

*Defining a Discipline: Archival Research and Practice in the Twenty-First Century, Essays in Honor of Richard J. Cox.* Edited by Jeannette A. Bastian and Elizabeth Yakel. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2020. 304 pp. Index. Softcover. \$55.00.

In their introduction to this volume, editors Jeannette Bastian and Elizabeth Yakel offer the thought that the maturity of a field of study may be marked by the recognition of its outstanding scholars. So far, few *Festschriften* honor archivists—a fact that attests to the still-recent maturing and professionalization of the discipline of archival science and its practitioners. During the career of Richard J. Cox, the honoree of this volume, archival science moved forward from many of its older practices and philosophies to become a modern, more mature, and better-defined profession. The growth of degree programs specifically offering archival education, along with the creation and adoption of archival standards and best practices at the national and international levels, continued that maturation. Cox's career also saw the application of computer technology as a tool for both the creation and management of archival records, which introduced profound and rapid changes as the technology created an ever-increasing volume of digital materials to be added to archival repositories alongside their analog counterparts. Cox entered the field at the beginning of an era of expansive growth for the archival profession, and, when he retired 40 years later, the field had expanded and evolved considerably in response to technology and sociocultural motivators.

Although this volume honors Cox as an archivist, author, educator, and mentor, it is not quite a proper *Festschrift*, as it is not so much about Cox himself as it is about how his legacy provides a path forward for the profession into the twenty-first century. The editors and almost all contributors were Cox's students or colleagues, and, in their essays, they clearly apply lessons learned from Cox to contemporary and emerging issues in archival science. The 18 essays in the book span four thematic sections, each representing an overarching issue that defined Cox's career and to which he contributed as an author or educator: accountability and evidence, ethics and education, archival history, and memory. Each section contains three or four essays, and a closing essay ties all the sections together.

The volume opens with an introduction by editors Bastian and Yakel in which they review Cox's contributions as a scholar, teacher, mentor, and leader in the profession and outline the contents of the book, noting the ways in which each essay honors, reflects, and builds upon Cox's work. The first section examines the intertwining themes of accountability and evidence, using Cox's 2006 book *Ethics, Accountability, and Recordkeeping in a Dangerous World* as a basis. David A. Wallace's opening essay addresses memory, ethics, and accountability regarding the ways in which Vietnam War atrocities and war crimes were recorded, misrecorded, and falsified in government records. Wendy Duff and Jefferson Sporn's essay examines oral history as archival evidence, considering the relationship between records and evidence, as well as the role of personal testimony and witnessing as contextualized by history and culture. Michelle Caswell and her colleagues at UCLA look at how marginalized communities understand archives as repositories of evidence that can be vital to creating social justice,

while, in the fourth essay, Luciana Duranti addresses how misinformation and disinformation result in a loss of trust in records and archival materials—and how the profession can regain that trust. Heather Soyka's closing commentary identifies common themes across the essays; namely, accountability to past and future generations, institutions and authority, and trust in recordkeeping.

The second section moves into the theme of ethics and education, with several essays echoing the topics of accountability and evidence from the first section. Heather MacNeil's essay, in response to Cox's encouragement that archivists should engage with other disciplines, engages with the idea of integrity by examining records as evidence, text, and narrative. Eleanor Mattern examines the National Archives and Records Administration's response to the 2015 news story and subsequent investigation of Hillary Clinton's use of personal email for government business, while Anne J. Gilliland and Kathy Carbone discuss the concepts of physical and intellectual movement and transformation in archives, and how these concepts can be taught as course content. Alison Langmead concludes this section by focusing on the changing foundation of archival professionalism, noting its movement from traditional neutrality, objectivity, and impartiality toward attachment, engagement, and empathy as a means of remaining viable as a profession.

The third section, which focuses on the theme of archival history, comprises three case studies. Donghee Sinn's case study examines the No Gun Ri digital community archives and how community members negotiate the shape of their own stories and contextualize them within broader society. In the following case study, Lindsay Kistler Mattock draws on theory from the Maker Movement to argue that the materiality of archival collections is often overlooked in favor of its intellectual content, leading to collections being regarded as static bodies. Her study of the archives of a nonprofit video collective uses the material value of the collection to document how archives are formed, reformed, and transformed. Patricia Galloway's case study, which summarizes her work to create a digital state archives during the 21 years from 1979 to 2000, covers the experiences of many archivists who faced the same challenges during this period and reflects Cox's interest in integrating the rapid advances in technology into archival practice. Finally, Robert B. Riter's essay concludes the section by recounting Cox's contributions to archival history. He connects the previous essays by examining shared themes of archival history, infrastructures, construction and translation, and communication, noting the importance of Cox's assertion that self-reflection is vital to the continued maturation of the profession.

The fourth section, which explores the theme of memory, likely offers topics and theoretical approaches that will particularly be of interest to readers from the broader cultural heritage community. Janet Ceja Alcalá's essay discusses the concept of social memory and its role in creating identity for a community in Mexico using fiesta videos collectively taken by community members, while Tonia Sutherland bases her essay on Cox's writings about the duty archives have to recognize the legitimacy of oral records,

citing as an example the African American tradition of passing down land through verbal bequests. Sutherland notes the important role that oral tradition plays in the collective and even legal memories of many marginalized groups. The power of records to evoke memory also figures in Jeannette A. Bastian's essay, which documents how cell phone photos and videos, websites, and other new technology changed our relationship with memory. Bastian notes the role of technology in the community archives movement and asks how "instant" memory redefines the relationship between archives and memory. Finally, Joel Blanco-Rivera closes the section with the observation that its essays collectively document the evolution of how archivists understand the concept of memory. Blanco-Rivera notes that the essays discuss the relationship between memory and technology and the importance of individual and community documentation in creating memory, especially for marginalized groups. The challenge for archivists is to redefine our concepts of what archives are.

The closing essay for the book, appropriately written by Cox's colleague, coauthor, and contemporary, James M. O'Toole, broadly details Cox's many professional and scholarly contributions over the course of his career as archivist and educator. O'Toole notes the ways in which Cox contributed to the areas of appraisal, archival history, technological advances, and archival professionalization and concludes the essay with a focus on Cox's work as a leader in archival education, especially in the areas of ethics, appraisal, and archival history.

Throughout this volume, a number of other themes emerge across the four sections, most notably the importance of collecting, preserving, and making accessible marginalized voices and the challenges archivists face as they continue to expand their definitions of what archives are and what archivists do. Throughout, archivists are further challenged to broaden their concepts of stewardship, preservation, access, and outreach beyond traditional materials and audiences and to rethink how traditional ways of "doing" archives must be changed to meet the needs of twenty-first-century users and communities. A number of essays also reflect Cox's career-long concern with the impact of technology on archival practice, to the point that this theme could have been the focus of a fifth section of the book.

One suspects that the greatest challenge these diverse essays presented to the volume editors was how to organize them into the four thematic sections. Some essays could have been placed in two or even three sections, depending on the focus the editors selected. Some readers may wish for more separation of thematic content, while others may welcome the continuity across chapters. Cox's own oil paintings of seascapes and landscapes bring an unexpected and pleasant personal touch to the volume, serving as illustrations for the cover and the title pages for each section.

Overall, this volume provides an excellent snapshot of the archival profession in the early part of the twenty-first century, while reflecting the many changes to the profession over Cox's career. His influence on his students and colleagues is evident throughout, serving as the groundwork for current research and practice. Accordingly, the book

will be of interest to archivists at all stages in their careers and to the broader cultural heritage community of practitioners, including folklorists, anthropologists, and public historians.

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