

# The Failure or Future of American Archival History: A Somewhat Unorthodox View

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The quality of research on American archival history has been uneven and the quantity not very impressive. This essay reviews some of the highlights of American archival history research, especially the growing interest in cultural and public history that has produced some studies of interest to scholars curious about the history of archives. The essay also focuses more on why such research still seems so far removed from the interests of most archivists. The essay will consider some hopeful signs, such as the re-emergence of records and record-keeping systems as a core area for study, for a renewed emphasis on American archival history. While much needs to be done, I am optimistic that the golden age of historical research on American archives lies ahead.

## Introduction

Today, many lament the loss of historical perspectives in library and information science education and practice. Donald G. Davis, Jr., asks the following: “Where do the values that have informed us for millennia have a place—or do they at all?”<sup>1</sup> It is ironic that American archivists face a similar challenge, given the long-term tradition of history in this field and the many professionals who have such educational backgrounds.<sup>2</sup> But they do, perhaps as a result of other priorities, an educational infrastructure only beginning to focus individuals on archives and records as important topics for study, and a weak self-image that sustains minimal desire for publishing historical scholarship.

At first glance, the state of American archival history appears not to be a significant problem. There continues to be published a fair number of histories of archival programs and biographies within mainstream professional journals. This suggests that all is well. However, this idea of what constitutes archival history is too narrow. Besides, there continues to be a lack of broader, more substantive histories of record keeping, archival development, and archival theory and practice, indicating that the historical dimension in the professional education and work of

archivists is somewhat lacking. There are few in the field who seem able to connect such aspects into a more holistic view of archival history.

My 1983 essay was the first effort to summarize and describe the varied and sometimes rich literature on the history of American archives. In that essay I noted that there still remained a need for extensive state histories, institutional histories, regional histories, and a single-volume synthesis.<sup>3</sup> All remain needs fifteen years later. I discovered when I reviewed the literature in the early 1990s that a decade after my initial survey very little new research had been done of any quality and certainly not any that created much of a blip on the radar screen of historical research.<sup>4</sup> The best histories of our national archives are twenty to thirty years old,<sup>5</sup> and the best efforts to write an overview analysis of historical societies are nearly forty years old.<sup>6</sup> There also remains only one comprehensive history of archival development in a single state, and it is more than three decades old.<sup>7</sup> While there have been important new uses of primary sources for smaller studies, there have been few major monographs on archival history topics completed in the last twenty years.<sup>8</sup>

I should note that the genesis of my own research and writing developed as a result of my trying to understand the evolution of archives and records programs I worked in, leading to research conducted for a master's thesis on the development of early Maryland archives. I worked on this type of research and writing with the logical assumption that a historical perspective would help me to understand in a better fashion what I was working on and the reason why things were as they were in the organizations and profession in which I labored. I also drew on my own experience to write a rationale for the value of archival history.<sup>9</sup> While this essay has always been favorably commented on and cited, it has not—it seems to me—led to a great upsurge of interest among the archival community for writing on archival history. In hindsight, it may be that such a *practical* emphasis led to a very internally focused inquiry that works against broader and more engaging research and scholarship.<sup>10</sup>

### **Promising Developments for Historical Research within Archivy**

There are some promising signs within the American archival discipline regarding research on archival history. The expansion of graduate education has led to a stronger curriculum with a more serious focus on research and an attempt to attract students with an interest in archives to doctoral programs. As of yet, there have been few contributions to archival history that have had a major impact on the field or on others working in related realms. With what has been done, however, we can see a more sophisticated reliance on and interpretation of sources.<sup>11</sup>

Moreover, some new developments, such as the creation of new bibliographic standards, have led to analyses that provide a broader (if still applied) historical background of theory and practices.<sup>12</sup>

There has been a peripheral connection of education to an interest in history. With the emergence of a North American interest in the theoretical approach of diplomatics as a means for understanding records and record-keeping systems, there has been a revisiting of older ideas of archival science.<sup>13</sup> This has led to a re-articulation of archival history. Although not directly connected to American archival history, Richard Brown's essay on a medieval record keeper shows the way for future work. Brown argues that archivists must not superimpose modern concepts of records on earlier concerns to manage records, especially as this has been seen in the rebirth of diplomatics as the crux of an archival science. Rather, archivists must be willing to understand the historical development of records management for what it tells us about records, not for what it suggests about an archivist's or records manager's *current* professional image.<sup>14</sup>

