

from experts as well as a sample valuation form for each type. There are also three appendices covering applicable U.K. government programs, a brief overview of the previously mentioned report *Valuation of Works of Art for Lending and Borrowing Purposes*, a detailed glossary of terms, and a bibliography and index.

Among the strongest aspects of the work are the significant contributions from experts in related fields. While Matassa takes sole credit as author, she did a superb job soliciting advice to make this book applicable for more than just fine art curators. In addition to the case studies, short summaries of valuation policies from influential British and Scottish foundations, libraries, museums, trusts, and archives are sprinkled throughout the text, somewhat at random, to give readers an idea how Matassa's general suggestions can be transformed into actual practice by professionals in affiliated fields. The library and archives summaries are especially valuable, as there appears to be no U.S. equivalent of this work written for special collections professionals, only helpful guides designed for new collectors, such as RBMS's *Your Old Books*, or online suggestions for navigating the usual databases. Some of this work's more specific details will not be applicable to American audiences, especially the chapter detailing the various U.K. laws that can impact or shape valuation practices, but the overall sentiment and approach will be helpful for those learning valuation or managing those who do.

If you want easy answers or shortcuts for generating monetary values of items within your collection, this is not the book for you; but it would be ideal for one struggling to know where to start in a special collections environment with a variety of holdings that may include objects in addition to the expected rare books and archives.—Colleen Barrett, *Philadelphia Rare Books & Manuscripts Company*

David Thomas, Simon Fowler, and Valerie Johnson. *The Silence of the Archive.*

Chicago: ALA Neal-Schuman, 2017. 187p. Softcover, \$76.00 (ISBN 978-0-8389-1640-7).

The Silence of the Archive is a deceptively slim volume, for within its covers the reader discovers a wide-ranging, thought-provoking conversation that brings together fascinating examples and anecdotes from archival history and a variety of perspectives and insightful commentary, all arranged in a thematic exploration of the silences or absences in archives. The result is a timely contribution that succeeds in asking the big questions so necessary for the survival of archives in today's world and bridging the gap in the archival literature between practical manuals and the contributions of archival theorists, historians, cultural theorists, and others about the archival endeavor. In considering what archives are *not*, the authors ironically bring us much closer to a grounded holistic understanding of what archives *are*, and what the role of archivists is, or should be.

Geoffery Yeo writes in his introduction:

[T]here is a long-standing belief in the power and importance of archives and records and their potential to determine the ordering of society. Yet it seems that archives are often silent when we expect them to speak. Why and how does this silence arise? Can we—should we—take steps to eliminate silences and to make good the apparent errors and omissions of past record keeping? (xi)

The contributing authors are well equipped to engage the topic at hand. David Thomas, Valerie Johnson, and Simon Fowler are all archivists with practical experience working in various capacities at the National Archives of the United Kingdom. In addition, Thomas and Fowler are educators. Each author brings a unique perspective: Thomas is the author of a book about archival forgeries and falsifications; Fowler is a researcher interested in nineteenth- and twentieth-century records, family and military history and genealogy; and Johnson has published on the work of historians and archivists in the academic, corporate, and public sectors. Not surprisingly, the authors rely heavily on their experiences within the United Kingdom; this in no way detracts from the book; it simply leaves room for further explorations of this topic within other geographic or topical areas. As their point of departure, the authors use the work of historian and anthropologist Michel-Rolph Trouillot on archives as institutionalized sites of mediation between sociohistorical processes and the narratives about these processes.

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The Silence of the Archive consists of two broad sections: 1) the causes and reasons for archival silences; and 2) how archivists and users have filled the gaps. The first three chapters provide a topical framework for the discussion of archival silences. In chapter 1, “Enforced Silences,” Fowler considers the large, established archival holdings of governments, powerful individuals and families, and the means by which these record creators and managers destroy, hide, or omit records. In the second chapter, “Inappropriate Expectations,” Fowler examines user perspectives of archives, acknowledges the limitations of archival collections and the inability (and unsuitability) of archives for containing a complete record of the human ex-

Call for Submissions

CFP: Special Collections as Sites of Contestation

Editor: Mary Kandiuk

Publisher: Library Juice Press

Special collections materials are actively acquired by libraries or accepted as donations. Increasingly, special collections are emerging as sites of contestation. Funding and political choices often underpin acquisition, access, and promotion of these collections, resulting in unequal representation, biased interpretations, and suppressed narratives. This collection of essays will interrogate library practices relating to special collections. The essays will explore the reinterpretation and resituating of special collections held by libraries, examine the development and stewardship of special collections within a social justice framework, and describe the use of critical practice by libraries and librarians to shape and negotiate the acquisition, cataloguing, promotion, and display of special collections.

