What is Recorded is Never Simply 'What Happened': Record Keeping in Modern Organizational Culture

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Abstract. Traditional premises in archival theory and practice hold that archival records are authentic as to procedure and impartial as to creation because they are created as a means for, and as a by-product of, action, and not for the sake of posterity. Such Positivist assumptions about the nature of records have come under sustained scrutiny in the archival literature over the past decade. The post-Positivist view of records embraces the record as a socially constructed and maintained entity. This paper situates itself within this new paradigm in an exploration of the beginning of the life of the record. It is therefore concerned with the creator (or recorder) and the social construction of the record. In expanding beyond a purely administrative- and juridical-based theory of records, this paper draws upon research from other disciplines, such as sociology, in order to place records and record keeping within a framework that allows for an understanding of their social nature. In particular, the goal is to determine the underlying social factors that directly influence and shape the creation and keeping of records and to begin to understand how these factors manifest themselves in the construction of the record.

Keywords: archival theory, documents, ethnomethodology, law enforcement, organizational record keeping, paperwork, records, research methodology, social theory

Introduction

> Deft [defendant] recovered almost immediately [from the effects of the Taser] and resumed his hostile charge in our direction. Ofcr Wind and I drew our batons to defend against deft's attack and struck him several times in the arm and leg areas to incapacitate him. Deft continued resisting kicking and swinging his arms at us. We finally kicked deft down and he was subdued by several ofcers using the swarm technique.[1] (Passage taken from the arrest report of Rodney King)

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[1] Quoted in John Van Maanen and Brian T. Pentland, "Cops and Auditors: The Rhetoric of Records", in Sim B. Sitkin and Robert J. Bies (eds.), *The Legalistic Organization* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1994), p. 73.

It is time for archivists to realize that the Positivist ideas to which the profes-. sion has so long been wedded have become untenable. As archivists have reached out beyond the confines of the profession (whether it be for education or research purposes, or in an effort to understand new challenges to the profession, such as electronic records), there is a growing realization of the problematic nature of the material that we manage – the record. In the electronic environment, the record, once viewed as knowable in terms of an understanding of its content, context and structure, is proving difficult to pin down. As the archival profession has had to confront the complexity of what constitutes a record in this new environment, archivists have also had to grapple with defining a new role for the profession. No longer can the archivist be content to be the guardian of the record. In an electronic environment the archivist must be involved in the very act of creation in order to ensure the long-term preservation of the record. The argument in this essay is that continuing or broadening this inquiry into traditional assumptions about the nature of the record, no matter whether in paper or electronic form, opens up many new and exciting opportunities for the archival profession. Indeed, it is argued that only in problematizing the nature of the record will archivists finally begin to develop a true theory of the record.

    This paper takes a look at one area of interest to archivists, organizational records, and demonstrates that, by drawing on new analytic frameworks and methodologies, the archival profession can broaden and deepen archivists' understanding of the nature of the material that they manage.

Traditional and emerging archival assumptions regarding the nature of records and record keeping

Archives are created and received in the conduct of personal or organizational activity, and, as such, represent a 'measure of knowledge which does not exist in quite the same form anywhere else.' They carry, in consequence, a particular weight as primary evidence of suppositions made, or conclusions drawn, about that activity. Archives provide evidence of their creator because they are *interrelated* as to meaning: each archival document is contingent on its functional relations to other documents both within and outside the fonds of which it forms a part, and its understanding depends, therefore, on knowledge of those relations; *authentic* as to procedure – meaning that archives are capable of bearing 'authentic testimony of the actions, processes and procedures which brought them into being': and *impartial* as to creation – meaning that archives are created as a 'means of carrying out activities and not as

ends in themselves, and therefore [are] inherently . . . capable of revealing the truth about these activities.' 'From this circumstantial guarantee of reliability, intentions and actions can be compared, the accuracy of the evidence can be determined, and its historical meaning can be derived.'[2]

Such a traditional approach to records was articulated in the nineteenth century by the French and Germans, codified by the Dutch in 1898, and brought to the English-speaking world by archival theorist Sir Hilary Jenkinson in his book published in 1922.[3] This view of records has formed the base of twentieth-century archival understanding about the nature of records and record keeping (and also by implication has shaped archivists' perceptions of their own role and their responsibilities to the communities that they serve). In terms of understanding the nature of records, this view of records serves to differentiate records from other types of information objects in that they are not viewed primarily as carriers of information. Instead, records are seen as serving a unique role in providing evidence about the activities of their creators. This role of records in providing evidence about the activities of their creators is described in terms of records serving as authentic testimony to the actions, processes, and procedures of these creators. Records are also viewed as impartial. Impartial in this sense means impartial as to their creation, as opposed to impartial as to their content. In this light, records are seen as by-products of activity rather than as conscious players in the activity itself. With this understanding, archivists have also assumed the role as keepers or guardians of these records with the explicit belief that their duty is to maintain these records inviolate for posterity.

Such traditional archival assumptions about the nature of records have come under sustained scrutiny in the archival literature over the past decade. Indeed, the degree of scrutiny into the nature of the record and the role of the archivist has led one author, Terry Cook, to describe the change in thinking among the archival profession in terms of a paradigm shift.[4] A growing number of authors such as Eric Ketelaar, Brien Brothman, Steve Lubar, Verne Harris, Joan Schwartz, and Tom Nesmith also write about the

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[2] Hilary Jenkinson, "Reflections of an Archivist", in Maygene F. Daniels and Timothy Walch (eds.), *A Modern Archives Reader: Basic Readings on Archival Theory and Practice* (Washington, D.C., 1984), p. 15, quoted in Heather MacNeil, "Archival Theory and Practice: Between Two Paradigms", *Archivaria* 37 (Spring 1994): 8–9.

[3] Hilary Jenkinson, "Introductory", in *A Manual of Archive Administration* (London: Percy Lund, Humphries & Co. Ltd., 1966), pp. 1–22.