There are other promising trends in research about archival history. There continues to be a steady, if unspectacular, number of articles published on this topic in the primary North American journals in the field. Since 1990 every other issue of *Archivaria* and one in three issues of the *American Archivist* have included an essay on archival history. However, this does not bode well for understanding American archival history, since many of these essays focus on Europe.<sup>15</sup> More important, however, has been the trend toward essays reliant on archival sources and those that establish parameters for a broader understanding of records and archives.<sup>16</sup> Members of the American archival profession are old enough now to write and publish memoirs, most notably Robert Warner's account of his effort to lead the U.S. National Archives back to an independent agency status. Memoirs have notorious problems in terms of their veracity and utility, but Warner's story is a compelling addition to the rich and troubled history of this institution—an institution that has been intertwined with the historical evolution of the American archival profession.<sup>17</sup> Even with these encouraging aspects, however, it is readily obvious that American archival history is a weak link in the professional chain.

### **Glimpses from Outside**

What is not a weak link, however, is the growing interest by those outside the archival and records profession in the historical evolution of writing, records, record keeping, archives, and historical sources. This interest is emerging in studies of the history of literacy, public memory, the culture wars, and the computer's societal impact.

The historical study of literacy has become a prime source of understanding how record-keeping systems have emerged. Archivists first became aware of this area of scholarship in 1979 when M. T. Clanchy published his work on the origins of records systems in medieval England, a far-reaching and pioneering study that bridged the gap between orality and writing and foresaw what was occurring in contemporary society with computers.<sup>18</sup> While much of this scholarship may seem irrelevant to the American archivist because it concerns either ancient or medieval notions of literacy and writing, the scholarship does reaffirm more recent notions of records as transactions and challenges many of the assumptions made about the origins of archives. At the least, scholarship in this area has led to some major re-assessments about writing with more detail about how records represent writing systems.<sup>19</sup> Rosalind Thomas's work on Greece and Rome, for example, directly confronts long-accepted notions of centralized government archives.<sup>20</sup> The re-creation of the medieval notion of record keeping, because of the renewed interest in diplomacy as a core component of archival science, is certainly challenged in studies by individuals such as Patrick Geary, who demonstrate how unsystematic these early record keepers seemed to be.<sup>21</sup> More directly relevant are the works by David Cressy on English literacy in the era of American colonization. Cressy provides an interesting perspective on document formation, the uses of communication, and the power of records and information in Tudor, Elizabethan, and Stuart England—all laying the groundwork for a fuller understanding of early American record keeping.<sup>22</sup>

The studies of historical literacy have also challenged stereotypical notions of the evolution of writing and records. In an important set of essays on alternative literacies in Mesoamerica and the Andes, a portrait of nontextual writing and record keeping describes how, "in this particular Amerindian writing tradition, a pictorial system is better suited to an environment where a multitude of often unrelated languages is spoken, allowing communication across language boundaries. By nature, alphabetic writing systems lack this flexibility."<sup>23</sup> Such insights have great potential for helping us to re-interpret the development of records and archives, discerning that it is not merely the textual information that makes them valuable but their role as evidence and symbol.

The larger context for the development of archives may be the idea of public memory, a strong new focus for studying the meaning of the past that is enriched by interdisciplinary research.<sup>24</sup> Archives—both the individual records/collections and the institutional repositories—are clearly a symbolic marker on the landscape. Archives mark the past and are formed by the past. Elsewhere I have written about how scholarship on public memory has managed to avoid specific or in-depth discussion of

archives and historical records.<sup>25</sup> But the scholarship has become so vast and far-reaching that it is hard not to see it as providing a more substantial framework for understanding at least the cultural significance (there are other significant noncultural aspects as well) of the origins and subsequent development of archives.

