

Archival Issues

Journal of the

Midwest Archives Conference

Volume 26, Number 1, 2001

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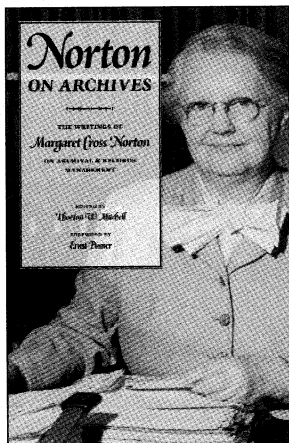
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AN ARCHIVAL CLASSIC!



NORTON ON ARCHIVES: The Writings of Margaret Cross Norton on Archival and Records Management

edited by Thornton W. Mitchell
with a foreword by Ernst Posner

This collection of essays by a pioneer in the archival profession still represents a precious source of material and study for archivists and students alike. As early as 1930, Margaret Cross Norton, who was Illinois State Archivist from 1922-1957, paved the way toward recognition of archival administration as an indispensable element of public service entitled to full public support. Her essays have a timelessness and currency that gives them a continuing value and this book stands as an important monument to her work.

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EDITORIAL POLICY

Archival Issues, a semiannual journal published by the Midwest Archives Conference since 1975, is concerned with the issues and problems confronting the contemporary archivist. The Editorial Board welcomes submissions relating to current archival practice and theory, to archival history, and to aspects of related professions of interest to archivists (such as records management and conservation management). We encourage diversity among topics and points of view. We will consider for publication submissions of a wide range of materials, including research articles, case studies, review essays, proceedings of seminars, and opinion pieces.

Manuscripts are blind reviewed by the Editorial Board; its decisions concerning submissions are final. Decisions on manuscripts will generally be made within 10 weeks of submission, and will include a summary of reviewers' comments. The Editorial Board uses the current edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style* as the standard for style, including endnote format.

Please send manuscripts (and inquiries) to Board Chair Mark Greene. Submissions are accepted as hard copy (double spaced, including endnotes; 1-inch margins; 10-point or larger type), or electronically (Microsoft Word, WordPerfect, or .rtf files) via 3 1/2" diskette or as an E-mail attachment.

Publication Reviews

Archival Issues reviews books, proceedings, Web publications, and other materials of direct relevance or interest to archival practitioners. Publishers should send review copies to Publication Reviews Editor Kevin Proffitt. Please direct suggestions for books, proceedings, Web publications, other materials for review, and offers to review publications to the Publication Reviews Editor.

Subscriptions

Subscriptions to *Archival Issues* are a part of membership in the Midwest Archives Conference; there is no separate subscription-only rate. Membership, which also includes four issues of *MAC Newsletter* and reduced registration fees for MAC's two yearly meetings, are \$30 per year for individuals and \$60 per year for institutions. Members outside of North America may elect to have the journal and newsletter mailed first class rather than bulk mail, at additional cost.

Single issues of the journal are available at \$15, plus \$1 shipping and handling.

Please direct inquiries regarding membership and purchase of journal copies to MAC Secretary Menzi Behrnd-Klodt, Klodt and Associates, 7422 Longmeadow Road, Madison, WI 53717. Phone: 608-827-5727; E-mail: menzi.behrnd-klodt@pleasantco.com.

Advertising

Display advertisements in black ink are accepted at the following rates: full page, \$250; ½ page, \$150; ¼ page, \$75; 1/8 page, \$50. These rates are discounted 20 percent for a one-volume (two-issue) commitment. Ads supplied as E-mail or on disk are preferred; camera-ready black and white acceptable. No bleed pages.

Archival Issues is pleased to consider exchange ads with other archival publications and with publications of other organizations that may be of interest to our readers.

Awards

Margaret Cross Norton Award

A panel of three archivists independent of the journal's Editorial Board presents the Margaret Cross Norton Award in odd-numbered years (alternating with the New Author Award). The Norton Award recognizes the author of what is judged to be the best article in the previous two years of *Archival Issues*. The award was established in 1985 to honor Margaret Cross Norton, a legendary pioneer in the American archival profession and the first state archivist of Illinois. The award consists of a certificate and \$250.

Cowinners were selected for volumes 23 and 24. Francis Blouin was recognized for his article, "Archivists, Mediation, and Constructs of Social Memory," 24:2, 101–112. Blouin's thoughtful and intellectually engaging article states that the role of archives in the formation of social memory is an area of study with wider practical reaches than that of a purely academic exercise. Blouin's article suggests that the study of archives and the representations of history within them bring the question of the integrity of archives to the forefront. The idea that archivists may play more than a completely objective role in the formation of the historical record strikes directly at the core of our theories and practices of archival appraisal and accountability. Through opening this discussion, Blouin opens the possibility for archivists in collections of every size and specialization to carefully consider the larger issues implicit in each collection-related decision that we make.

The other winner of the Margaret Cross Norton Award is Philip C. Bantin for his article, "Strategies for Managing Electronic Records: A New Archival Paradigm? An Affirmation of Our Archival Traditions?" 23:1, 17–34. Our colleagues who develop theoretical solutions for profound problems that face us in fulfilling our professional mandates often challenge us to rethink previously held convictions or develop practical solutions. In recent years, nowhere has this been more apparent than the complex issues facing electronic records. For many in our profession, the very subject "electronic records" seems to be a Promethean task introduced by cruel gods to haunt our dreams and impede our progress. Rarely are archivists presented with such a clear synopsis of the theoretical framework, an analysis of the crucial issues, and a series of practical suggestions as in Phil Bantin's article.

New Author Award

A panel of three archivists independent of the journal's Editorial Board presents the New Author Award in even-numbered years (alternating with the Margaret Cross Norton Award) for articles appearing in a two-year (four-issue) cycle of the journal. The award was instituted in 1993 to recognize superior writing by previously unpublished archivists, and may be awarded to practicing archivists who have not had article-length writings published in professional journals or to students in an archival education program. Up to two awards may be presented in a single cycle. The award consists of a certificate and \$250.

For volumes 23 and 24, the New Author Award winner was Mark Shelstad for his article, "Switching the Vacuum into Reverse: A Case Study of Retrospective Conversion As Collection Management," 23:2, 135–153. The article discusses in detail the situation at the American Heritage Center at the University of Wyoming as it undertook the retrospective conversion of the collections' finding aids to electronic format. The project, as is typical of such endeavors, became more than retrospective conversion: it became a massive reappraisal, documentation, and deaccessioning project. The article includes extensive tables on the time required to revise a collection as well as a detailed discussion of the methodology used. It is a well-written and well-documented article on potential problems almost any repository might face when doing retrospective conversion and how one institution responded to these challenges.

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