

and leaves us unable to understand the final text in all its complexity (p. 291). She discusses the first novel written by a black woman, Miriam Tlali, in South Africa. Published in 1975, this novel went through a number of incarnations before appearing in its final form. The porous boundaries between biography, literary text, and archive are seen as valuable and important; they are to be encouraged, understood, and maintained. The experiences of GALA (Gay and Lesbian Archives of South Africa) and the decision to formally institutionalise records which chronicle the struggles of gays and lesbians, thus making them generally available to a larger constituency, are described by Graeme Reid. GALA is housed at the University of Witwatersrand and as such is part of the general research arena, but GALA also maintains outreach services to the community thus preserving some aspects of a radical archiving practice (p. 203).

One of the greatest strengths of this book is that readers have an opportunity to hear from scholars whose opinions and perspectives on the subject of the archive are of great significance but whose names are generally unknown in the archival literature of the “global hub.” And what a benefit to our profession it would be someday to devise a method of hearing from other observers and commentators, whose viewpoints on the archive, and its power, could help us see ourselves as the political entities that we are, but who do not have access to any forum currently available. The silent periphery haunts us still.

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Managing Records as Evidence and Information. RICHARD J. COX. Westport, Connecticut: Quorum Books, 2001. 243 p. ISBN 1-56720-231-4.

This companion volume to Richard Cox's *Closing an Era: Historical Perspectives on Modern Archives and Records Management* (2000) is a recitation of the errors and omissions of the archival and records management professions under the guise of a critical consideration of “the fundamental principles supporting” archives and records policy. The apparent deception is a disappointment only if you are truly seeking a comprehensive, critical examination of the varied and complex principles and contingencies supporting archives and records policy that have a resonance with the management of such programs. Otherwise readers will find a “series of discourses on the fundamentals of archives and records management needing to be understood *before* any organisation attempts to define and set ... policy affecting records and information” (p. xi). This work has little to do with policy per se and more to do with Cox's critique of archives and records management issues ranging from electronic records management to advocacy and archival education. The

premise is that policy work should begin with revisiting our errors in order to rediscover our calling as records experts, and the rediscovery of the record. Policy matters are not irrelevant, but for the purposes of this volume, secondary to the necessity of Cox's call for a records-centred revival.

Because naming the problem is the first step, patient readers (presumably the disappointed policy analysis seekers have fled) accepting this premise will find an intriguing if not occasionally rambling survey, according to Richard Cox, of missed opportunities by the archives and records management professions. Ultimately, then, the promise of policy is not a guise but a clever invention, designed to capture our attention (who could resist, after all, the dazzling bauble that is policy) for the real purpose of reviewing the professions' missteps. Editorial beguiling aside, is this higher purpose of coming to terms with the meaning and substance of the record well served by Cox's review? Does this premise adequately explore the issues related to supporting archives and records policy?

Based on Richard Cox's prolific and thoughtful writing in approximately eighteen separately published articles (over the last ten years), the book's five chapters sadly offer him in a sometimes incoherent compilation of arguments recalling the failures of archivists and records managers to seize the opportunities afforded by technology, and our inherent and rightful place to govern and manage records. The tone of this work bears additional mention over content precisely because its polemic nature may lead to obscuring a series of interesting, but poorly constructed, discussions. Claiming no particular or clear audience, the chapters contain a discomfiting frequency of phrases beginning with "archivists and records managers *should*." Archivists and records managers should strengthen their understanding of information technology and its effect on privacy and access, of professional ethics, of the limitations of laws and policies, and of their potential role in the commercialization of their records. Amongst our failings archivists and records managers have: missed the opportunities afforded by technological transformation of the workplace; allowed professional divisiveness to compromise collaboration between records professionals; missed opportunities for advocacy; and been too concerned with curatorial manuscript functions (archivists) and/or matters of housekeeping efficiency and routine tasks (records managers).

There are truths here, but little in the way of revelations or newly controversial issues. Cox is accurate and thorough on some issues but more often bluntly narrow in other areas (notably in the way management and institutional culture shape the strategies used in support of archives and records policy). Technology, advocacy, education, and the profession each open up a range of critical issues, sobering in their importance and worthy of a reminder if we are to transform, evolve, and sustain our institutions and the profession. Unfortunately this exploration of the issues offers little insight or mention of

the obstacles, impediments, and considerable nuances evident in negotiating these issues within our institutions and professional communities. Presumably Cox shares in at least some of these blunders (read: missed opportunities) if only for the therapeutic sake of an entire profession's *mea culpa*. The truly unfortunate result is that many of his arguments fall prey to a seemingly cut-and-paste polemic culled from the original articles, at times sympathetic, often admonishing, and more frequently too authoritatively distant from reality for an author otherwise known for insightful work on the profession and its issues.

