit organisation aimed at improving the quality of government in Canada. The National Archives of Canada, Public Works and Government Services Canada and the Chief Information Officer Branch of the Treasury Board Secretariat supported the project. There are also links to the International Records Management Trust's work on Evidence-Based Governance in the Electronic Age.

The main body of the report comprises three chapters titled:

- Understanding governance in a changing world
- Managing information for improved governance
- Managing information for improved governance: Canadian and international experiences and trends.

Written by Andrew Lipchak, an independent consultant in the field, the report commences by defining the elements of governance and examining how increased use of information and communications technologies are changing governance. It defines governance in a way that goes beyond institutions and structures to include attitudes, behaviours and relationships, both within the government and between government and citizens.

Lipchak identifies a shift in governance resulting from the increased prevalence of information and communication technologies. The increased flow of information within and between organisations and people is stimulating increased interdependency within governance organisations where 'the once-clear lines that separated the public sector, the private sector and a wide range of civil society organizations and institutions are blurring' (p. 8). There is an unresolved tension

between this 'network' approach and continuing traditional hierarchical structures based on control.

This report appears to be targeted at decision makers in government, particularly those with little knowledge of records management. Much of what is covered in chapter 2 on the nature of records, access and privacy concerns, transience of email and websites and the need for, and fragility of, electronic records will be familiar to many of us.

However, one interesting part of chapter 2 is the identification of necessary skills and competencies for records management and some speculation on the future of records management as a profession. Lipchak claims that 'records management will not remain a discrete and distinct profession. In time, it will be absorbed into a more mature multi-media information systems environment in which business, accountability and related information management needs drive technology deployment' (p. 48).

Another strength of the document is the clear mapping of a desirable information management environment, characterising where many organisations are, and where they should be, on a number of measures such as culture, information awareness, law and policy, accountability, records practices, technology and people (p. 50).

While it claims to take an international perspective, and does include some discussion of governance in developing countries and the digital divide, the focus is clearly on the Canadian experience. This is highlighted in chapter 3, which devotes six pages to Canada and three pages to international and other national examples.

One problem with the report is the almost indiscriminate use of the terms information management and records management. The two are used almost interchangeably. I gained the impression that information management was being used for the strategic level and records management the implementation level, until towards the end of the document where information management is scoped, for the purpose of one citation, as including 'records management, library services, web site management, access and privacy administration, and network infrastructure' (p. 55). Information management is defined also on page 27 in a breakout box, but this definition is not used or referred to anywhere in the main text. Due to the lack of clear definitions and

consistent usage, I am still not clear on the difference in this document between information management and records management.

While the report itself is quite dense and occasionally repetitive, it does have some useful insights on the changing nature of governance, the importance of recordkeeping to governance and a good overview of the recordkeeping environment in Canada.

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Liverpool University Centre for Archive Studies, *Political Pressure and the Archival Record: An International Conference*, Liverpool University Centre for Archive Studies (LUCAS), Liverpool, England, 22–25 July 2003. More information at www.liv.ac.uk/lucas/index.htm.

This conference deserves to be remembered for a long time. Not because it was well-organised, convivial and collegial (which it was) but because it was timely and dealt with issues at the heart of our professional life as archivists. The international focus and the breadth of participation were impressive. There were papers from retired, established and younger archivists and researchers. The participants were from the Caribbean, South America, several African countries and Eastern Europe as well as Western Europe and North America, Japan and Australia and New Zealand. The program was cleverly constructed and the relatively small number of participants added to the sense of inclusiveness. It was impossible to ignore the international and national backdrop – only a few months after the invasion of Iraq and only a few days after the death of David Kelly.

In these days when there is a new story every week in the Australian media about government manipulation of information, pressure on public servants to alter records or not to create them in the first place and denials that this behaviour even takes place, this conference was a welcome reminder that such pressure has been and is being resisted around the world. Many papers bore testimony to the pressures, subtle and blatant, experienced by archivists in carrying out their duties, caught between their duty to their employers and their duty to uphold

the law. To hear the personal stories of the courage of leading members of the profession from several countries who put the defence of the record before the defence of their own jobs was a moving and salutary experience.