Since the end of the Second World War many have written about how other nations are struggling to remember aspects of the horrific acts of their forebears. Some of these works have discussed the manner in which records are being or have been used or neglected for such purposes.<sup>26</sup> While other wars have spurred on the collecting and preservation of records, the aftermath of the Second World War has led to a contested context for the meaning of records.<sup>27</sup> In fact, studies about remembering painful past events have much to inform archivists about the origins and nature of their profession and its institutions.<sup>28</sup> Some of this has led to considerable debate about the meaning and value of archives, from the Civil War to the end of the Second World War.<sup>29</sup> Ironically, this contested past, as in the interpretation and memory of the Second World War, has also been tied to developments that suggest the importance of records in general and archives in particular. This has been most evident in the controversy surrounding the role of Swiss banks in financing Adolf Hitler and subsequent generations' efforts to lay claims to assets left by and stolen from Holocaust victims.<sup>30</sup> The result has been powerful social pressure to move archives from dusty bins visited by scholars to the front pages of newspapers and on the table before public policymakers. This suggests a different kind of archival history—at least the need for such a history. If we can find studies on historic preservation that enable certain societal elements to use it to fulfill particular mandates (such as “to prompt Americans—newcomer and native alike—to accept their aesthetics, work harder, live more humbly, and appreciate Yankee traditions”),<sup>31</sup> we also need studies that show the factors leading to the origins and ongoing development of archives and historical records repositories.

Yet the association of public memory and archives is far more complex than what I have just stated. There has been an uneven reception about the importance of archives in public memory. One study about how Watergate has been perceived includes no discussion of the Presidential Records Act or of the legal wrangles and hassles over the ownership of the Nixon White House tape recordings,<sup>32</sup> despite the public interest in such secret record keeping.<sup>33</sup> Another study argues how the personal accounts by journalists have become the *de facto* societal archives for remembering and interpreting the assassination of John F. Kennedy.<sup>34</sup> What has been lost in this is an appreciation that there is a need to study the formation of presidential records, if not the memorializing event that

surrounds the establishment of presidential libraries; both topics are worthy of focus by archival historians, and neither has been well treated.<sup>35</sup>

It may be that not only the scholarship about public memory but the debate about its use in multiculturalism, textbook writing, and history standards are important for a new context for archival history. In these discussions and diatribes (and there are both, often side by side) we see a nearly simultaneous rejection and elevation of the value of historical records.<sup>36</sup> Such debates have often proceeded with little appreciation of how archives are formed, but it is likely that continuing discussions will lead us to some new understanding. This is doubly important in the so-called Information Age, when the computer has become God, information is *the* source of all power and prestige, and electronic networking is the *only* way by which this information can be disseminated.

The exploding literature on the challenges posed and promises offered by the computer also contributes to studies with implications for understanding the development of modern record-keeping systems. Thomas Landauer's efforts to reconsider the claims of the computer's productivity have led him to write extensively about automated record-keeping systems.<sup>37</sup> His work is reminiscent of earlier histories completed on office systems and work that, while examining issues such as gender and communication, provides some of the most in-depth understanding of how records and information technologies have evolved in the past century and a half.<sup>38</sup> These studies provide a new understanding about the importance of records and the challenges confronting the maintenance of archives.

Histories of other information technologies also are useful for understanding the impact on traditional record-keeping systems. Many archivists have lamented that telecommunications technologies such as the telephone, with its ability to provide quicker communication with a lower cost, have affected what is captured in transactional records. However, histories of the telephone suggest that initially its success was not certain, and its reasons for success often had little to do with its technical attributes.<sup>39</sup> Considering such histories should indicate to archivists the need for fuller studies of records and archives. Has the creation of archival programs been sustained by the more ephemeral nature of electronic information systems? Have these new and emerging systems really affected society's ability to document itself?

The impact of computer technology on organizations and individuals has also prompted many concerns about the social, ethical, political, and other impacts of the technology.<sup>40</sup> From my vantage point it seems that such concerns have led to a renewed interest in matters that have considerable implications for understanding the history of records systems and archives, such as access and privacy, handwriting, personal record

keeping, and so forth. Regarding privacy and/or access, new scholarship has emerged that re-examines such complex matters as the impact of opening secret police files, the negative ramifications of government secrecy, and the problems inflicted on personal lives by preserving and opening private papers.<sup>41</sup> While archivists and other records professionals have written extensively on privacy and access over the past two decades, none of their work has led to significant new studies of the history of record keeping and archives. That this is a loss can be seen in E. Wayne Carp's recent study of secrecy in adoption, which provides an extensive history of the evolution of adoption records systems since the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>42</sup>