[4] Terry Cook, "Archival Science and Postmodernism: New Formulations for Old Concepts", *Archival Science* 1(1) (2001): 4. The notion of a paradigm shift comes from the work of Thomas Kuhn. Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962).

record as a socially constructed and maintained entity.[5] In particular, there has been scrutiny into how records are viewed at their creation, during their phase of active usage, and finally their maintenance within an archive. As such there is a call to understand the "social and cultural factors, the standards and values, the ideology, that infuse the creation of records" and their subsequent maintenance in an archival repository. Within this new framework, the archival idea of "context" necessitates the discovery of "the human being that acted as recorder" and the human being that acted as "archiver."[6] Richard Brown and Frank Upward also stand within this tradition when they argue for an archival theory placed in a broader socio-cultural and ideological background to transcend the profession's traditional administrative-juridical roots documented by such modern authors as Luciana Duranti and Heather MacNeil.[7]

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[5] See especially Terry Cook, "What is Past is Prologue: A History of Archival Ideas Since 1898, and the Future Paradigm Shift", *Archivaria* 43 (Spring 1997): 17–63; Terry Cook, "Fashionable Nonsense or Professional Rebirth: Postmodernism and the Practice of Archives", *Archivaria* 51 (Spring 2001): 14–35; Brien Brothman, "Orders of Value: Probing the Theoretical Terms of Archival Practice", *Archivaria* 32 (Summer 1991): 78–100; Brien Brothman, "The Limits of Limits: Derridean Deconstruction and the Archival Institution", *Archivaria* 36 (Autumn 1993): 205–220; Steve Lubar, "Information Culture and the Archival Record", *American Archivist* 62 (Spring 1999): 10–22; Verne Harris, "Redefining Archives in South Africa: Public Archives and Society in Transition, 1990–1996", *Archivaria* 42 (Fall 1996): 6–27; Verne Harris, "Claiming Less, Delivering More: A Critique of Positivist Formulations on Archives in South Africa", *Archivaria* 44 (Fall 1997): 132–141; Tom Nesmith, "Still Fuzzy, But More Accurate: Some Thoughts on the 'Ghosts' of Archival Theory", *Archivaria* 47 (Spring 1999): 136–150; Joan M. Schwartz, "'We make our tools and our tools make us': Lessons from Photographs for the Practice, Politics, and Poetics of Diplomatics", *Archivaria* 40 (Fall 1995): 40–74; and Joan M. Schwartz, "'Records of Simple Truth and Precision': Photography, Archives and the Illusion of Control", *Archivaria* 50 (Fall 2000): 1–40. See also Theresa Rowat, "The Record and Repository as a Cultural Form of Expression", *Archivaria* 36 (Autumn 1993): 198–204; and Preben Mortensen, "The Place of Theory in Archival Practice", *Archivaria* 47 (Spring 1999): 1–26.

[6] Eric Ketelaar, "Research In and On Archives", (19 September 2001), paper presented at the National Scholarly Communications Forum's Round Table No. 10, "Archives in the National Research Infrastructure", in Canberra, November 1999. <http://www.asap.unimelb.edu.au/nscf/roundtables/r10/r10_ketelaar.html>. See also Eric Ketelaar, "Archivalisation and Archiving", *Archives and Manuscripts* 27 (May 1999): 54–61.

[7] Richard Brown, "Death of a Renaissance Record-Keeper: The Murder of Tomasso da Tortona in Ferrera, 1385", *Archivaria* 44 (Fall 1997): 1–43; Frank Upward, "Structuring the Records Continuum. Part One, Post-Custodial Principles and Properties", *Archives and Manuscripts* 24 (November 1996): 268–285; Frank Upward, "Structuring the Records Continuum. Part Two: Structuration Theory and Recordkeeping", *Archives and Manuscripts* 25 (May 1997): 10–35; Luciana Duranti, "The Concept of Appraisal and Archival Theory", *American Archivist* 57 (Spring 1994): 328–344; and Heather MacNeil, "Archival Theory and Practice: Between Two Paradigms", *Archivaria* 37 (Spring 1994): 6–20.

Much of this post-Positivist literature has focused, in particular, on an examination of the meaning of archives, and the role of the archivist within this new framework.[8] This article, however, takes up the call to understand and elucidate "the human being that acted as recorder" within this new archival paradigm. Therefore, the concern is with the beginning of the life of the document – with the creator (or the recorder) and with the social construction of the document. A premise of this article is that a departure from a purely administrative- and juridical-based theory of records is necessary to discover the human being that acted as recorder. What is needed, in fact, is to place records and record keeping within a framework that allows for an understanding of both their technical and social nature. It is no longer useful, however, to simply propose or endorse a new framework that will allow for a fuller understanding of record creation and record keeping. The time has come to discover the components of such a framework, that is, the social factors that influence organizational record creation and record keeping. For the purposes of this article, such factors are derived from an examination of the nature of records and record keeping within the arena of law enforcement.[9] Law enforcement records include court records, parole records, and police records of interviews with suspects.

Components of the framework

In order to derive and populate a new framework for understanding organizational record creation and record keeping, the author selectively analyzed literature on records and record keeping in law enforcement. The analysis uncovered the components or factors that influence record creation and record keeping as well as the complexity of the relationship of these components to each other. Several prominent themes or areas of focus emerged in this analysis. The first theme sheds light on the socialized behavior that can lie behind decisions to create records in the first instance. The second theme points to a dichotomy between the use and purpose of records. The final theme attests to the role of internal and external audiences in shaping the

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[8] The degree of engagement with this topic is evidenced by the strength of archival participation in a year-long seminar, "Archives, Documentation, and the Institutions of Social Memory", organized by the Advanced Study Center of the International Institute at the University of Michigan during the academic year 2000–2001. The topics covered in the seminar series included the archive, social memory, the politics of memory and the politics of archives, private versus public memories, archivist as mediators, and truth and meaning.

[9] Law enforcement is defined in terms of organizations involved in the prevention, investigation, apprehension, or detention of individuals suspected or convicted of offences against the criminal laws.

nature of the record. The literature also demonstrates the utility in exploring multiple perspectives and analytic approaches to determine which particular methods shed light on components of the framework and the relationship of the components to each other.

On becoming a record

Merry Morash has examined the relative association that individual and peer group characteristics have in the establishment of a juvenile police record.[10] Morash's work is situated at the nexus between the record-creating event and the group members' understanding of background expectancies. In particular, Morash evaluates the symbolic interactionist perspective that the interpretation or "meaning" that police give to their observations about the youths with whom they interact is a noticeable influence when it comes to arrest decisions.[11] While Morash's use of the term "arrest record" refers to a juvenile having a criminal record rather then meaning a record in the physical sense, by implication her work sheds light on when physical records will be created about an individual.