Many themes were traversed during the conference: they included the irreparable harm caused by the loss and theft of records in war, the need for creators to understand that people other than themselves have an interest in the records they create, the importance of having consistent recordkeeping regimes and the need for better understanding of appraisal strategies. We were also reminded that it is not only archivists who are defending openness and fighting against secrecy and the misuse of records. Chris Williams, a historian of policing on collective efforts to ensure the preservation of police records in Britain and Tom Blanton of the National Security Archive on his organisation's efforts to keep FOI a reality in the United States were two examples here. On the other hand, Tom Connors on information lockdown in the Bush administration demonstrated the role archivists employed outside national archives can have in tracking and publicising overt attempts by governments to deny information to the public.

This conference put paid to the notion that archivists can stand apart from the political context in which they work – government archivists are part of the political process, whether they wish to acknowledge this or not. Rachel Lilburn addressed this issue in her paper on security archives in New Zealand, noting that archivists must be active documenters not passive players. Rachel also revealed the contrasting approaches of the national archival authorities in Australia and New Zealand concerning security records. The New Zealand government's approach has been cautious and deferential to the United States, whereas the availability of Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) files for research in the National Archives of Australia is critical not only for Australian but also New Zealand scholars researching subjects such as the cold war.

The conference did not confine itself to the public sphere. Public and private are connected: people expect government to act when cases of misuse and wilful destruction of records by corporations come to light. Conversely, private archives as custodians of politicians' papers have a critical responsibility when politicians attempt to claim their papers as private rather than public property. Australian archivists responsible for private archives will be envious of the solution in Belgium, where

four major political sectional interests are recognised and the archives preserving their records are funded proportionately from the public purse.

This review has intentionally dealt with the conference at a general level – the papers will be published in the near future. An extra working session to discuss next steps decided that participants would keep in touch and to set up a register of cases as a resource. A session at the ICA Congress in Vienna in 2004 is also planned. It will be encouraging if the momentum from the conference is sustained – since July issues of public interest, recordkeeping and political pressure have become even more urgent.

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Stuart Macintyre and Anna Clark, *The History Wars*, foreword by Sir Anthony Mason, Melbourne University Press, 2003. 288pp. ISBN 0 522 85091 X. \$30.00.

It is unusual for this journal and – risking a generalisation – for the archives profession in Australia, to take much notice of happenings within the historical profession. This contrasts unfavourably with the main three or four equivalent English language journals. Here one often encounters mention of recent historiographical trends represented through surveys of recently published literature. Irrespective of whether this seriously matters, the Reviews Editor was absolutely right to bring this book under notice; it raises issues of direct relevance to us.

Before examining them, however, some general points may help set *The History Wars* in context. Of the two authors, Anna Clark is a doctoral student researching Australian history school texts, and responsible for chapter 9, What do they teach our children? The principal author, Stuart Macintyre, is Ernest Scott Professor of History at the University of Melbourne, and a prolific researcher and writer whose credits include several titles covering aspects of the history of Australian history. In innumerable ways he has supported archival-based research and the causes of teaching Australian history in schools, and libraries and

archives generally. For instance he served as Secretary to the Business Archives Council (Victorian Branch) and later on the Council of the National Library of Australia, and incidentally wrote the entry on archives for the *Oxford Companion to Australian History*. He is no innocent bystander in the debates he describes: for instance he lived through the Blainey affair at the University of Melbourne, and nearly came to blows with Peter Ryan, Melbourne University Press's publisher, over what many regard as his betrayal of Manning Clark. More substantively, he has strongly challenged Keith Windshuttle's views on Indigenous history and now sets down his explanation of why these views are symptomatic of a larger and dangerous trend.