The growing influence of electronic media has also prompted a new interest in the cultural history of older record-keeping technologies. Tamara Plakins Thornton's study of American handwriting is a prime example with a major emphasis on the evolution of scripts, the teaching of particular scribal traditions, and the emergence of autograph collecting as part of a resistance to other information technologies such as the typewriter and office equipment.<sup>43</sup> There has developed, for example, an intense interest in diary writing, the most intimate and personal record-keeping approach. The scholarship in this area has stressed the history of diary writing and, in some cases, has even argued that the process of personal diary writing has served as a surrogate for local archives and the documentation process.<sup>44</sup> Some of the concern about the new technologies has been directed toward understanding how objects or artifacts such as records could be authentic or reliable in the new cyberculture or virtual reality. Studies that address such matters have a direct connection to the understanding of the continuing evolution of record-keeping systems and archives. Anthony Grafton's anecdotal history of the footnote is an explanation of one form of authority.<sup>45</sup> An increasing interest in forgeries is another indication of such concerns and an important one for archives, given that the origins of archival science (diplomats) rests with the business of detecting forgeries.<sup>46</sup>

The development of the World Wide Web and other information technologies has also increased the sense that visualization is superseding text in much the same manner that writing superseded oral communication. There has been increased attention paid to the history of photography, for example, and this has in some cases provided a new base for archivists to rethink the evolution of this technology as a record-keeping system.<sup>47</sup> It is also no surprise that the study of book collecting as well as a scholarship that examines the future of the book have developed. For some it might be surprising that the writing about the collecting of books has easily lapsed over into chronicling the acquisition of manuscripts and the origins of special collections.<sup>48</sup>

The onslaught of cyberculture is not the only stimulus to useful scholarship with implications for archival history. While archivists have focused on small institutional studies and biographies, more substantial studies that provide probes into certain aspects of records and archives have appeared. Some historians have written detailed accounts of particular record-keeping systems as sources of information, such as the census.<sup>49</sup> A growth in the examination of nonprofit management has produced some excellent studies of research institutions chronicling their fiscal management and their development as collections.<sup>50</sup> Textual criticism has also produced some notable work that historians of archives and records could draw on. This work ranges from the role of scribes and clerical bureaucrats with a sense of the influence of records in Latin America to an interpretation of the creation of the British Empire via research, classification, and documentation to critiques of individual documents.<sup>51</sup> The availability and value of such research are only beginning to be appreciated by a fairly limited group of archivists.

Finally, the archivist or person interested in archives might find some insights on the history of records and archives in unlikely sources. Writers who revisit their own past wind up waxing eloquently about their family papers.<sup>52</sup> The current spate of popular writings by professionals such as engineers and architects also provides some useful surprises such as Henry Petroski's ruminations on paper clips and the pencil.<sup>53</sup> The continuing fascination with measure and quantification has also produced important references for comprehending the development of legislation for creating records and financial systems such as double-entry book-keeping. What we are reading about in these volumes concerns the records ultimately considered for archives.<sup>54</sup>

## **Conclusion**

If we expect to see a vibrant interest in the history of archives, archivists and other information professionals need to expand their views about the topic. There needs to be an acceptance of the interdisciplinary nature of research in the field, but it has to be one that will enrich both those studying this within and without the disciplinary boundaries. Archivists and other records professionals have much to gain from these other fields, but it is not a one-way benefit. Archivists and records managers may have a greater sensitivity to professional issues that provides insights others might lack.

The other need is to expand archivists' and others' views beyond traditional archives—the traditional efforts to acquire and preserve historic manuscripts and records—to an understanding of records and record-keeping systems. I mentioned earlier the resurgence of interest in diplo-



matics, but this interest has partly grown because of the challenges posed by electronic records. Archivists have been forced to rethink their cherished mission, how they define records, and for and with whom they work. Out of this comes the essence of a new power for archival history. Understanding records and record-keeping systems naturally leads us to think about why they have been created, what uses they have, and issues about their maintenance. The muse of history, Clio, would be happy to help archivists and records managers in such endeavors.