Morash's findings indicate that there are certain individual and peer-group characteristics that serve as "cues" to the police and increase individuals' chance of arrest. As such there are certain youths, that may or may not have committed more delinquent acts than other youths, that are more likely to have a police record. Individuals' characteristics that suggest to the police that they are a delinquent type, and possibly a threat to others, or that increase their visibility to the police, influence the police to investigate and arrest them. Males with delinquent peers and those that broke the law with their peers were most likely to have an arrest record. Females in all-female groups were least likely to have a record. This discretion that police have in making a record is shown to be a learned or a socialized behavior on the part of the police. Morash posits that "the police learn to recognize the characteristics and behaviors that signify that youths are delinquents through their occu-pational socialization ... they learn a 'police theory,' or what is commonly called 'street wisdom' which specifies the cues to a delinquent identity."[12]

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[10] Merry Morash, "Establishment of a Juvenile Police Record: The Influence of Individual and Peer Group Characteristics", *Criminology* 22 (February 1984): 97–111.

[11] The research interest in symbolic interactionism is in "understanding how individuals take and make meaning in interaction with others ... the emphasis is on the pressures of meaning-making in social organization." Catherine Marshall and Gretchen B. Rossman, "Introduction", in *Designing Qualitative Research: Second Edition* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1995), p. 2.

[12] Morash, "Establishment of a Juvenile Police Record", p. 98.

Of primary importance to this article is not only the specific individual and peer group characteristics, but also, as Morash's research demonstrates, that police do not detect a large proportion of juvenile offenders, but when they do, the police have a great deal of discretion in their decision to make an arrest (and therefore create a record on an individual). The notion of socialization into the activity of police work, a "police theory," supports the idea that a similar socialization occurs among police officers in the creation of police records. This notion of police officers being socialized in record creation and keeping is in fact discussed by Van Maanen and Pentland. Of equal importance is the fact that, as Morash states, "the existence of a juvenile record can influence the reactions of other significant people to youths."[13] This is a powerful reminder that the subjective nature of record creation is important because whether a criminal record is created about someone or not matters. Records are more than just numbers and statistics; they can be powerful objects with social import. The determinations that go into the creation of records, and the physical presence and maintenance of these particular records, have ramifications not only for the person who creates and maintains the record, but also for those whose lives are somehow contained within the record and whose lives are later shaped by it. The record has, as one of its functions, a strong element of social control.

"Purpose" versus "use" of records

An article by Cochran et al. speaks to the difference between the use and purpose of records and to the importance of understanding records from the creator's point of view.[14] The authors begin by elucidating what they call the "commonly accepted understanding" of record keeping. According to such a view, records can be seen as preserving information about the occurrence of certain social events such as crime, educational achievement, marriage, and divorce. Records are also seen as potentially reactive, in that the imposition of record keeping is seen as causally affecting the process it measures. The causal effect is usually perceived to have negative effects.[15] In this piece, instead of focusing on factors such as the accuracy of records, Cochran et al. examine records from the record-keeper's point of view. Taking this perspective, records are seen as proactive agents rather than reactive or descriptive or passive containers. Viewing records as proactive rather than merely reactive is simply, as the authors state, a matter of perspective.

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[13] Ibid.

[14] Nancy Cochran, Andrew C. Gordon, and Merton S. Krause, "Proactive Records: Reflections on the Village Watchman", *Knowledge: Creation, Diffusion, Utilization* 2 (September 1980): 5–18.

[15] Ibid., p. 5.

However, by changing one's perspective, a whole new way of looking at and understanding records emerges. By viewing records as proactive, Cochran et al. highlight the fact that "a record keeper's plans, goals, intentions and assumptions precede and therefore shape the record." As such, "many decisions (conscious or implicit) about a record precede and therefore influence the actual recording of information."[16]

The work of Van Maanen and Pentland focuses on the records of police and auditors.[17] Records are seen as having a number of uses – technical and rhetorical. The technical work of records relates to their use, for example, in decision making and as memory aids. It is, however, the rhetorical uses of records in which the authors are mainly interested. As such, records are seen as being "produced to document the performance of a given organizational task, rather than allowing an impression of this performance to form upon the audience as an incidental by-product of the task activity itself."[18] Van Maanen and Pentland see that "prescriptively, record keeping is a purely technical act, but descriptively, it is a symbolic use of legalistic rhetorical forms to create (sometimes false) impressions of legitimacy and rationality."[19] Records are also, in the case of Cochran et al., viewed as being just as much proactive as reactive in the sense that they are created in anticipation of the uses to which they may be put. Such a view has led to the institutionalization of a particular view of reality represented in part in documentary form by a highly specific and specialized form of language, order, and form. An interesting observation that the authors make is that "the symbolic or rhetorical value of the information put forth in working papers and police reports is of greater importance generally to organizational members than whatever technical value such records convey" thus emphasizing the fact that records are created with the outsider in mind.[20] The terms "technical" and "rhetorical" are seen here as equivalent to my terms *use* and *purpose*.

As with Morash's work the authors raise the notion of police officers being socialized in record creation. Skills in record creation, according to Van Maanen and Pentland, involve, for example, knowledge of "subtle contextual use of pat phrasing," "wise precedent," and "person-specific cultural rules" developed through training, experience, and aid. Vivid support for this assertion is provided by a quotation from some of Van Maanen's earlier fieldwork:

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16 Ibid., p. 6.
17 Van Maanen and Pentland, "Cops and Auditors: The Rhetoric of Records", pp. 53–90.
18 Ibid., p. 53.
19 Ibid., p. 61.
20 Ibid., p. 83.

> Returning to the station house, Barnes filled out the many reports asso-
> ciated with the incident and passed each of them to his sergeant for
> approval. The sergeant carefully read each report and then returned the
> paper to Barnes saying that he had better claim that he was kicked in the
> face BEFORE he entered the patrol wagon or Barnes would get a heavy
> brutality complaint for sure ... after some discussion and two rewrites,
> Barnes finished a report that the Sergeant said 'covered their asses.'[21]

Lemert's work focuses specifically on the role of records in the American Juvenile Courts.[22] Lemert depicts these records as complex documents that seek to satisfy and accommodate the goals and requirements of certain individuals. Lemert begins by discussing the purposes of juvenile court records. At the most basic level, Lemert points out that certain kinds of facts are necessarily present in juvenile court records in order for juvenile courts to carry out their daily business. This can be viewed as equivalent to Van Maanen and Pentland's technical use of records and my term, *use*. In addition, statutory requirements are noted as playing a role in what must be present in a juvenile court record. Lemert also observes that specialization of function within larger probation departments has a direct affect on the nature of records. This happens because material is included in the record in order for subordinates to provide justification for their actions to their supervisors or administrative heads. Other data may be included in order to facilitate the compilation of reports or to meet research needs.