Hence at the core of *The History Wars* is a deeply felt concern about how approaches to Australia's past have become politicised far beyond the usual degree to which people in power prefer one national story, historian or historical school over another. Around that central idea are six case study chapters. Two analyse the treatment of historians Manning Clark and Geoffrey Blainey, and four focus on specific debates surrounding the celebration of the bicentenary of European settlement in 1988, the 'frontier wars' history debate, the inquiry into the National Museum's exhibitions, and various disagreements over how Australian history is treated in school textbooks. Scattered throughout there are several miscellaneous chapters: one giving an overview explaining what the wars, warriors and battles are about; a chapter (appropriately termed 'Relaxed and comfortable') which covers the use the current and previous prime ministers John Howard and Paul Keating have made of Australian historical themes and symbols and of their favoured historians Clark and Blainey; and two chapters deftly answering questions forming their titles, What do historians do? And, in relation to Australian history, what do they say?

There is much one could say and ask about this book, including the unusual concentration of central players from Melbourne, and the degree of deep hostility and personal animosity evident in the disagreements. For us, however, there are two directly relevant aspects worth highlighting.

The first relates to one of the themes evident throughout the various history wars battles, namely historians' factual accuracy and use of archival sources. The issue was there in Malcolm Ellis's infamous review of Manning Clark's first volume, is there in Geoffrey Blainey's practice of

dispensing with the 'scholarly paraphernalia' and the 'entanglements of learned references' (p. 77), hovers around accusations of inadequately researched or hearsay-based exhibitions at the National Museum, and is central to the so-called Windshuttle thesis with its allegations of deliberate and systematic misquotation and wrong citation of archival sources. Our attitude has been silence. It is doubtless born of a belief that, provided all access, copyright and reading room conditions have been observed, researchers are free to draw what ever conclusions they want to from the records. We encourage them to cite our material in a standard way, and we sometimes indemnify our staff from actions arising from use or publication. But generally, it's been disinterest; the implied message being 'Allege genocide or deny massacres, say what you like claiming the records in our care as your authority; professionally we don't care'. As the Windshuttle view expanded from *Quadrant* articles to volume one of a self-published book and begat Robert Manne's so-called counter festschrift, there have been moments of deeply felt unease with my/our silence. Against that, it is difficult to see, if we did start passing comment on researchers' varied use of 'our' records, where we should draw the line.

The second point for us arises from Macintyre's account (chapter 10, Working through the Museum's labels) of the media and political attention focused on the National Museum of Australia because of its presentation and choice of themes, and in particular the way it represented conflicts between settler and Indigenous Australians. For all Commonwealth funded cultural institutions now, the lesson of this attention and the inquiry which it eventually triggered is clear: be very careful about any angle which could be labelled 'politically correct' or 'black armband'; remember that historical facts are only those verifiable by written not oral sources; don't do anything that could be seen as advocating causes; leave visitors feeling good about their country; present history, don't debate it; be a self censor not a risk taker; don't glamorise lawbreakers; think vanilla, not chilli.

One does not expect for example the Ford Motor Company archives to mount an exhibition on slave labour in World War II. But *public* cultural institutions ideally should be independent, inclusive and challenging; in practice, they must survive in the real world. Imagine a government archives wanting to mount an exhibition called 'My heart is not breaking: the stolen generation myth' in 1992 when Paul Keating made

his ground-breaking Redfern Park speech: 'We ... smashed the traditional way of life; ... we took the children'. Macintyre's reading of the current climate is that the reverse is sadly almost impossible to imagine. In the last issue of *Archives and Manuscripts*, George Nichols suggested that if you read only one book on politics and government this year, read *Don't Tell the Prime Minister* (Scribe, 2002). If you can stretch that to two, add *The History Wars*.

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Bruce E Massis, *The Practical Library Manager*, Haworth Information Press, New York, 2003. 149pp. ISBN 0 7890 1765 2 (hard cover, US\$34.95) and ISBN 0 7890 1766 0 (soft cover US\$24.95).

