

are useful for anyone wanting to know more about digital preservation in their own context, like Peter Hirtle's "Archival Authenticity in a Digital Age" that was part of a 2000 CLIR report.⁴ I think *Personal Digital Archiving* is a great example of one of those publications that helps archivists and records creators meet the challenges of the digital present and future, and it will be added to my go-to list.

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- ¹ OCLC Research, <http://www.oclc.org/research/themes/research-collections/borndigital.html>; Jeremy Leighton John, Ian Rowlands, Peter Williams, and Katrina Dean, *Digital Lives: Personal Digital Archives for the 21st Century, an Initial Synthesis*, 2010, <http://britishlibrary.typepad.co.uk/files/digital-lives-synthesis02-1.pdf>; J. Schofield, "What Happens to Your Facebook Account When You Die?," Ask Jack, *The Guardian*, October 30, 2014, <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/askjack/2014/oct/30/what-happens-to-your-facebook-account-when-you-or-a-loved-one-dies>.
- ² Both Redwine's report and the PARADIGM workbook provide easy-to-read, modular sections around a variety of digital preservation topics that nonexperts can read and understand. There are opportunities to dive deeper in each document, but you can also use sections to get a general idea of concepts, "Workbook on Digital Private Papers," Paradigm, <http://www.paradigm.ac.uk/workbook/>.
- ³ Paul Wilson, "Preservation Planning for Personal Digital Collections," Digital Preservation Coalition, April 2016, <http://www.dpconline.org/docman/miscellaneous/advice/1509-casenote-pwilson-preservationplanning-ver2/file>.
- ⁴ Peter B. Hirtle, "Archival Authenticity in a Digital Age," in *Authenticity in a Digital Environment* (Washington, D.C.: Council on Library and Information Resources, 2010), <http://www.clir.org/pubs/reports/reports/pub92/pub92.pdf>.

Paper Cadavers: The Archives of Dictatorship in Guatemala

By Kirsten Weld. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, *American Encounters / Global Interactions*: a series edited by Gilbert M. Joseph and Emily S. Rosenberg, 2014. 352 pp. Softcover. \$27.95. ISBN 978-0-8223-5602-8.

In July 2005, investigators in Guatemala City looking for improperly stored ammunition unexpectedly stumbled upon another type of explosive material. At an abandoned, dilapidated police warehouse that had once been a torture and detention center known as *la isla*, or "the island," investigators found bundles of decaying police records covered in decades-thick dust, mildew, cockroach carcasses, and vermin feces. The cache, an estimated eighty million records that dated back almost a century, is the largest discovery of secret police archives in Latin American history, and held the potential to provide answers to questions

about human rights abuses committed during the country's thirty-six-year civil war that state officials had long denied or discredited.

Kirsten Weld makes a powerful contribution to the field of human rights archives in her book, *Paper Cadavers: The Archives of Dictatorship in Guatemala*. Weld, currently John L. Loeb Associate Professor of the Social Sciences at Harvard University, joined the Project for Recovery of the National Police Historical Archives (known as “the Project”) shortly after the trove’s discovery in the spring of 2006. As one of the few international citizens allowed to work locally on the Project, Weld takes the care to explain that she wanted to offer her labor at the service of Guatemalans’ priorities before following her own—an assertion that is not lost on this reader. It is refreshing to read that, as a historian, Weld was not just interested in telling the story found in the archives. Instead, Weld intended to document the process of unpacking the archives and to capture the “messiness and complexity [that] would be lost as the archives were transformed into an institution, a success story” (p. 23). To achieve this, Weld weaves an elucidating historical narrative with testimonials provided by the Project’s team, a unique insight into the development of the Project’s institutional memory made possible by Weld’s on-the-ground documentation as the Project unfolded. What results is an intimate, living, breathing account of how a group of records once used as weapons for surveillance, repression, and ideological management were transformed into tools for those in the pursuit of documentary truth and justice for victims of state-sponsored terror.