Lemert discusses a rhetorical use of records in dealing with the records in juvenile court. According to Lemert, and reminiscent of the work of Van Maanen and Pentland, probation or court records are created in such a way in order to influence judges' decisions. They are also created in such a way to "express conflicts, compromises, and accommodations within the probation department, detention center, or local placement facilities." Lemert states that the "subtleties of these 'behind the scenes' maneuvers and transactions account for the seeming opaqueness of many juvenile court records and their discontinuity between cited facts, interpretations, and final recommendations."[23]

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[21] John Van Maanen, "The Moral Fix: On the Ethics of Fieldwork", in Robert M. Emerson (ed.), *Contemporary Field Research: A Collection of Readings* (Boston: Little Brown, 1983), p. 273, quoted in Van Maanen and Pentland, "Cops and Auditors: The Rhetoric of Records", p. 77.

[22] Edwin M. Lemert, "Records in the Juvenile Court", in Stanton Wheeler (ed.), *On Record: Files and Dossiers in American Life* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1969), pp. 355–387.

[23] Ibid., pp. 371–372.

Role of audience on the nature of the record

The apparent discontinuity between the contents of the records and major decisions made in juvenile courts and probation departments also draws Lemert's interest. This discontinuity is reflected in the fact that only a select amount of information from the records is utilized in the decision-making process (such as information on family situation, demeanor of child and parents, resources at hand, nature of offence, and record of prior court contacts), in spite of the often vast amount of other information that is present in juvenile court records. Discontinuity is reflected in the lack of discernible correspondence between the contents of the records and the recommendations used to conclude such cases. According to Lemert, this discrepancy can be explained by examining the role that community pressure, and the desire to preserve the support of the public, can play in such decisions. In instances like this, "one must 'read between the lines' of records or solicit informal expectations from parties involved."[24] Faced with such a scenario, Lemert states that probation officers either ignore the record or adapt it to fit the situation. They do this by letting the judge make the disposition recommendation, by writing the report in a way that justifies the outcome, or by filing an amended petition in which "new facts" are produced that are more in fitting with that decision. Here Lemert reminds us that record creation and maintenance, as well as the process of deriving meaning from records, is an on-going, interrelated process and at times involves a process of negotiation and re-negotiation.

Malcolm Coulthard's work focuses on audience manipulation in police records of interviews with suspects.[25] Coulthard demonstrates the power of text to create, reproduce, and legitimize a particular point of view. He shows the nuances that can occur during the record-creating event, in this instance converting the spoken to the written word. Coulthard uses discourse analysis to examine linguistic bias that is present in some police records. Linguistic bias is important in a record in that it modulates the content of the record and therefore can affect how that content is received. In effect, it allows for the creation of a positive police image. Coulthard points to two major ways in which a police record can reflect linguistic bias. The first is achieved by impinging on the perceived reliability of the speakers as witnesses. This is done by the attribution of non-prestige forms of language (such as obscenities, non-standard, colloquial, and slang features) to the accused. Coulthard states that the reliability of the accused can also be impinged by the meta-

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[24] Ibid., p. 359.

[25] Malcolm Coulthard, "The Official Version: Audience Manipulation in Police Records of Interviews with Suspects", in Carmen Rosa Caldas-Coulthard and Malcolm Coulthard (eds.), *Texts and Practices: Readings in Critical Discourse Analysis* (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 166–178.

linguistic validation of the record, that, is if there is some supporting text surrounding or even justifying or authenticating an unsigned and unconfirmed confession. A further method called meta-linguistic creation of atmosphere and police character involves the creation of a positive police image in the record.

Coulthard states that the second means of introducing bias into a police record is by enhancing the verisimilitude or plausibility of the interaction reported. Coulthard points out that, paradoxically, "some of the interview records produced from memory are formally more similar to linguists' verbatim transcripts than are the authentic and supposedly verbatim records which have been produced contemporaneously." In other words, when "inventing" or "composing" speech, police officers can be more conscious of form and therefore produce records that seem more "authentic."[26] Common devices in such "remembered records," as opposed to contemporaneous transcripts, include discourse markers, the use of interruptions, and of non-verbal features.

Meehan's work emphasizes the notion of an organization as a social entity and how this fact directly impacts upon the physical nature of the record. Focusing on juvenile police records, Meehan examines the consequences that police faced when community and administrative pressure was brought to bear to discourage the arrest and formal processing of juveniles in a suburban town in the United States.[27] In this instance, the community wished to protect the reputation of their children by putting pressure on the police to shield juveniles from formal arrest and the court process. Meehan reports on the effects of such external and internal pressures on police work, including a focus on the direct change that occurred in the nature of police record keeping. The change from a focus on external to internal types of record keeping was enough to bring about a variation in the content, form, size, and purpose of the juvenile records held.

The pressure to discourage the use of arrest in this community precipitated a shift to systematic surveillance as a predominant form of social control. This left the police with few formal records of juvenile activity. As a result, informal record keeping became more important. The type of informal record keeping that was developed was the field interrogation and observation card (FIO). As an internal record about juveniles, FIOs had characteristics unlike that of more formal records. FIOs were only used within the police department and as such could contain any kind of information that an officer wanted. As an internal record, the events described in the cards were also immune

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26 Ibid., p. 175.

27 Albert J. Meehan, "Internal Police Records and the Control of Juveniles: Politics and Policing in a Suburban Town", *British Journal of Criminology* 33 (Autumn 1993): 504–524.

from any external accountability. While FIOs were often rich in detail, they also tended to be cryptic and therefore required a working knowledge of police practice in order to make sense of them. The physical size of the FIO also impacted the content of the record. Unlike incident or arrest reports, the size of the FIO, typically a 5×3 card, provided no space for a narrative account of the incident. The FIO therefore was used to stand alone as the facts. Meehan also points out that informal record-keeping practices had an implication for understanding or interpreting the official crime statistics: "departments [were] able to manage their crime rates so that towns with apparently equal levels of juvenile deviance [had] very different official rates of juvenile crime."[28]

Cochran et al.'s study of record keeping grew out of the authors' interest in accountability in the service sector. As such, the paper draws together literature on the study of those records used to make evaluative judgements of the people who generate the records. The authors, for example, examine literature pertaining to the records of state and federal legislature, the airline industry, parole officers, social welfare agencies, and academics. The authors' premise, as stated earlier, is that records reflect intentionality, which is that "people assemble and use records with some goal in mind." This can sometimes be as non-specific as providing what is asked in a manner that protects on-going relationships. The authors state that record production is one of the main means of "accommodating the variable and sometimes competing goals and purposes of people in organizations."[29] The authors believe that records can accommodate such a goal because of two characteristics that relate to the content of most records: first, categories for record keeping are generally ambiguous (by ambiguous the authors mean that no physical check on the correctness of the record is usually possible); and, secondly, record entries can be discretionary. The authors point out that the only records that cannot accommodate these purposes are records that allow for virtually no judgment on the part of the recorder.

