

strategies, Heron writes “in the text and graphic of temperance publications, the ‘traffic’ [liquor traffic or commercial enterprise] came to life as reptilian beasts, serpents, or menacing birds of prey, often drawn from the imaginative realm of folk and fairy tales (there was far less interest in the apparent realism of photography as an educational tool)” (p. 149). The question of why photographs were not employed by the WTCU would make a fascinating study and would enrich the understanding of their ability to convince society of the legitimacy of their ideas through the use of visual imagery.

Heron’s tone in *Booze* is undeniably sympathetic towards “wet voices” but perhaps he comes from it honestly as a labour historian. He feels that groups such as the WTCU unjustly blamed and targeted working class men and their affection for saloons. Cook concurs that “the early WTCU in both the United States and Canada viewed drink as the primary cause of poverty” (p. 90). It wasn’t until the early twentieth century that labour voices began to argue their own point of view. “Give the workingman sufficient money to enable him to make his house a home and then he will stop drinking” an Independent Labor Party member stated in 1911 (Heron, p. 223). Women too began to redefine their role in society, including re-evaluating the idea that morally responsible women didn’t drink. These reasons, and also the return of First World War veterans, angered to learn that the freedoms they had thought they were fighting for (such as the right to enjoy a drink in public) were being overturned at home in the name of patriotism, of course led to the loosening of restrictions on drinking in Canadian society. *Booze* is prefaced with a short history of the drinking preferences of his own family. Heron’s approach is perhaps less distanced from his subject than Cook but this does not prevent *Booze* from being objective and in fact may help to draw in the reader, connecting him or her personally to the tumultuousness of drinking in Canadian history.

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The Archive and the Repertoire, Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas. DIANE TAYLOR. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003. 326 p. ISBN 0-822-33123-3.

To see ourselves as others see us may not always be a pleasant experience but is often an instructive one. Diana Taylor offers archivists just such an experience in *The Archive and the Repertoire, Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*, an examination and analysis of the expression of societal memory through embodied performance. By “repertoire” Taylor refers to a whole series of alternative non-textual cultural and historical signaling that includes the entire panoply of performance arts as well as the embodiment of events by

both actors and audience. By “archive” Taylor refers to the archival memory found within textual and other traditional physical archival materials – letters, videos, archaeological remains, compact discs – materials that are “resistant to change.” Taylor sees a rift between the “archive of supposedly enduring materials ... and the so-called ephemeral repertoire of embodied practice/knowledge” (p. 19). Conventional archives become a foil to the “archive” of performative experience, as Taylor suggests that “embodied practice, along with and bound up with other practices, offers a way of knowing” (p. 3). At the same time, this book is about the legacy of the archivally powerful, the colonizers and conquistadors who charted maps, wrote diaries and reports, and recorded their versions of the New World and its conquered inhabitants, and the powerless non-literate native peoples whose memories and cultures survive through embodied experience.

Taylor is professor of Performance Studies and Spanish and chair of the Department of Performance Studies at New York University. Her area of expertise is Latin America and she has written extensively on performance and theater in the Americas. She is also the founding director of the Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics. In the introductory chapter of *The Archive and the Repertoire* she talks about her own childhood in Northern Mexico, her banishment to private school in Canada, and her joyful return to her beloved homeland. This is no casual autobiographical excursion, but Taylor’s way of establishing a context. The dichotomies between north and south, western and non-western, colonizer and colonial, textual and performative, inform and permeate this book that is at once a scholarly analysis of social memory and a personal journey.

In the opening chapter, “Acts of Transfer,” Taylor defines what she means by performance studies, embodied memory, and archives. She sees performances as acts that transfer knowledge, culture, identity, and memory. At the same time, the public aspects of performance create a methodological lens that enables scholars to analyze performances as events. Just as Paul Connerton, in his seminal classic *How Societies Remember*,¹ described meaning through embodied practices such as clothing, public expressions, and body language, so Taylor sees performance as an epistemology, a way of self-identifying as well as imparting and transmitting social knowledge. She writes, “performance and aesthetics of everyday life vary from community to community, reflecting cultural and historical specificity as much in the enactment as in the viewing/reception” (p. 3). Above all, as she will make clear in later chapters, performative expression is the way that many non-western former colonial communities perpetuate and transmit their cultures and affirm their identities. While Taylor sees performance/repertoire as interacting with archives, she also sees archives as sites of power that have attained their status

1 Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge, 1989).