A revitalized archival history will take more than an Archival History Round Table in the Society of American Archivists (where one has existed for more than a decade) or even partnerships with the Library History Round Table, which is celebrating its golden anniversary, in the American Library Association. It will require an understanding of the significance of the historical perspective for everyday, practical archival work. It will require the continued expansion of graduate archival education with time and opportunity to study the history of archives and record keeping. And, finally, it will require a scholarship with more breadth and depth than what has thus far passed for archival history. My own sense is that we will see a growth in the historical study of records and record keeping because of the modern sensibility about their importance.

## Notes

1. Donald G. Davis, Jr., "Ebla to the Electronic Dream: The Role of Historical Perspectives in Professional Education," *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 39 (Summer 1998): 228-35 (quote p. 230).

2. This can be seen in the research they conduct, and this research has not emphasized historical studies. See Richard J. Cox, "An Analysis of Archival Research, 1970-92, and the Role and Function of the *American Archivist*," *American Archivist* 57 (Spring 1994): 278-88.

3. Richard J. Cox, "American Archival History: Its Development, Needs, and Opportunities," *American Archivist* 46 (Winter 1983): 31-41. For a more comprehensive, international bibliography of the same era, see Frank B. Evans, comp., *The History of Archives Administration: A Select Bibliography* (Paris: UNESCO, 1979).

4. Richard J. Cox, "Other Atlantic States: Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, New Jersey, and South Carolina," in H. G. Jones, ed., *Historical Consciousness in the Early Republic: The Origins of State Historical Societies and Collections, 1791-1861* (Chapel Hill: North Caroliniana Society and North Carolina Collection, 1995), 102-24.

5. H. G. Jones, *The Records of a Nation: Their Management, Preservation, and Use* (New York: Atheneum, 1969); and Donald R. McCoy, *The National Archives: America's Ministry of Documents 1934-1968* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978).

6. David D. Van Tassel, *Recording America's Past: An Interpretation of the Development of Historical Societies in America 1607-1884* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960); and Walter Muir Whitehill, *Independent Historical Societies:*

*An Enquiry into Their Research and Publication Functions and Their Financial Future* (Boston: Boston Athenaeum, 1962).

7. H. G. Jones, *For History's Sake: The Preservation and Publication of North Carolina History 1663–1903* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1966).

8. Works such as Victor Gondos, Jr., *J. Franklin Jameson and the Birth of the National Archives 1906–1926* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981) and Burl Noggle, *Working with History: The Historical Records Survey in Louisiana and the Nation, 1936–1942* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1981) remain unsurpassed. Barbra Buckner Higginbotham, *Our Past Preserved: A History of American Library Preservation 1876–1910* (Boston: G. K. Hall and Co., 1990) is closely related and does examine many original sources.

9. Richard J. Cox, "On the Value of Archival History in the United States," *Libraries & Culture* 23 (Spring 1988): 135–51.

10. This is similar to problems faced in library history: "Because a sizable percentage of all books that are read come from libraries, a broad history of the uses of literacy must eventually incorporate some history of the uses of libraries. Until now, historians of libraries have focused more on internal professional development than on readers or the circulation of books." Carl F. Kaestle, Helen Damon-Moore, Lawrence C. Stedman, Katherine Tinsley, and William Vance Trollinger, Jr., *Literacy in the United States: Readers and Reading since 1880* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1991), 66.

11. See, for example, the theoretical contribution of Trevor Livelton, *Archival Theory, Records, and the Public* (Lanham, Md.: Society of American Archivists and Scarecrow Press, 1996).

12. Terry Eastwood, ed., *The Archival Fonds: From Theory to Practice* (Ottawa: Bureau of Canadian Archivists, 1992) is a good example.

13. This can be seen in the influence of the diplomatics approach at the University of British Columbia master's in archival studies program and the emergence of a substantial amount of writing about the history of records systems and record keeping. The theoretical foundation of this approach was captured in Luciana Duranti's six-part series on diplomatics published in *Archivaria*, a series recently published as a book (Luciana Duranti, *Diplomatics: New Uses for an Old Science* [Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press for the Society of American Archivists, 1998]). That diplomatics has taken on a new and re-invigorated role can be seen in the special issue of the *American Archivist* on "Diplomatics and Modern Records" (volume 59, Fall 1996).