Within the book’s four sections—“Explosions at the Archives,” “Archives and Counterinsurgency in Cold War Guatemala,” “Archives and Social Reconstruction in Postwar Guatemala,” and “Pasts Present and the Future Imperfect”—the reader finds an embrace of the archives that is inclusive of its field in both theory and practice, the type of labor it entails, and its workers. The first section places the reader at the point of the archives’ discovery. Professional archivists will find the first three chapters particularly interesting as Weld details the process the team of amateur archivists, many of whom were former insurgent militia members or children of the war’s forcibly disappeared, or *desaparecidos*, underwent as they transitioned from laboring through their own subjectivities in search of documents that mentioned their loved ones, to laboring through the sum of the archives’ parts by learning the National Police’s bureaucratic logic and its organizational structure. Initially, the Project’s laborers began to sort and clean documents the way that made the best sense to them—chronologically—breaking the inherent original order in its administrative nature. Archival principles of provenance and original order were taught to the Project’s staff which in turn facilitated their understanding of the bureaucracy’s relationship between its substructures, internal hierarchies, and documentary flows (p. 71). Through *archival thinking*, or the embrace of archival theory and practice, Project workers

were able to gain physical and intellectual control over the documents that had originally been produced to control them and their loved ones (p. 31). This type of thinking, Weld posits, has played a major role in changing national attitudes about archival culture in the transitional democracy of postconflict Guatemala.

In the second section of the book, Weld delves into post-1954 Guatemalan history and the Cold War counterinsurgent archival practices that developed thereafter. Here the reader comes to understand how the National Police archives came into existence and how it derived its power—thanks largely to the U.S. government’s patronage in the professionalization of police recordkeeping through its Agency for International Development (USAID) program. Through USAID, the U.S. government had a direct role in the counterinsurgent archival practices that the National Police developed by providing financial and infrastructural support for the acquisition of filing cabinets, file cards, and records management training courses. These tools, as Ann Stoler (quoted in the book) suggests, allow for the production of “assemblages of control and specific methods of domination” (p. 15), which, in this case, allowed the close monitoring and dismantling of the Guatemalan insurgency and documented the fate of the thousands killed or disappeared by the National Police.

If section two focuses on the tactics that allowed efficient and deadly counterinsurgent practice, section three warms up the book’s narrative by detailing the personal experiences of the Project’s laborers while the recovery effort took place. Here the concept of “warming up the records,” a counterpractice of collecting fuller, more humanizing data in response to the “cold data” typically found in government or other bureaucratic records, comes to mind.¹ Through ethnographic practice, Weld puts the emotional, psychological, and physical challenges of memory work front and center of her narrative as told in the words of the Project’s laborers. The testimonies illustrate the heart of Weld’s argument on detailing the processes that take place as a terror archives transforms into a people’s archives. One shortcoming in an otherwise fantastic read is that Weld does not offer an examination on how her own ethnographic practice may have played an integral role in the emotional well-being and psychological transfer of power to the Project’s laborers. By centering their personal stories and trauma, Weld’s own production of knowledge is, arguably, part of the seismic shift in power that occurred while the archives was being processed. Weld notes various extracurricular activities, such as mandatory monthly mental health workshops, soccer playing, and the installation of a garden at the site of the former detention center (p. 195), in which the Project’s team took part as coping strategies to manage the strain of “routine violence.” But the book misses an opportunity to examine how the very practice of community archiving, in collecting the testimonies of those rendered powerless through the official archives, is in itself an empowering practice that may have allowed the psychological space for

many of the Project's team members to conduct the emotional labor necessary to bring paper cadavers back to life.

The book's final section concludes by detailing legal advances made possible because of the archives' accessibility. The Project has been successful in changing both the law and culture of what can be done in Guatemala by pushing the national conversation toward government accountability and transparency. Following the National Police archives' discovery, Guatemala passed a national archives law and created new archival education and human rights programs at the national university. Indeed, the Project has changed the way Guatemalans archive, and, in turn, it also changed the way Guatemalans live (p. 249).

