
**Archives: Principles and Practices** is a different kind of archives manual. In this book, celebrated archival theorist and consultant Laura Millar invites archivists to remember their profession as one built on common sense. Using the analogy of cooking, Millar touts **Archives: Principles and Practices** as less of a recipe book and more as a book of culinary practice that provides a foundation of knowledge about food: if you understand how yeast and gluten interact to make bread, you are better equipped to be successful in bread making than you would relying solely on a recipe. Similarly, if you have an understanding of the fundamental concepts of archival science, you will be more equipped to make decisions that fit a given situation.

**Archives: Principles and Practices** is divided into eight chapters covering the fundamental functions of archival science: an introduction to archives and archival institutions, preserving and protecting archives, key principles, appraisal and acquisition, arrangement and description, access and outreach, and digital archives. Within the chapters, one does not encounter a how-to manual style: rather, each chapter helps orient the reader towards doing archival work of the highest quality by giving a sense of the spectrum of ideas, theories and practices relevant to that area of archival work.

The first two chapters introduce the reader to archives and archival institutions, why they exist, and how, over time, they have assumed the various shapes that they have. In these pages, Millar provides an overview of the kinds of materials typically held by archives and the reasons, such as public memory and accountability, why they are kept. Within the first chapter is an exquisite explanation of content, structure and context using the example of a hypothetical sticky note found in Barack Obama’s agenda. This is one of many hands-on examples that Millar provides in order to illustrate principles or practices: some based on real situations and others on the work of fictitious archives, such as the Nakouru City and Community Archives.

In Chapter Three, Millar takes the reader through the higher level aspects of managing an archival programme, such as establishing a mandate, developing policies and complying with legislation. The chapter reads as a kind of checklist of the underlying legal, ethical and philosophical considerations that those responsible for archival programmes need to keep in mind. This chapter will be especially valuable to those trying to get an archive off the ground or struggling to make a case for resources within parent institutions.

Whether an institution has all of the necessary environmental controls and other infrastructure in place or is struggling to meet the baseline requirements of keeping records safe and intact, Chapter Four, "Protecting Archives," provides practical advice and encourages the reader to set up a preservation policy that will help govern this kind of work. Millar also approaches the chapters on "Appraising and Acquiring Archives," "Arranging and Describing Archives" and "Making Archives Available" with the same
orientation towards introducing the overall principles and practice in each of these areas, as well as common challenges or emerging issues.

While the concepts of original order, provenance and respect des fonds all underlie the daily work of an archivist, they are also key principles which tend to be discussed and debated within the sphere of archival theory. Millar's approach to tackling these principles is to move beyond the specifics of these debates in order to provide a simple overview of why these concepts figure so centrally into archival practice. She does this by illustrating principles through the use of practical examples.

Millar’s top priority is that archivists conduct their work within a framework of societal good: to acquire what can reasonably be preserved according to set mandates, to do one's utmost to physically protect archives, to make archives available to users, and to maintain their integrity as evidence of human action. How archivists go about achieving this is where she softens in order to allow for the very broad spectrum of archival circumstances around the world, providing no more than a first stop toolkit for archival professionals to do good work. Interestingly, one of the tools that emerges most throughout Millar's book is that of making solid and realistic choices: for example, having an acquisition mandate that fits an organization's resources and anticipated user base can save endless frustration and wasted resources down the road. Millar's book does well to inform readers of the key considerations in making such informed decisions from the start.

Gabrielle Prefontaine, University Archivist & FIPPA Coordinator, g.prefontaine@uwinnipeg.ca, University of Winnipeg, Winnipeg, Manitoba

This review copy was provided by way of The OLASTore. Neal-Schuman titles are distributed in Canada by the OLASTore. Members of the Partnership (http://www.thepartnership.ca/) will generally receive a discount of 5-10% on most publications. For further information about this title, please visit www.accessola.com/theolastore or contact orders@accessola.com.