In other instances, Cochran et al. state that "people seize on record keeping as an opportunity to advance their own specific causes or points of view."[30] In taking a proactive view of record keeping, the authors believe that "control and self-determination is achieved through record keeping more often than is apparent."[31] An example used by the authors to elucidate this point is

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[28] Ibid., p. 504.

[29] Cochran et al., "Proactive Records: Reflections on the Village Watchman", p. 14.

[30] Ibid., p. 6.

[31] Ibid., p. 11.

based on McCleary's work on parole records.[32] Parole records can be viewed, among other things, as a history of the parole officer's decisions about how he or she should treat parolees. A parole officer can initiate a record to threaten or coerce a parolee; eliminate a troublesome parolee; or protect him- or herself from the supervisor in the Department of Corrections. One of the most common ways to protect oneself in a service organization, as the authors point out, is simply to have records that reinforce one's point of view and justify one's actions.

Similar findings, regarding the strong proactive nature of records, are reported by Meehan in a study undertaken of the record-keeping practices in the policing of juveniles.[33] Meehan argues that "the projected organizational career and anticipated use of a record shapes its form and content in significant ways."[34] Meehan demonstrates that police officers orient themselves, as record-keepers, based upon knowledge of the prospective users, both internal and external, of the documents that they create. Records with projected external careers are viewed as "contractual" in that they portray a certain expectation.[35] Meehan uses the example of an arrest report where records are "assembled in ways that portray the actions taken by the police as standing in a 'correct' or sanctionable relation with court-honored standards of law enforcement." As Meehan states, "this assembling process may involve the selection, recasting, and, on occasion, even fabrication of 'the facts' and the sequence in which they occurred."[36] Records with envisioned uses that are primarily within the organizational setting are created and manipulated with an eye to a projected (and enhanced) internal career. Such records include dispatchers' incident cards, patrol officers' log sheets, and field interrogation and observation (FIO) cards.

Meehan also emphasizes the importance of personal or non-official records to police work. Personal records, while not "official records," are important sources of information for the construction of official reports or to remind police officers about particular events. However, the brevity and idiosyncratic nature of these records means that making sense of such records depends on having direct access to the event or to the officer's account of the event. Another important source of information for police that Meehan

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[32] R. McCleary, "Bureaucratic Reward-Contingencies as a Stumbling Block to Evaluation", Northwestern University (unpublished paper).

[33] Albert J. Meehan, "Record-Keeping Practices in the Policing of Juveniles", *Urban Life* 15 (April 1986): 70–102.

[34] Meehan, "Record-Keeping Practices in the Policing of Juveniles", p. 70.

[35] The notion of contractual records is drawn from the work of Harold Garfinkel. See Harold Garfinkel and Egon Bittner, " 'Good' Organizational Reasons for 'Bad' Clinic Records", in *Studies in Ethnomethodology* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999), pp. 186–207.

[36] Meehan, "Record-Keeping Practices in the Policing of Juveniles", p. 75.

discusses are the officers' own verbal exchanges. Meehan categorizes such information as consisting of the running record (an oral history of persons, places, and incidents) and the mental dossier (personal recollections of events or persons). The running record and the mental dossiers are particularly important because they are used to assess the meaning and relevance of information that appears in the written record or of information that is provided by other officers. As such, individuals utilize personal "records" and knowledge to make sense of official written records.[37]

The contribution of Van Maanen and Pentland's work is in their understanding that records, whether viewed as rhetorical or technical, both presume an audience. They reveal how the threat of an adversarial audience shapes the very nature of the police record. As structural attributes of an organization, records can serve as legitimizing symbols to both people inside and outside the organization. Their theoretical perspective is focused on the rhetoric associated with the management of impression and perception, and thus the notion that record production is inherently self-interested. Through this lens, their understanding of police records is that "the specific form these records take, the language used in them, the process of their production, and, to some extent, their very existence are all determined in part by the record producers' shrewd sense of the requirements of prospective audiences to whom their records may be given."[38]

A new framework for understanding records and record keeping

The new framework for understanding record creation and keeping presented here departs from traditional archival thinking in that it does not situate the process of record creation and record keeping within a solely technical framework. In introducing such a framework, the function of this paper is also to make evident the various factors that affect record production and maintenance and, in doing so, provide a structure for understanding these factors and the relationships that exist between them. By making such variables explicit, it is possible to examine records creation and record keeping from multiple perspectives. This difference in perspective is not insignificant, in that it determines which aspects of record creation and record keeping are taken for granted and which ones become the focus of inquiry. In the literature of law enforcement, the general perspectives on record creation and record keeping are largely informed by a broadly ethnographic interest. In turn, these ethnographies are informed by various analytic standpoints ranging from

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[37] Ibid., pp. 91–92.

[38] Van Maanen and Pentland, "Cops and Auditors: The Rhetoric of Records", p. 60.

ethnomethodolgy to symbolic interactionism. As is seen from the analysis of the literature, different perspectives shed light on specific aspects of record creation and maintenance. What all these analytic standpoints share, however, is a common view of the record as a product of the organizational context within which they are generated. That is to say, records reflect practical organizational concerns and cannot be viewed simply as transparent reflections of organizational routines and decision-making processes.

Although a number of complementary strategies for understanding the nature of records from the literature of law enforcement are raised in this paper, an emphasis is placed on ethnomethodology as the methodological framework of analysis. This is due to the contribution of ethnomethodology to many of the articles analyzed in this paper, particularly the works of Meehan and Van Maanen and Pentland.[39] Ethnomethodology sees the social world as a production where members use social rules and imperfect knowledge bases to sustain ordinary activities and mutual understanding in their day-to-day life. A knowledge of such social rules, and the ways in which members cope in order to make these requirements acceptable to themselves and those who have control over them, speaks to the social factors that influence record creation and record keeping. The study of records within an ethnomethodological framework owes much to the work of sociologists Harold Garfinkel and Aaron V. Cicourel.[40] Central to an understanding of such a framework are a number of key propositions that stem from Cicourel's work, The Social Organization of Juvenile Justice. The most fundamental of these propositions is that organizations, as social entities, are bounded by general procedural rules. Furthermore, "members develop and employ their own theories, recipes, and shortcuts for meeting general requirements acceptable to themselves and tacitly or explicitly acceptable to other members acting as 'supervisors' or some form of external control."[41] Records, therefore, can be viewed as a means to standardize the business at hand so that activities can be made meaningful. In order to understand how people generate or transform records into a meaningful interpretation of what happened, it is necessary to understand people's "background expectancies" or tacit knowledge and how this shapes the creation and the reading of a record.[42] Without such an understanding, it is difficult to subsequently understand the record because the act

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[39] Ethnomethodolgy is the study of ways in which ordinary people construct a stable social world through everyday utterances and actions.

