

Archival Values: Essays in Honor of Mark A. Greene

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Archival Values – Essays in Honour of Mark Greene takes a deep-dive into the principles which define modern archivism. As a practitioner, administrator, teacher, theorist, and leader, Mark A. Greene (1959–2017) was one of the most influential archivists of his generation on US archival theory and practice. Greene shaped the modern American archivist identity through the establishment of a core set of values for the profession. In this collection of essays, 23 archivists from repositories across the profession examine the values that comprise the Core Values Statement of the Society of American Archivists.

Jennifer Meehan sets the scene with Archival Intangibles, utilising her extensive studies in archival theory to show that archivists wield great power through the management of the intangibles of memory and story. Meehan effectively contrasts between the authority given by history and memory (who controls the past controls the future), and the emotion drawn out by storytelling (who engages the past engages the future).

In The Ethics of Social Responsibility, Randall C Jimerson outlines the changing landscape of the Society of American Archivists' archival code of ethics and its previous focus on behaviour rather than purposes. Jimerson outlines the differences between collecting and institutional repositories, detailing how social responsibility guides

archivists from both camps in core archival functions such as selection and appraisal, preservation, arrangement and description, access and usage.

Elena Danielson strikes home with her line that, “archivists are at ground zero for the explosion in information technology”. Writing in *Preserving Access as a Core Value in the Digital Era*, Danielson concisely details how the previous years of public access to limited amounts of information have been flipped about in an era of open, free-flowing data and what she terms, “the excess of access”. Danielson goes on to detail the five biggest barriers to access (physical, intellectual, discriminatory, legal and indifference) and maintaining that with a myriad of issues to consider, access is not a purely black and white, restricted or open, situation.

The essays cover the full gamut of values we live and breathe: memory; social responsibility; diversity; accountability; custody; selection; access and use; preservation; advocacy; and, service and professionalism. Each author adheres faithfully to Greene’s values, and there is a sense that the reader knows Mark as a colleague by the last chapter. There is no doubt that the collection of essays adds a wealth of knowledge to the archival and records management sector and can be used as a powerful guide for individuals interested in learning about the value drivers behind the modern archivist.

Reviewed by Evan Greensides