Although this book is primarily aimed at library managers, it is still a useful and practical book for archivists managing reference areas. There are many areas of common purpose in the library and archive professions and this book deals with such themes such as accepting and managing organisational change, meeting the needs of internal and external clients, technology changes, and staff training. American in focus, the book still has general relevance for the Australian reader.

Chapter headings include The Challenge of Staffing; The Impact of Technology on the Library Manager; Building Core Competencies for Library Staff; Challenges and Opportunities for Planning and Implementing a Training Program for Library Staff; Creating and Implementing a Technology Training Program for Library Staff; Evaluating a Technology Training Program for Library Staff; Clicks and Bricks; The Challenge of the Virtual Library; The Library Consortium; Practical Library Development; and A Dynamic Dozen: Management Classics for the Twenty-First Century Library Manager. There are also two appendixes, notes, bibliography and an index. If the reader substitutes the word archives for library while reading there is much to gain from this publication, especially for a new manager.

In the section on staffing the author asks questions such as are recent graduates receiving adequate instruction, how can staff training take

place, what form should it be and so on. These types of questions were also asked at the ASA Archives and Records Education Stakeholders (ARES) Forum held in Melbourne in April 2003. The chapter on core competencies also reminded me of the ARES Forum where participants talked about what should be included in Australian archival courses. So despite the American library focus, I found myself asking the same sorts of questions, but with an Australian archive focus and thinking of ways that I could apply some of the suggestions in my own work and professional environment.

Appendix B includes a Technology Needs Assessment Questionnaire to assess staff needs in this area. Also included is a survey for staff training outcomes and looks at such things as the respondent's background, knowledge skills in using technology and program design and delivery.

In conclusion this book is worth a read, especially for those new to management and working in small to medium archives as it does provide an overview of the practical aspects of management, especially the all important issues of staffing and staff training.

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John Newman and Walter Jones (eds), *Moving Archives: The Experiences of Eleven Archivists*, Scarecrow Press, Lanham, Maryland, 2002. x + 124pp. ISBN 0 8108 4500 8. Hardcover, US\$35.00.

This book records the experiences of eleven American archivists who have relocated their collections. Noting that there was little written material to advise them on how to go about organising a move, the authors have set their experiences to paper for others to use in the future.

Each author begins with a brief description of their institution and their collection. They describe the facilities they had and why they were moving to a different building. They then recount the move, describing what happened, and what lessons were learned along the way.

The book contains many interesting, and in some cases quite amusing, anecdotes such as:

- have a team of black belt karate experts ready to help
- measure twice, cut once
- moving seems to be like herding cats.

At the conclusion of their stories several authors included a section entitled *Lessons Learned* or *What I would do differently* and these contain some very useful advice.

The book is a welcome addition to the literature on moving an archival collection, but it does have some failings. The first is that it would have been very useful if a summary or checklist of the authors collective experiences had been included, in the form of a *What to do* or a *What not to do*. Between them the eleven authors have had a wealth of experiences, and it would have been helpful to other archivists to set them down in tabular form.

The second problem with this book is that there is no bibliography. The authors acknowledge the paucity of written material readily available on the subject of moving an archival collection, but there is some if you are prepared to look for it. In 2000 I wrote an article on moving an archive, which was published in the UK *Journal of the Society of Archivists*. Since then another extensive article, written by Gabriella Albrecht-Kunszeri and Maida H Loeschner, has been published in *Comma* in 2001.

Some of the useful pieces of advice that are contained within this book are as follows.

Appoint a supervisor

Appoint a staff coordinator to oversee the move. This person should have the responsibility and the ability to make decisions, which will often be required 'on the run'.

Planning for the move

When planning for a move, talk to other people who have gone through similar moves. Ask them lots of questions. Look at established shelving installations similar to the one you might be planning to buy to ensure they are suitable for your collection.

Detailed planning and preparation for the move are essential. Develop a plan, but keep it clear and simple. Carefully examine the records to be moved and the space that will accommodate them, and try to anticipate

difficulties. However, even well laid plans go awry; so be flexible, be patient, and have an alternative plan for when things do go wrong.