[40] See Garfinkel, Studies in Ethnomethodology; and Aaron V. Cicourel, The Social Organization of Juvenile Justice (New York: John Wiley, 1968).

[41] Cicourel, The Social Organization of Juvenile Justice, p. 1.

[42] The notion of "background expectancies" is discussed in Alfred Schutz, Collected Papers I (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1962); and Harold Garfinkel, "Studies of the Routine Grounds of Everyday Activities", Social Problems II (1964): 225–250.

of record creation involves the manipulation of such background expectancies in order to make accounts of what happened persuasive and justifiable.

Garfinkel's contribution to an understanding of organizational records comes from his seminal work on clinic records.[43] Garfinkel's work speaks to the importance of perspective in understanding the complex nature of the record. Garfinkel shows that judging records from an outside perspective often leads to records being viewed as deficient in terms of their completeness, clarity, or credibility. However, by understanding and making explicit the ties in existence between records and the social systems that service and are serviced by records, Garfinkel demonstrates that there is an "organizational rationale" to why records are the way that they are.[44] In this regard, Garfinkel points the reader to the relevance of understanding the "organizationally relevant purposes and routines under the auspices of which the contents of the files are routinely assembled."[45]

To reiterate, at the heart of this new framework is the shared notion that records are more than purely technical facts. The framework allows for an understanding of records as social entities, where records are produced, maintained, and used in socially organized ways. To paraphrase Garfinkel, records support the socially ordered ways of an organization's activities. Records do not describe the order, nor are they evidences of the order, but rather stand as representations of them. In fact, what records represent is a persuasive version of the socially organized character of an organization's operations, regardless of what the actual order is, indeed perhaps independently of what the actual order is. Records consist of a socially derived, persuasive, and proper account of the organization as an orderly enterprise.[46]

A new view of records

This paper proposes a framework that makes evident the nature of record creation and keeping in an organizational setting from the perspective of the record creator. This new understanding about records is not intended to delineate a linear or temporal view of the sequence of components that go into shaping the record. On the contrary, the aim is to highlight the inter-relatedness and the complexity of the dynamic pressures that influence record creation and keeping. The new framework is bounded by the view

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[43] Garfinkel and Bittner, "'Good' Organizational Reasons for 'Bad' Clinic Records", pp. 186–207.

[44] Ibid., p. 192.

[45] Ibid., p. 191.

[46] Harold Garfinkel, "What is Ethnomethodology?", *Studies in Ethnomethodology* (1999), pp. 23–24.

that records reflect the nature of organizations as both technical and social entities. The organization as a technical entity can be viewed in terms of understanding a strict or legal interpretation of an organization's business. The record, operating as a technical entity, is influenced from sources both external and internal to the organization. Such influences include administrative, procedural, and statutory requirements. This understanding is in line with traditional archival assumptions about record creation in an organizational setting. The organization as a social entity can be viewed in terms of understanding those factors that relate to human society. For example, the interaction of the individual and the group, or the welfare of human beings as members of society. Examples include an organization's need for accountability, self-presentation and self-interest, and the individual's need for control and self-determination. The social nature of an organization is also shaped by sources both internal and external to the organization. The analysis of the literature shows that the relationship between the needs of organizations, operating as both technical and social entities, and the role of the audience both internal and external, is so tightly dependent that one cannot be pulled apart from the other. However, it seems clear that just how these two factors interrelate will differ between organizations which, depending perhaps on their function, or wider sectorial or national positioning, will have different needs and will be shaped by different outside and inside influences.

These intertwining strands are ultimately manifested in the record in a number of ways. The first of these is in the differentiation between the *use* and *purpose* of records. The category of "use" refers solely to a record carrying out a purpose or action of an organization. The "*use*" to which records are put allows an organization to carry out its daily business. The term is confined to records meeting the strict technical requirements of an organization, such as their role in preserving information about the occurrence of selected events, or their role in decision making and as memory aides. The notion of "*purpose*" differs from that of "*use*" in that it encompasses the social factors that impinge upon record creation and record keeping. The notion of records having a "*purpose*" beyond an immediate use highlights the proactive nature of records. In particular, it acknowledges that records are created in anticipation of future as well as current uses (both within and outside of the organization) and that these other uses are (or will be) more than the purely technical. The categories of "*use*" and "*purpose*" are not mutually exclusive, however, and many records may fulfill both functions simultaneously. As Van Maanen and Pentland point out, the distinction between the two is not absolute as "both uses coexist and play off one another."[47] Viewing records as potentially proactive draws attention back to the role that external

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[47] Van Maanen and Pentland, "Cops and Auditors: The Rhetoric of Records", p. 54.

(community) and internal (administrative) pressure and audience can have on the nature of the record. The interplay of an organization's need for account-ability, self-presentation and self-interest, and an individual's need for control and self-determination, is expressed in the intentionality evident in records, in particular, the ability of records to serve as legitimizing symbols and, there-fore, to accommodate the expectancies of internal and external audiences. In the end, the outcome of all these variables is a blending of the record. The record can be viewed as the sum of both technical and social elements. In fact the record is more *representation*, in the sense of a record being, as Garfinkel states, a persuasive version of the socially organized character of an organization's operations, regardless of what the actual order is, and indeed independently of what the actual order is. Ultimately how the organization is represented, through the manifestation of the record, has a direct impact upon how the content of the record is subsequently received and how the records are actually read within the creating organization itself. The record as representation is also reflected in terms of the manifestation of their physical and intellectual form. As demonstrated in the literature analysis, the physical and intellectual nature of the record can be shaped in terms of the language used in the text, as well as the record's content, structure, form, and even size of the record. Changes to the form of the record are manifested in different record types. Such record types within an organization can include official records, informal records, and personal records.