Get past wincing at the tone and the content emerges. Chapter one entitled "Starting Policy: Defining Records," explores various definitions of the record, the impediments brought by the damaging stereotype and perception of the archivist and records manager; the necessity for collaboration between records managers and archivists; the potential dangers to the protection of the record by institutional convergence (between libraries, archives, and museums); and Cox's criticism of the archival community's inability to confront technological issues. Chapter two entitled "Driving Policy: Focusing on Records, Not Technology," considers the nature of computer literacy, how records professionals approach technological literacy and information literacy (Cox recommends we focus on the latter); and the nature of organizational change as a result of new technologies. The remaining chapters each include the term policy in the title (the Policy's Spine, the Policy's Aim, Supporting Policy) but make little connection between the functions of policy and the range of issues described including records management scheduling, advocacy, and archival education.

Cox's summary lessons include the following: Any archives and records policy must be based on our ability to defend the substance and purpose of records; we must ensure that we maintain a central role in administering records; our sponsor organizations need to manage records to support accountability, the protection of crucial evidence, and the nurturing of corporate memory; co-operation between archives and records management is not only optimal but essential; and each of these issues will have vast implications for training. A high point amidst the summary lessons is Cox's interesting discussion and review of *The New York Times* articles dealing with records and/or archives issues (see Chapter four "The Policy's Aim: Reaching the Public"). Overall Cox is harshest in his review of American manuscript archivists, saving perhaps undue virtues and praise for the Australian and Canadian archival community. While the chapters lack coherence, Cox's tangents and footnotes provide a review of the state of archives and records management theory and practice in North America over the last fifty years (though the use of 772 footnotes in less than 200 pages again begs the question of intended audience). It is some consolation that we alone are not solely responsible for our fate, as Cox lays equal and due responsibility with our institutions, the media and public, and our national organizations and professional associations, claiming

in particular that the divisiveness between archivists and records managers contributes to our continuing alienation from the true meaning of the record and our record-keeping responsibilities.

Not sufficiently considered by this work is the range of implications that managing technology (and record keeping systems) has for archival and records institutions. What organizational changes within our institutions will be necessary to carry Cox's fundamentals and their future policies? How much will we each be willing to change, relinquish, gain as we evolve to position ourselves to undertake electronic records initiatives? How will our organizational culture and institution type shape the direction of these initiatives and new collaborations? Will this potential for diversity in the way we manage our focus on the record necessarily forge collaboration among records professionals (as Cox proposes) or fracture it further? Perhaps more archivists and records managers working in institutions *should* be writing about *these* issues soon. In sum, this is a disappointing compilation. Readers unfamiliar with Richard Cox's writing would be better served by his journal publications for a more coherent rendition of the important arguments in this work.

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Appraising Moving Images: Assessing the Archival and Monetary Value of Film and Video Records. SAM KULA. Lanham: Scarecrow Press Inc., 2002. 155 p. ISBN 0-8108-4368-4.

Appraising Moving Images is a groundbreaking work in many ways. For the first time, the gamut of historical and current theory of moving image appraisal has been brought together with considerable practical experience to be discussed and re-interpreted for the new century. Its author – Sam Kula – is well-known to both the Canadian archival community and the international moving image archival community. He worked at the British Film Institute and the American Film Institute in the 1950s and 1960s, and was the driving force behind the establishment and phenomenal growth of the National Archives of Canada's film and television holdings in the 1970s. He authored the first serious treatment on film appraisal, *The Archival Appraisal of Moving Images: A RAMP Study With Guidelines* (some ideas of which are carried over to this new work) published by UNESCO in 1983. And though retired he remains active in the field. He is currently the president of the Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA), is on the board of the AV Preservation Trust, and advises the Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board (CCPERB) on moving image issues. His experience in three countries is unmatched, his knowledge is both broad and exhaustive.

The book is misleadingly slim. In a volume that normally would take twice