Well before the move, walk through the new location with the removalist – look for anything that might prove to be a hindrance, eg narrow door widths, low ceiling heights, access to lifts, lack of parking facilities for removal vans, etc.

Consider whether to restrict services to the public during the move. If such services are restricted ensure that everyone who needs to know is informed well in advance. If resources allow, undertake a complete stocktake of the collection prior to the move. Ensure that all records are appropriately packaged, all are accounted for, and any unwanted records are removed from the collection.

Number and label all boxes clearly. Shrink-wrapping boxes once they are placed on trolleys is one way to help keep things together and to prevent material from falling off the trolleys during the move.

Communication before, during, and after the move

Cooperation and support from all staff are essential. Maintain active communication with all people and departments involved in the move. All decisions should be in writing and disseminated as widely as possible.

The removalist

Ensure that the moving company has first-hand experience in the packaging and transportation of archival materials, particularly when a long distance move is involved.

Interview all potential removalists and only use a company that has demonstrated practical experience with archival collections, or similar materials.

After the contract has been let talk to the removalists. Get to know their supervisor. The removalist should only pack and unpack records under direct supervision by archivists.

The move

A staff member should be with the removalist at all times. Have staff on site at both locations for security and to monitor any changes that may suddenly occur.

As almost all moves operate to very strict timeframes, set aside an area in the new location for problems that may arise in order to keep the momentum going, but leave these problems till later.

At the end of the move do a final walk through both buildings with the removalist to ensure that nothing has been left behind in the old building, and everything is accounted for in the new building.

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(William) Edward Parry, *In the Service of the Company: Letters of Sir Edward Parry, Commissioner to the Australian Agricultural Company*, volume II: June 1832–March 1834, Australian National University, Canberra, 2003. xii + 277pp. ISBN 0 7315 4634 2. \$30.00. Available from the Noel Butlin Archives Centre, Australian National University, Canberra ACT 0200.

Sir Edward Parry (1790–1855) was a glamorous and commanding figure in colonial New South Wales. Tall and strikingly handsome, he been knighted and elected a fellow of the Royal Society for his exploration of the Canadian Arctic, in search of a North-West passage. In 1827 he attempted to reach the North Pole across the ice from Spitsbergen; his record of latitude 82° 45' N stood for fifty years. Hydrographer Royal at the time of his appointment as commissioner to the Australian Agricultural (AA) Company, he landed in Sydney with his family in December 1829. The son of a fashionable doctor, Parry had made a good marriage into the Cheshire gentry, and was to father ten children. His AA Company responsibilities were on an even more heroic scale. From headquarters at Port Stephens, north of Newcastle, he managed the Company's coalmines and some 458,000 acres of pastoral holdings, carrying 32,000 sheep, 3,000 cattle and 330 horses. By 1832 his workforce numbered 60 free 'servants' and 414 convicts.

In a thoughtful preface, Alan Atkinson reminds us that the Company's 'powerful combination of free and state enterprise' was entirely 'characteristic of the period', but one 'which may be too little understood in Australian history. Here, in some ways, was a curious echo of eighteenth century mercantilism. But here too was the beginning of that

tradition, so important for Australia, which made officialdom itself into something of an entrepreneur:

... The Company's ambivalent character is frequently obvious [in Parry's correspondence] – money-making is often overlaid ... with a sense of some larger purpose, or at least some larger dignity. In that way these official records of the Company not only say something about the early possibilities of government in Australia but also about the early possibilities of capitalism.' (p. iv)

Two volumes of Parry's letters have been on deposit with the Noel Butlin Archives Centre (NBAC) since 1956. The first volume covers the period 1829–32, the second the period 1832–34 (letters 637–1107). As the second volume 'was both easier to read' and needful of less extensive conservation work, it was transcribed first. Transcription and editing has been 'a real team effort' (p. ii), involving NBAC staff and volunteers. A single page details the conventions adopted in transcribing and editing Parry's heavily and inconsistently abbreviated originals. Five further pages of notes by Pennie Pemberton supply the necessary context for making sense of the Company's land grant, its mining operations and its corporate establishment. The letters themselves are not otherwise annotated. This, however, is hardly disadvantageous because Parry is such an excellent letter writer. From internal evidence it appears that he drafted his letters into a copybook or amended an existing letter in pencil. Thereafter his secretary would prepare the final version 'in a fair hand' for his signature (p. ix).