It is important to state that this framework allows for many different starting points depending on the analytic standpoint and methodologies used to study any specific aspect of record creation and keeping. Therefore, it is possible, for example, to begin an examination of organizational records from the perspective of the social and technical factors that bound organizations and work in toward the record, or it is possible to start from the records themselves and work out to their social contexts. By making this evident, the intent is to illustrate what can potentially be gained and what can be lost from taking either perspective. It is also possible to cut across the framework in order to examine discrete stages in the life of the record, from the functions and activities of an organization, the decision to create a record, and record registration and description. Such an entry into the framework is important because it facilitates an examination of the particular social and technical influences in play at a particular point in time. For example, it allows for an understanding of why organizational records are created or not and, if not, what alternative strategies may be put in place to capture that information.

Implications

What does this review of law enforcement literature tell us about the nature of records and record keeping? The literature undoubtedly sheds light on the underlying social factors that directly influence and shape record creation and keeping (including whether a document is created or not) and how these factors are manifested in the construction of the record (content, structure, and purpose). This literature also clearly demonstrates that organizational records should be viewed as a product of a social process. The framework presented in this paper provides a structure for identifying and understanding the variables that affect the creation and maintenance of organizational records, with the particular focus on records of law enforcement. The view of records that emerges is one in which records demonstrate the following characteristics:

  — records are not necessarily (or only) technical artifacts, but designed to produce an effect;
  — records can be structured opportunities to advance one's cause;
  — control and determination can be achieved through record keeping;
  — records are created "to maintain interpersonal relationships, control the behavior of others, protect oneself, save time, eliminate busy work, avoid unwanted scrutiny, exercise discretion over one's work, document cases that can be successfully resolved, and document that work has, in fact, been done;"[48]
  — form, size, and purpose of records are influenced by the intended audience; and
  — people are often socialized in the art of record creation and control.

At their core, records must be seen as proactive rather than merely reactive or descriptive or passive receptacles. People in organizations assemble and use records with a goal in mind. To quote Van Maanen and Pentland:

> Organizational records, like any product of a social process, are funda-mentally self-conscious and self-interested. What is recorded is never simply 'what happened' because, first, no event can be fully or exhaus-tively described and, second, all records, as institutionalized forms, represent the collective wisdom of those who are trained to keep them. Records are not factual, neutral, technical documents alone, although while serving legitimate ends they must appear this way, and while serving illegitimate ones even more so. They are designed – implicitly or explicitly – to produce an effect in some kind of audience, which itself actively uses records to interpret events. This is not to suggest conscious

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[48] Cochran et al., "Proactive Records: Reflections on the Village Watchman", p. 13.

deceit or cynicism on the part of either record keepers or users (although
... this is certainly possible). Rather it is simply to acknowledge and
open up for analysis the conditions under which organizational records
are produced and used.[49]

The components of the framework presented in this paper neither claim
to be definitive or all encompassing. The framework is incomplete in the
sense that it does not yet take into account the impact of technology on
record creation and use. While this aspect is beyond the scope of this present
paper, studies suggest that the nexus of technology and record creation and
maintenance is another avenue for further research.[50] While the components
of the framework are exploratory, based on an examination of record keeping
in a particular type of organization, future examination of other studies of
record keeping in areas, such as medicine, education, and finance, would
help further augment and refine the framework as presented in this paper,
and offer new perspectives and new means of examining the relationships
outlined here.[51] Atkinson and Coffey's study of the records of audit, for
example, focuses on how documents are constructed as distinctive kinds

[49] Van Maanen and Pentland, "Cops and Auditors: The Rhetoric of Records", p. 53.

[50] See for example P.K. Manning, "Technological Dramas and the Police: Statement and
Counterstatement in Organizational Analysis", *Criminology* 30(3) (1992): 327–346.

[51] For writings about medical records see, for example, Mark Berg, "Practices of Reading
and Writing: The Constitutive Role of the Patient Record in Medical Work", *Sociology of
Health and Fitness* 18 (September 1996): 499–524; Mark Berg and Geoffrey Bowker, "The
Multiple Bodies of the Medical Record: Toward a Sociology of an Artifact", *The Socio-
logical Quarterly* 38 (1997): 513–537; Isobel Bowler, "Further Notes on Record Taking and
Making in Maternity Care: The Case of South Asian Descent Women", *The Sociological
Review* 43 (February 1995): 36–51; Christian Heath and Paul Luff, "Documents and Profes-
sional Practice: 'Bad' Organizational Reasons for 'Good' Clinical Records", *Proceedings of
the ACM 1996 Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work* (Boston, MA, 1996),
354–363; Christian Heath and Paul Luff, *Technology in Action* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge
University Press, 2000); Christian Heath, "Preserving the Consultation: Medical Record Cards
and Professional Conduct", *Sociology of Health and Fitness* 4 (March 1982): 56–74; Sally
Macintyre, "Some Notes on Record Taking and Making in an Antenatal Clinic", *The Socio-
logical Review* 26 (August 1978): 595–611; Rhona Maloney and Christopher Maggs, "A
Systematic Review of the Relationships Between Written Manual Nursing Care Planning,
Record Keeping and Patient Outcomes", *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 30 (1999): 51–57;
Phyllisis M. Ngin, "Recordkeeping Practices of Nurses in Hospitals", *American Archivist*
57 (Fall 1994): 616–630; Lynn M. Olson, "Record Keeping Practices: Consequences of
Accounting Demands in a Public Clinic", *Qualitative Sociology* 18 (1995): 45–70; Sally
Swartz, "IV. Lost Lives: Gender, History and Mental Illness in the Cape, 1891–1910",
Feminism and Psychology 9 (1999): 152–158; and Meira Weiss, "For Doctors' Eyes Only:
Medical Records in Two Israeli Hospitals", *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry* 21 (1997):
283–302.

of organizational products.[52] In particular, the value of this article is that it introduces a number of other complementary approaches, not previously discussed in this paper, which can be used in the analysis of documentary data. The authors' analytic approach comes from a semiotic perspective that focuses on examining records as systems of conventional signs and modes of representation. The authors also draw on aspects of literary and rhetorical analysis as part of their examination of the social construction of documentary reality. The authors' approach is especially useful in its illustration of the interrelatedness or intertextuality of records.

While this paper situates the whole process of record creation and record keeping within a general social framework, it may also be illuminating to situate the process within a framework of organizational types. Situating the population under study within this framework is useful in two regards. First, it serves to clarify that population by defining the boundaries and scope of what will be examined. Secondly, in using this framework, the record-keeping practices of the population under study can subsequently be compared across or within organizational types to see if this is a viable avenue for future research. In this manner, it would be possible to ascertain whether differences in organizational variables affects record creation and record keeping. A potentially useful framework for distinguishing between organizational types comes from the literature of sociological theory in the form of Hasenfeld's[53] dichotomy of people-processing and people-changing organizations.[54]

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[52] Paul Atkinson and Amanda Coffey, "Analysing Documentary Realities", in David Silverman (ed.), *Qualitative Research: Theory, Method and Practice* (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 1997), pp. 45–62.