at the expense of the repertoire. Following Derrida and other postmodernists, she points out that the supposed immutable truths in the archives are, in reality, mediated and changeable. She claims that even though “the archive and the repertoire exist in a constant state of interaction, the tendency has been to banish the repertoire to the past” (p. 21). The succeeding chapters are efforts to redress this balance by presenting different scenarios as paradigms of social structures and behaviours that “allow us to draw from the repertoire as well as the archive” (p. 29). The scenarios she proposes include elements of physical space, the embodiment of the social actors and the multiple forms of transmission within the scenarios themselves such as writing, dancing, telling, and the audience. She offers illustrations and analyses of these various scenarios. In “Scenarios of Discovery,” for example, Taylor revisits the Columbus story, utilizing Columbus’ first letter from the Caribbean to his Spanish patrons in 1493 as a framework for deconstructing the Columbus myth in terms of communication, language, and cultural “transfers.” At the same time, however, Taylor shows us how a scenario has been created that will be acted and re-enacted through the ages: the scenario of the conqueror. She reenacts the “discovery” as theater, with Columbus at center stage for his European audience – the indigenous peoples are merely the “unauthorized spectators” creating the illusion of acquiescence, “the scenario thus situates the discoverer as the one who “sees” and controls the scene, and who never feels obliged to describe or situate himself” (p. 61). Other chapters explore and interpret deliberate theatrical performances by Latin American actors as well as non-scripted public performances around events such as the funeral of Princess Diana.

The positing of archives as power relationships in the establishment of a dominant/other dichotomy is a recurrent theme in current postcolonial scholarship and archives as sites of power has become a dominant theme among archivists as well. Power is also at the center of Taylor’s book. On the one hand she explores the tensions between archives and performance/repertoire, while on the other she examines colonial power where the oppositions between writing and performance are critical elements in the colonial paradigm.

Taylor analyses the multiple facets of power relationships and the archives/repertoire equation through a wide spectrum of examples, both historical and current, that play constantly and convincingly on the juxtaposition between the fixed memorial (the archive) and the developing dynamic of the performance. In describing her experiences as a New Yorker during the destruction of the World Trade Center, she runs back and forth between her apartment window where she takes pictures, and the television screen where the performance is being horribly enacted. Here, multiple performances, as well as multiple archivings are going on. This synergy between archives and performance is made equally clear in Taylor’s description of a political demonstration in Argentina by the “children of the disappeared” (children of the thousands of Argentinian political victims of the 1970s), and the “Madres de Plaza de

Mayo” (mothers of the victims). Here official records, photographs, posters, combine with the repertoire. As Taylor writes, “when the Madres took to the street to make the disappearances visible they activated the photographs, performed them” (p. 177). This excellent and insightful book should make archivists worry – not about acknowledging alternate narratives, but about being able to fully respond to the powerful nature of the materials they hold and having the vision to place these materials within a sufficiently wide context of peoples and cultures. If, as Taylor convincingly argues, the enduring materials in the archive holds sway over the way our civilization works, then the power of archives is very great indeed, and archivists must understand both their negative as well as their positive impact on society.

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Selecting and Appraising Archives and Manuscripts. FRANK BOLES. Chicago: The Society of American Archivists, 2005. 192 p. ISBN 1-931666-11-3.

In 1999, Pulitzer prize-winning writer Larry McMurtry posed the question, “What in this age, when we are so oversupplied with information, does a given human need to remember ...?”¹ The question is amplified when one considers the range of information, not just from the current period, but also from the past. Archivists face this question continually when selecting and appraising manuscripts and archives. Obvious considerations such as the continuous space crisis for warehousing records, and the costs associated with processing, help archivists determine, to some degree, what becomes part of our collective memory. However, other determinants are less evident and archivists are often compelled to read the future in order to predict what is worthy of preservation. Now, thanks to Frank Boles and his latest contribution to the professional literature, McMurtry may have the solution to his problem.

In the introductory chapter entitled, “Why Archivists Select,” Boles discusses the realities associated with most modern archives, especially government archives. Too much information in too many formats is shared among too few archives. Tough decisions must be made with respect to selection because of the overabundance of records. He adds that no one is better equipped to assume this societal responsibility than an experienced and fully qualified archivist. From this starting point, Boles proceeds to examine the ins and outs, as well as the pitfalls and consequences, of employing flawed selec-

¹ McMurtry posed the question in his book, *Walter Benjamin at the Dairy Queen: Reflections at Sixty and Beyond* (New York, 1999).