14. Richard Brown, "Death of a Renaissance Record-Keeper: The Murder of Tomasso da Tortona in Ferrara, 1385," *Archivaria* 44 (Fall 1997): 1–43.

15. In the 1990–97 run of *Archivaria*, 18 of the 191 articles were on archival history, and 10 of 15 issues had an article on this topic. In the 1990–97 run of the *American Archivist*, 14 of the 267 articles were on archival history, and 10 of the 32 issues had an article on this topic. In the *American Archivist*, 4 of the 14 articles were on European archival history; in *Archivaria*, 3 of the 15 articles were on European archival history.

16. Some of these noteworthy essays on American archives are Alfred E. Lemmon, "The Archival Legacy of Spanish Louisiana's Colonial Records," *American Archivist* 55 (Winter 1992): 142–55; Dennis East, "The Ohio Historical Society and Establishment of the State's Archives: A Tale of Angst and Apathy," *American Archivist* 55 (Fall 1992): 562–77; Margaret O'Neill Adams, "Punch Card Records: Precursors of Electronic Records," *American Archivist* 58 (Spring 1995): 182–201; Anke Voss-Hubbard, "'No Documents—No History': Mary Ritter Beard

and the Early History of Women's Archives," *American Archivist* 58 (Winter 1995): 16–30; and Robert D. Reynolds, Jr., "The Incunabula of Archival Theory and Practice in the United States: J. C. Fitzpatrick's *Notes on the Care, Cataloguing, Calendaring and Arranging of Manuscripts* and the Public Archives Commission's Uncompleted 'Primer of Archival Economy,'" *American Archivist* 54 (Fall 1991): 466–82. A noteworthy historical analysis of theoretical matters, with implications for North American archivy, is Terry Cook, "What Is Past Is Prologue: A History of Archival Ideas since 1898, and the Future Paradigm Shift," *Archivaria* 43 (Spring 1997): 17–63.

17. Robert M. Warner, *Diary of a Dream: A History of the National Archives Independence Movement, 1980–1985* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1995).

18. A revised second edition of the original 1979 work was issued as M. T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record: England 1066–1307*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1993).

19. Of prime importance is Henri-Jean Martin, *The History and Power of Writing*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994). See also the works by Jack Goody, *The Interface between the Written and the Oral* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987) and *The Logic of Writing and the Organization of Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), which seem to serve as points of departure for many other commentators and disciplines on writing and literacy.

20. Rosalind Thomas, *Literacy and Orality in Ancient Greece* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992). For other interesting works on ancient literacy, see William V. Harris, *Ancient Literacy* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989) and Denise Schmandt-Besserat, *How Writing Came About*, abridged ed. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996). The latter provides an interesting look at the origins of writing systems from tokens used to capture ancient commercial transactions.

21. Patrick J. Geary, *Phantoms of Remembrance: Memory and Oblivion at the End of the First Millennium* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994). Other interesting works on the medieval period are Brian Stock, *Listening for the Text: On the Uses of the Past* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990) and *The Implications of Literacy: Written Language and Models of Interpretations in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1987).

22. David Cressy, *Bonfires and Bells: National Memory and the Protestant Calendar in Elizabethan and Stuart England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989); *Coming Over: Migration and Communication between England and New England in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); *Literacy and the Social Order: Reading and Writing in Tudor and Stuart England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980).

23. Peter L. van der Loo in Elizabeth Hill Boone and Walter D. Mignolo, eds., *Writing without Words: Alternative Literacies in Mesoamerica and the Andes* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994), 84.

24. The burst of research has been well documented in Patrick H. Hutton, *History as an Art of Memory* (Hanover: University of Vermont, 1993).

25. Richard J. Cox, "The Concept of Public Memory and Its Impact on Archival Public Programming," *Archivaria* 36 (Autumn 1993): 122–35. I focused on John Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992); David Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry: The Uses of Tradition in the Early Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990); and Michael

Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991).

26. See, for example, Ian Buruma, *The Wages of Guilt: Memories of War in Germany and Japan* (New York: Meridian, 1994).

27. See, especially, the Australian experience in Alistair Thomson, *Anzac Memories: Living with the Legend* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).

28. An interesting study to begin with is Kenneth E. Foote, *Shadowed Ground: America's Landscapes of Violence and Tragedy* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997).