Although this volume contains only Parry's letters (occasionally signed by his deputy), and none of his correspondents' replies, it is never difficult to make sense of the business in hand: whether it is the standing of the Company's stallions, the dispatch of wheat for milling, his repeated petitions for more assigned convict labour, or the tortuous and protracted negotiations with the far from well-disposed Governor Burke and Surveyor-General Mitchell over the exchange of part of the Company's original Port Stephens grant for land on the Liverpool Plains and the Peel River. Admittedly there are helpful diagrams, based on maps held by State Records, which the editors have inserted at the appropriate places in the text. But one of Parry's happiest gifts is his ability to identify and succinctly summarise the issues in contention, before setting down his rejoinders. The settlement of the land grant prior to his departure

from the colony in March 1834 bears witness to his tenacity, patience and diplomacy. Dignified, but not pompous, he had a nice sense of propriety, maintained with some effort during long running, and evidently vexing, jurisdictional disputes with a fellow magistrate Captain Moffatt.

Parry's watchfulness for the Company's interests went hand-in-hand with high-minded paternalism, reinforced by a goodly dose of evangelical piety. In the absence of resident clergy, he conducted services, baptised the newly born and did not scruple to remind the Company's servants of their duties, both as employees and as husbands and fathers. Service in the Royal Navy had not blunted his horror at 'the frightful and growing evils' resulting from 'the unlimited sale [and consumption] of Spirituous Liquors' on the Company's estates, producing 'disorder' and 'a constant stagnation of the Company's business'. Yet, characteristically, he also was concerned about the adverse consequences for the keeper of the 'free store', whose business would almost certainly suffer with the loss of his public house licence (pp. 102-03). Fair-minded and honourable, Parry was scrupulous in investigating complaints against the Company or its servants, but ready to take a firm stand if he judged that either had been wrongfully traduced.

These letters are enduringly interesting human documents, as well as key texts in the business history of Australia. In recognition of this importance, they and the AA Company's other archival series have recently been listed on the UNESCO Australian Memory of the World Register. The unobtrusive professionalism that NBAC staff members have brought to editing and publication is wholly commensurate with the letters' status.

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Elizabeth Shepherd and Geoffrey Yeo, *Managing Records: A Handbook of Principles and Practice*, Facet Publishing, London, 2003. xiv + 318pp. ISBN 1 85604 370 3. Hardcover, UK£34.95.

A lot has happened in recordkeeping in the past few years: the emergence of the continuum theory, AS 4390, ISO 15489, and the growing number of projects tackling the challenges of a whole range of changes in technology. Initiatives such as InterPares and the Victorian Electronic Records Strategy (VERS) come to mind. The complexities of managing email, web, and database records are some of the pre-eminent issues. There are many sources that document change, such as journals like *Archives and Manuscripts* and the various listservs.

However, for crystallising the current state of theory and practice there is nothing better than a standard text. In reviewing Elizabeth Shepherd and Geoffrey Yeo's *Managing Records: A Handbook of Principles and Practice*, the fact that change has been so widespread and so quickly upon us has never been brought so clearly to my mind. Australia's contribution to this change is also more clearly defined than ever.

Shepherd and Yeo bring their considerable experience in records management in both the private and public sector to this work. Both are respectively, the past and present directors of the Masters program in Archives and Records Management at University College, London.

In chapter one, 'Understanding Records Management', preliminary definitions are well covered, as are the explanations of the record life cycle and continuum theories. The chapter also deals with the role records have in providing evidence of business transactions and provides proof, that yes, Virginia, 'data in electronic transaction systems are records' (p. 15).