One of Weld's strongest contributions to the understanding of Latin American Cold War history is shifting the scholarship away from the well-told, singular narrative about the genocidal atrocities committed by the military against the rural-living, often misrepresented as apolitical indigenous Mayan community (p. 10). Thanks in part to the very discovery of the archives, Weld is able to expound beyond this oversimplification, focusing on the National Police's role as a primary architect of repression against Guatemala's urban, highly educated, middle-class population. However, it takes a historian of a certain caliber to move careful analysis beyond the story found in the primary source and to examine the very central role of knowledge production in the context of policing and other forms of state-sponsored repression. Weld's analysis makes it clear: containment is not just carried out with guns and helicopters, but also with three-by-five index cards, filing cabinets, and training in records management (p. 15).

Paper Cadavers inhabits a location at the intersection of archival history and practice, human rights, Latin American history, and U.S. Cold War relations in Latin America. Anyone with an interest or dedicated practice in any of these fields as historian, human rights activist, academic, practicing archivist, or student archivist-in-training will find the book's narrative engrossing and worthwhile in its entirety. The book is right at home with the books featured in the *Critical Human Rights* series edited by Steve Stern and Scott Straus that includes Michelle Caswell's *Archiving the Unspeakable: Silence, Memory, and the Photographic Record in Cambodia* (University of Wisconsin, 2014). In fact, both Caswell and Weld evoke Michel-Rolph Trouillot's foundational *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Beacon Press, 1995) in their respective texts; though, Weld is much more prudent in her evocation of Trouillot's framework and keeps her examination at the heart of the story—with stories told not through the archives, but in response to the archives.

The archives profession has an important ally in Weld as she urges historians to reexamine archives as sites of social struggle and power that should be placed front and center in historical research “rather than simply relegating them to footnotes and parentheses” (p. 13). I hope that through this comprehensive,

interdisciplinary study of surveillance and repression via knowledge production, archival thinking takes hold in the historical field as well as it did in Guatemala. For archivists who may not be as familiar with Latin American Cold War history and the U.S. government's complicity in and support of repressive, authoritarian dictatorships, *Paper Cadavers* is a sobering account that illustrates how, in Latin America, the Cold War was anything but cold.

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- ¹ Alice Royer, "Warming Up Records: Archives, Memory, Power and Index of the Disappeared," *InterActions: UCLA Journal of Education and Information Studies* 6 (2010), <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/5j76z82c>.

The No-Nonsense Guide to Archives and Recordkeeping

By Margaret Crockett. London: Facet Publishing, 2015. 224 pp. Softcover. \$115U.S., £54.95U.K. ISBN 978-1-85604-855-2.

As evidenced by the title, the goal of *The No-Nonsense Guide to Archives and Recordkeeping* is to provide a practical "how-to" approach to records management and archives. It is the work of Margaret Crockett, British archival consultant and codirector with Janet Foster of The Archive-Skills Consultancy Ltd. (TASC). Crockett's twenty years of archival experience in practice and education provide the foundation for this volume, which draws from her extensive consulting experience in Great Britain and internationally. She has served on the International Council of Archives (ICA) Section for Archival Education and Training, and, in cooperation with ICA, organized with Foster a 2001 conference for archival educators and trainers in Marburg, Germany.

The author clearly states at the outset the volume's purpose is to provide a practical, comprehensive summary of records management and archival practice that includes all record formats. While relying more heavily on British practice for examples of records management and archival professional groups, institutional types and policies and procedures, Crockett does reference international organizations and approaches, particularly those in Canada and the United States. She defines the audiences for this volume as individuals working in archives and records management, particularly those without formal training; managers to whom archival programs report; and related professionals with whom archival