Proposals are invited for chapters relating to special collections held by all types of libraries in all countries. Special collections are library and archival materials encompassing a wide range of formats and subject matters. They are usually distinguished by their historical, societal, cultural, or monetary value, uniqueness, or rarity, and are housed separately from a library’s main circulating collection with a commitment to preservation and access. Specific topics of interest include but are not limited to:

- Evolving understandings and interpretations of historical materials in special collections.
- Censorship, self-censorship, academic freedom, intellectual freedom, and special collections.
- The use of critical practice to resist cultural hegemony in the development of special collections.
- The challenges of developing contemporary special collections relating to social justice.
- Examining special collections through the lens of the marginalized and disempowered.
- The representation of unpopular or radical views in special collections.
- Contested interpretations of special collections.

perience, and discusses the challenges of communicating the contents of archives to users through finding aids and catalogs. In chapter 3, “The Digital,” Thomas writes on the paradigm-changing world of digital information and collections and the question of digital silences, ranging from “big data” to preserving websites to digitized analog collections. He suggests that archivists learn to adapt to new digital paradoxes: specifically, that digital openness might mean less information and certainly less knowledge; and the increasing volume of digital records may mean that archival institutions will become smaller and change what they do.

- Safe spaces and special collections.
- Controversial exhibits relating to special collections.
- Information literacy and special collections employing a social justice framework.
- Decolonizing and indigenizing special collections.
- Donors, funding, power, and politics and their influence on the development of special collections.
- Development and stewardship of special collections relating but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, politics, religion, war, conflict, genocide, sex, pornography, racism, discrimination, heritage, memory, and identity within a social justice framework.
- Any aspect of acquisition, curation, structure, cataloguing, digitization, presentation, arrangement, promotion, display, and instruction relating to special collections using a social justice or critical practice framework.

Proposals

Chapter proposals should contain: 1) an abstract of 500–750 words describing the proposed contribution; and 2) a brief biographical statement about the author(s). Please direct all submissions and inquiries to volume editor Mary Kandiuk (mkandiuk@yorku.ca).

Timetable:

June 1, 2018: Deadline for 500–750-word abstract proposing a chapter.

July 1, 2018: Notification of acceptance of proposed chapter.

December 1, 2018: Deadline for submitting completed manuscripts.

About the Editor

Mary Kandiuk is the Visual Arts, Design & Theatre Librarian and a Senior Librarian at York University in Toronto, Canada. She holds a Master of Arts in English and a Master of Library Science from the University of Toronto. She is the author of two bibliographies of secondary criticism relating to Canadian literature published by Scarecrow Press and coauthor of *Digital Image Collections and Services* (ARL Spec Kit, 2013). She is coeditor of the collection *In Solidarity: Academic Librarian Labour Activism and Union Participation in Canada* published by Library Juice Press in 2014. Her most recent publications include articles on the topic of academic freedom. For more information, see: <http://mkandiuk.blog.yorku.ca/>.

The second set of chapters (4–7) look at how users have filled gaps in archives. In chapter 4, “Dealing with the Silence,” Johnson demonstrates ways of addressing silences, from seeking alternative voices or reading voices back into the past, to ensuring a diversity of voices in archives into the future. She cautions us, however, not to lose sight of the fact that historical records are limited and sometimes limiting and that, in some cases, silences and forgetting may be necessary. Thomas is also concerned with how archival silences may be filled—but from a different perspective. In chapter 5, “Imagining Archives,” he examines the significance of archival forgeries and their role in filling archival voids. In chapter 7, “Solutions to the Silence,” Johnson concludes that archives and archivists are powerful forces in supporting memory, especially to those denied a voice in the past. In the final chapter, “Are Things Getting Better or Worse?” Thomas closes the conversation with a list of areas of concern as well as opportunities. Much depends on archivists seizing the opportunities provided by the digital paradigm to prevent digital silences and on historians embracing a more nuanced understanding of archives as mediated sites of historical inquiry and production rather than sites of truth.

The Silence of the Archive is an important contribution to the archival, library, and information studies literature in that it brings together and examines a number of significant themes in archival theory from a common, practical frame of reference shared by archivists and users alike. This thoroughly engaging book will appeal to a broad range of readers. One of the delightful things about this volume is that it reads almost as a series of internal conversations between the contributors as they engage with diverse topics such as archives and historical methods, power, accountability, truth, representation, ways of knowing, memory, silence, and forgetting. By simultaneously grounding the topic in actual archival experiences, acknowledging theoretical frameworks for understanding archival silences and asking questions about what, if anything, should be done, this slim book opens up a whole new way of looking at what we are doing and where we stand. This book should be required reading for librarians, archivists and historians, and students of archives.—*Tamara E. Livingston, Museums, Archives & Rare Books*