29. Robert Brent Toplin, ed., *Ken Burns's The Civil War: Historians Respond* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996). The Enola Gay Exhibition debate has been particularly powerful. See, for example, Martin Harwit, *An Exhibit Denied: Lobbying the History of Enola Gay* (New York: Copernicus, 1996); Edward T. Linenthal and Tom Engelhardt, eds., *History Wars: The Enola Gay and Other Battles for the American Past* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 1996); and Philip Nobile, ed., *Judgment at the Smithsonian* (New York: Marlowe and Co., 1995).

30. Tom Bower, *Nazi Gold: The Full Story of the Fifty-Year Swiss-Nazi Conspiracy to Steal Billions from Europe's Jews and Holocaust Survivors* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1997); Isabel Vincent, *Hitler's Silent Partners: Swiss Banks, Nazi Gold, and the Pursuit of Justice* (New York: William Morrow and Co., 1997); and Jean Ziegler, *The Swiss, the Gold, and the Dead*, trans. John Brownjohn (New York: Harcourt Brace and Co., 1998). A similar controversy about stolen art treasures has also resulted in new studies that re-explore archives and demonstrate their importance. See Hector Feliciano, *The Lost Museum: The Nazi Conspiracy to Steal the World's Greatest Works of Art* (New York: HarperBooks, 1997); Lynn H. Nicholas, *The Rape of Europa: The Fate of Europe's Treasures in the Third Reich and the Second World War* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994); and Elizabeth Simpson, ed., *The Spoils of War: World War II and Its Aftermath: The Loss, Reappearance, and Recovery of Cultural Property* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, in association with the Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts, 1997).

31. James M. Lindgren, *Preserving Historic New England: Preservation, Progressivism, and the Remaking of Memory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 155.

32. Michael Schudson, *Watergate in American Memory: How We Remember, Forget, and Reconstruct the Past* (New York: Basic Books, 1992).

33. See, for example, Michael R. Beschloss, ed., *Taking Charge: The Johnson White House Tapes, 1963-1964* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997); Tom Blanton, ed., *White House E-Mail: The Top Secret Computer Messages the Reagan/Bush White House Tried to Destroy* (New York: New Press, 1995); Stanley I. Kutler, ed., *Abuse of Power: The New Nixon Tapes* (New York: Free Press, 1997); and Ernst R. May and Philip D. Zelikow, eds., *The Kennedy Tapes: Inside the White House during the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1997).

34. Barbie Zelizer, *Covering the Body: The Kennedy Assassination, the Media, and the Shaping of Collective Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

35. The potential to study such records can be seen in Carol Gelderman, *All the Presidents' Words: The Bully Pulpit and the Creation of the Virtual Presidency* (New York: Walker and Company, 1997), which tracks the influence of speechwriters on the modern presidency, and Harold Holzer, comp. and ed., *Dear Mr. Lincoln: Letters to the President* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1993), which includes an interesting description of how the president's secretaries contributed to the creation of his records.

36. See, for example, Lynne Cheney, *Telling the Truth: Why Our Culture and Our Country Have Stopped Making Sense—and What We Can Do about It* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995); Todd Gitlin, *The Twilight of Common Dreams: Why America Is Wracked by Culture Wars* (New York: Metropolitan Books, Henry Holt and Co., 1995); Lawrence W. Levine, *The Opening of the American Mind: Canons, Culture and History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996); James W. Loewen, *Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong* (New York: New Press, 1995); Gary B. Nash, Charlotte Crabtree, and Ross E. Dunn, *History on Trial: Culture Wars and the Teaching of the Past* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997); Peter N. Stearns, *Meaning over Memory: Recasting the Teaching of Culture and History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993).

37. Thomas K. Landauer, *The Trouble with Computers: Usefulness, Usability, and Productivity* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1995).

38. The classic work of this type remains JoAnne Yates, *Control through Communication: The Rise of System in American Management* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989). For an example of the type of study that considers women in the workplace, see Margery W. Davies, *Woman's Place Is at the Typewriter: Office Work and Office Workers 1870–1920* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1982).

39. Claude S. Fischer, *America Calling: A Social History of the Telephone to 1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).