The authors leave no doubt that the world has changed and the complexity of managing records of different formats in multiple environment leaves all recordkeepers operating in a twilight zone of hybrid systems with many layers of accountability and risk.

Here the authors rely, in part, on the advice of Kennedy and Schauder (1998) and suggest that records which provide evidence should be managed as a priority, informational documents and their complexities should be acknowledged but tackled on a needs basis (p. 20).

The text follows an increasingly well-travelled road in suggesting the Designing and Implementing Recordkeeping Systems (DIRS) approach should be used for determining the recordkeeping requirements of organisations. Shepherd and Yeo investigate many aspects of the DIRS methodology as reflected in AS 4390 and ISO 15849. The DIRS methodology has been supported and practically demonstrated in the State Records of NSW and National Archives of Australia DIRKS manuals and in the State Records of Western Australia and Queensland State Archives agency recordkeeping planning processes.

Shepherd and Yeo also provide a good analysis of the context for keeping records within an organisation and seek to provide advice to develop good recordkeeping in 'power', 'role', 'task and achievement' or 'cluster and support' based organisations (p. 42).

Functional analysis and functional classification are covered in a good deal of depth and the authors provide many reasons for why functional-based classification thesauri, like Keyword AAA, were developed and are used today. Shepherd and Yeo also provide advice in classifying electronic records and developing schemes for electronic file directories.

Metadata in recordkeeping is given a high level, yet practical, treatment and references the detailed specifications of the University of Pittsburgh, National Archives of Australia's Recordkeeping Metadata Standard for Commonwealth Agencies, the Public Records Office of Victoria (VERS) metadata standards and Monash University's SPIRT project.

The chapter 'Managing appraisal, retention and disposition' cites Schellenberg's Taxonomy of Values and the Jenkinson and Griggs appraisal system as the traditional basis for appraisal theory and practice. (In 1954 the UK Government's Grigg Committee proposed a scheme that used five- and 25-year periods as appraisal 'triggers'.) The chapter examines the more recent recognition of the cultural value of records and the emergence of macro-appraisal as theory and in practice. The text also covers retention schedules and appraising legacy records in some detail.

Chapter six of the text is devoted to 'Maintaining records and assuring their integrity'. Here archival management is dealt with briefly, and in part states: 'If archival records are kept by the records management unit or by an in-house archives unit that is closely linked to it, an artificial division of the organisation's records can largely be avoided

(p. 183)'. The text cites BS 5454: 2000 *Recommendations for the storage and exhibition of archival documents* and *Keeping Archives*, as sources for further information on managing archives.

Shepherd and Yeo also examine the long-term preservation of electronic records, including the issues of short-term solutions, such as universal viewers and backward compatibility, as well as maintaining original access technology, emulation and migration. The use of standard logical formats (ACII, PD, Tiff and XML) as preservation metadata is also covered. In such a quickly developing area the amount of treatment, based on broad, currently-held thinking is a wise approach.

The text is very well referenced with a raft of explained diagrams. No photographs have been used, and I am sure this will ensure the text's longevity in some respects. *Keeping Archives* (1st edition, 1987) and my set of the *General Electric Encyclopedia of the Modern World* (1952 edition) are dated by them.

As comprehensive a subject as records management is, the authors have managed to cover the full spectrum in their 318-page text. It compares well with other 'standards' such as Diamond, and Kennedy and Schauder, and has something for the practitioner, theorist, and standard-setter. At around \$100 this English-produced text is a worthwhile acquisition for inclusion in your resource centre - I'll certainly be organising one. It provides clear insights to a variety of emergent issues and will no doubt be used as the basis for ending and starting many debates on the listservs. In *Managing Records: A Handbook of Principles and Practice*, Shepherd and Yeo give a thoughtful, comprehensive treatment of the latest (including the already well-considered) principles of recordkeeping.

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