[53] Yeheskel Hasenfeld, "People Processing Organizations: An Exchange Approach", *American Sociological Review* 37 (June 1972): 256–263.

[54] In the study of formal organizations, Hasenfeld's division of organizations is based on a functional view, where division is based on the relationship the organizations have with the people they serve. As such Hasenfeld recognizes two organizational types: "people-processing organizations" and "people-changing organizations." The function of people-changing organizations is to change the behaviour of people directly. The function of people-processing institutions is not to change the behavior of people directly but "to process them and confer public statuses on them." Furthermore, "these organizations shape a person's life by controlling his access to a wide range of social settings through the public status they confer; and they may define and confirm the individual's social position when his current status is questioned" (256). Examples of "people-processing institutions" include diagnostic clinics, employment placement offices, university admissions offices, a credit bureau, HMO's, and juvenile courts. The function of these organizations is to create cases and move these cases through the organization to a final disposition. Law enforcement organizations fit within this framework. Hasenfeld distinguishes people-processing and people-changing organizations based on four variables. In people-processing organizations, the major product is the altered "status" of the individual in comparison with the product of people-changing organi-

Conclusion

As many people with a vested interest in graduate archival education, or in archival research and archival theory, can attest, there is some reluctance within the profession itself to view records and record keeping as a legitimate site of serious academic research or for theoretical analysis.[55] What some have yet to realize is that by embracing a post-Positivist paradigm in archival science, the profession is being invigorated with a new sense of purpose and a new direction both in archival theory and archival practice. A premise of this paper is that a comprehensive argument or answer about the fundamental nature of records has not been forthcoming from the archival profession, in part, because archivists have traditionally lacked the appropriate research skills necessary to critically examine the question. Even now, the record appears to have eluded many as an object of study because of the inherent

zations that is behavioural change. The second variable relates to the processing technology of the organization. In people-processing organizations, the technology is the classification and disposition of clients. In people-changing organizations it is the socialization/resocialization of clients. The third variable refers to the locus of technology within the organization. In people-processing organizations, the locus occurs at the organizational boundary. In people-changing organizations, it occurs intra-organizationally. The final variable relates to the relative duration of the staff-client encounter. In people-processing organizations, the relative duration is short term in comparison to the long-term duration in people-changing organizations. As stated previously, a further development of the framework might be to hypothesize that these four variables also make a difference to records and records keeping in terms of the types and the nature of the records that are created and maintained.

[55] For articles on graduate education and its connection to research and the nature of archival research, see the special issue on graduate education of the *American Archivist* 63 (Fall 2002). Relevant articles include "Archival Research: A 'New' Issue for Graduate Education" by Anne Gilliland-Swetland; "Archivistics Research Saving the Profession" by Eric Ketelaar; "Collaborative Research Models: A Review of Australian Initiatives" by Sue McKemmish; and "The Imperative of Challenging Absolutes in Graduate Archival Education Programs: A Challenge for Educators and the Profession" by Terry Cook. For articles on the debate over the nature of archival theory, see Frank G. Burke, "The Future Course of Archival Theory in the United States", *American Archivist* 44 (Winter 1981): 40–46; Lester J. Cappon, "What, Then, is There to Theorize About?" *American Archivist* 45 (Winter 1982): 19–25; Frank G. Burke, "To the Editor" (comments on Cappon), *American Archivist* 45 (Summer 1982): 260–261; Gregg D. Kimball, "The Burke-Cappon Debate: Some Further Criticisms and Considerations for Archival Theory", *American Archivist* 48 (Fall 1985): 369–376; John W Roberts, "Archival Theory: Much Ado About Shelving", *American Archivist* 50 (Winter 1987): 66–74; John W. Roberts, "Archival Theory: Myth or Banality?", *American Archivist* 53 (Winter 1990): 110–120; Frederick J. Stielow, "Archival Theory Redux and Redeemed: Definition and Context Toward a General Theory", *American Archivist* 54 (Winter 1991): 14–26; Luke J. Gilliland-Swetland, "The Provenance of a Profession: The Permanence of the Public Archives and Historical Manuscripts Tradition in American Archival History", *American Archivist* 54 (Spring 1991): 160–175; and John W. Roberts, "Practice Makes Perfect, Theory Makes Theorists", *Archivaria* 37 (Spring 1994): 111–121.

difficulties in studying records creation and maintenance. It is perhaps the record's very embeddedness in what appear to be routine processes and mundane practices that creates this difficulty. The record has become naturalized and thus invisible, an assumed backdrop rather than active agent. In general, creators themselves seem to reflect little on their own practices of record creation and maintenance.[56] This being so, obtaining information about records creation solely from interviews with creators seems, at best, to generate less than comprehensive answers to the fundamental questions that we seek to answer. Archivists must learn from, and utilize methods capable of, studying the perceived minutiae of human social action to begin to answer our questions.

In embracing a new framework of records and record keeping we must acknowledge the following four realities: first, that there is a need for archivists to conduct their own research, whether based on social science methodologies, or otherwise, in order that the profession of the record fully understands and documents that which it collects: the record; secondly, that there is a need for archivists to more rigorously examine and reevaluate why we collect records and which records we should be collecting; thirdly, that there is a need for archivists to be more cognizant of the role that they themselves play in shaping the historical record; and finally, archivists do a disservice to themselves and to their patrons by isolating themselves from other cultural institutions. Archivists should instead seek to understand commonalties with other professions as archivers of products of social process.

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[56] Work conducted by the author as part of the International Research on Permanent Authentic Records in Electronic Systems project (InterPARES) indicates that this is not always so. An analysis of one of the InterPARES case-study interviews revealed rich data on a number of issues relating to record creation in the digital environment. The case study examined was of a DataCAD® system of a small American architectural firm where one individual, a partner in the firm, was interviewed. Themes that emerged from the case study related to three main areas: how organizations viewed their own records and how these perceptions are modified by outside influences; the factors that influence the way that records are created and formatted; and how electronic records and paper records are perceived to be similar and how they are perceived to be different. The report, "Applying Content Analysis to Case Study Data: a Preliminary Report", is available online as an appendix to the Final Report of the Authenticity Task Force at http://www.interpares.org