40. This is why areas of scholarship such as cyberculture and social informatics have developed. For the latter, visit the Center for Social Informatics at <http://www.slis.indiana.edu/CSI>. For a view on cyberculture, visit the Resource Center for Cyberculture Studies at <http://otal.umd.edu/~rccs>.

41. Timothy Garton Ash, *The File: A Personal History* (New York: Random House, 1997); Robert Jay Lifton and Greg Mitchell, *Hiroshima in America: A Half Century of Denial* (New York: Avon Books, 1995); Angus MacKenzie, *Secrets: The CIA's War at Home* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); David Rudenstine, *The Day the Presses Stopped: A History of the Pentagon Papers Case* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996); Janna Malamud Smith, *Private Matters: In Defense of the Personal Life* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1997); and Mary Gordon, *The Shadow Man* (New York: Vintage Books, 1996).

42. E. Wayne Carp, *Family Matters: Secrecy and Disclosure in the History of Adoption* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998).

43. Tamara Plakins Thornton, *Handwriting in America: A Cultural History* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1996).

44. See, for example, Suzanne L. Bunkers and Cynthia A. Huff, eds., *Inscribing the Daily: Critical Essays on Women's Diaries* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1996); Andrew Hassam, *Sailing to Australia: Shipboard Diaries by Nineteenth-Century British Emigrants* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1995); Alexandra Johnson, *The Hidden Writer: Diaries and the Creative Life* (New York: Anchor Book, Doubleday, 1997); Kenneth A. Lockridge, *The Diary, and Life, of William Byrd II of Virginia, 1674–1744* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1987); Thomas Mallon, *A Book of One's Own: People and Their Diaries* (New York: Ticknor and Fields, 1984); James G. Moseley, *John Winthrop's World: History as a Story: The Story as History* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992); Stuart Sherman, *Telling Time: Clocks, Diaries, and English Diurnal Form, 1660–1785* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996); and Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *A Midwife's Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard, Based on Her Diary, 1785–1812* (New York: Vintage Books, 1990). The Sherman and Ulrich studies are especially useful.

45. Anthony Grafton, *The Footnote: A Curious History* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997).

46. For interesting studies on forgeries, see Pat Bozeman, ed., *Forged Documents: Proceedings of the 1989 Houston Conference, Organized by the University of Houston Libraries* (New Castle, Del.: Oak Knoll Books, 1990); Anthony Grafton, *Forgers and Critics: Creativity and Duplicity in Western Scholarship* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990); Charles Hamilton, *The Hitler Diaries: Fakes That Fooled the World* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1991); Robert Harris, *Selling Hitler* (New York: Penguin Books, 1986); Steven Naifeh and Gregory White Smith, *The Mormon Murders: A True Story of Greed, Forgery, Deceit, and Death* (New York: New American Library, 1988).

47. Some interesting and noteworthy works include Julia Hirsch, *Family Photographs: Content, Meaning, and Effect* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981); Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997); Celia Lury, *Prosthetic Culture: Photography, Memory, and Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1998); and John Tagg, *The Burden of Representation: Essays on Photographies and Histories* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993).

48. See, for example, Nicholas A. Basbanes, *A Gentle Madness: Bibliophiles, Bibliomanes, and the Eternal Passion for Books* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1995).

49. Margo J. Anderson, *The American Census: A Social History* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1988).

50. Jed I. Bergman, in collaboration with William G. Bowen and Thomas I. Nygren, *Managing Change in the Nonprofit Sector: Lessons from the Evolution of Five Independent Research Libraries* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1996); and Kevin M. Guthrie, *The New-York Historical Society: Lessons from One Nonprofit's Long Struggle for Survival* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1996).

51. Angel Rama, *The Lettered City*, trans. and ed. John Charles Chasteen (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996); Thomas Richards, *The Imperial Archive: Knowledge and the Fantasy of Empire* (London: Verso, 1993); and Jay Fliegelman, *Declaring Independence: Jefferson, Natural Language, and the Culture of Performance* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1993).

52. Ian Frazier, *Family* (New York: HarperPerennial, 1994).

53. Henry Petroski, *The Evolution of Useful Things* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992) and *The Pencil: A History of Design and Circumstance* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990).

54. Alfred W. Crosby, *The Measure of Reality: Quantification and Western Society, 1250-1600* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).