

**Appraisal in Archives**  
**An Annotated Bibliography**

Garrett Boos

INFO 522: Information Access & Resources

December 6, 2009

## **Introduction and Scope**

This bibliography covers much of the relevant literature on the process of appraisal in archives. The articles included in here cover much of the last thirty years in archival science. There are three articles from the 2000's, ten from the 1990's and 2 from the 1980's. The first article is from 1956. This is Schellenberg's bulletin to the National Archives detailing his ideas for processing the larger volume of records that is associated with the modern government. This bulletin is considered by many to be one of the most important pieces on American Archival science. The article is included here because of its importance, but also because most, if not all, of the other articles reference it. The aim of this bibliography was to show how other scholars on appraisal have adapted the ideas in Schellenberg's original bulletin to now. Most of the articles are from the 1990's because as many articles point out that has come to be known as the decade of appraisal, when archivists did the most writing on this topic. American archivists wrote most of the articles but there are a few European scholars who give their view on Schellenberg. This bibliography also includes case studies done by archivists who have tried one method or model and then reported on its effectiveness. For one model there is also a paper by another archivists critiquing it, so as to have a more balanced view. The few articles done by European archivists are about the differences between American and European appraisal practices. Although these articles tend to cover a lot of the same material, history of archives and particularly Schellenberg and his impact on archival practice, they offer a good perspective on different models of appraisal one can find outside the United States, and they critique American practices.

## **Description**

Archival appraisal is one of the most difficult aspects of the archivist's role. It is the basic duty of the archivists to preserve records so they can be studied in the future. Because no archive is large enough or well funded enough to save everything, only the records or materials that are worth saving are preserved. Appraisal is the name of the process the archivists goes through to determine what records should be saved; it has nothing to do with monetary appraisal. Schellenberg was one of the first to write on this topic when working in the National Archives. He realized new practices had to be

devised because of the volume of records that was being created by the modern government. He advocated certain criteria an archivist should use to determine if a record should be saved or not. This started an international debate that is still going, on what the duty of an archivist is. Some believe everything should be saved and others believe that is impractical and the limited resources should be focused on preserving the most important documents. This raises another discussion on what records are worth saving. Schellenberg wrote in the 1950's and now the situation is even worse. The flood of documents archives have to process now is pushing his ideas to the limit. Many of today's archivists are writing on this topic and some are creating new models on how to handle the new amount of records. Although these archivists are creating new theories on archival appraisal and applying them to records Schellenberg never had to consider they all acknowledge his ideas are at the core of archival appraisal.

### **Summary of Findings**

Many of the issues concerning the debate over appraisal are still not resolved. Schellenberg wrote out of necessity but the issues he faced have only increased. In the 1990's the proliferation of computers in the workplace and in private lives introduced a host of new issues archivists have to face when appraising collections. Computers have allowed record creation to explode exponentially. Now with even more records and records in different formats archivists are pressed to find new strategies to handle the material. Some European, particularly English, archivists still argue that an archive should not dispose of records (Duranti, 1994), but they meet with opposition from American archivists (Boles & Greene, 1996). The difference comes from two theorists on archival appraisal, Schellenberg in America and Jenkinson in England. Although this bibliography does not contain any of Jenkinson's writings, it was meant to focus more on Schellenberg and later interpretations of his ideas, it does contain a number of papers where modern archivists compare Schellenberg's and Jenkinson's different perspectives.

Tschan's paper "A comparison of Jenkinson and Schellenberg on appraisal," does exactly that. He writes about their background and the historical setting that contributed to their radically different views on appraisal (2002). He places Jenkinson firmly in the English tradition of archives. Tschan then goes on to show how Schellenberg, writing

and working a couple years later, came to the relatively new post at the National Archives without a long tradition to dictate his views. Schellenberg is portrayed as the radical that he was seen as (2002).

Ole Kolsrud is an archivist in Norway who compares the archival system of different European countries and America. He also spends considerable time detailing the differences between Jenkinson and Schellenberg. Although he is a European archivist he favors Schellenberg ideas greatly over Jenkinson. He believes that Germany especially and the rest of Europe can and should learn a great deal from America and England's system has now become the outcast (1992).

No one could have predicted the amount of records facing modern archives but many new models were introduced in the late twentieth century. This bibliography covers two case studies. One study is of a collection of a university dean that was being processed and the authors developed three main criteria that should be considered when making appraisal decisions (Boles & Young, 1985). Boles and Young attempted to build on Schellenberg's ideas and break the different criteria down into a hierarchical structure. Their main categories were value of information, costs of retention and implications of the appraisal recommendation, which were then broken down into smaller more manageable parts (1985). The model developed by Boles and Young sounds good on paper and allows for a repository to have an extremely detailed collection model that allows for consistency across time and different personnel. Sink writes about this model's effectiveness when it was used at the archives at the New York Public Library (1990), and found it eliminated the personal touch a good archivist brings to appraisal, mainly intuition and good common sense.

The other case study details what has come to be called the "Minnesota Method" because it was developed at the historical society of Minnesota (Greene, 1998). This study focuses on using this model to appraise business records. It is set up in a ranking system. With those businesses that only the smallest amount of records are collected from being at level D and those where everything is collected at level A. Level A businesses are also the only businesses that are actively petitioned by the archives staff for material (Greene, 1998). This model offers the flexibility of collecting a lot of material from a small group but also documenting the other businesses in the area. The

author offers little advice on how it can be adapted to other types of collections, which is a fundamental problem explored by most if not all of the authors in this bibliography. If a universal theory of appraisal is going to be developed it has to be applicable to the wide range of collections in different archives.

One more paper in the bibliography that deserves special mention is Steinwell's article "Appraisal and the FBI files case: For whom do archivists retain records." The paper details the Supreme Court trial where a number of historians, archivists, and social organizations sued the FBI for destroying records that they believed belonged in the National Archives (1986). The trial was possible because of new amendments to the Freedom of Information Act that allowed citizens to request information from the FBI. When people began requesting information it was discovered that a lot of important records, particularly on wire tapings and counter espionage, were destroyed. The National Archives and Records Agency (NARA) allowed the FBI to determine what records were worth keeping and which should be destroyed (1986). The article details the dangers of letting those who created the records do the appraisal instead of archivists. The FBI destroyed any and all records that would cast their activities in a bad light. When an archivist conducts the appraisal they bring the necessary checks and balances to the process.

The rest of the articles in this bibliography are concerned with appraisal as a whole. They cover the basic ideas behind appraisal and explain why this aspect of archival science is so troubling. They all build off Schellenberg's ideas and offer ways to adapt his ideas to the modern age or argue that they do not need to be changed. "Schellenberg in Cyberspace" is a detailed argument on why Schellenberg's ideas translate seamlessly to the world of electronic records (Henry, 1998).

During the 1990's a lot of work was done to advance archival appraisal. Many new scholars wrote on this issue and all scholars attempted to incorporate the basic ideas of T. R. Schellenberg into the new volume and nature of archival records. Now as the first decade of the 2000's is closing there does not seem to be as much written on this issue even while technological advances may be changing the very foundation that appraisal is based on. The archival literature seems destined to be due for another decade of appraisal.

## Bibliography

### Entry 1:

Schellenberg, T.R. (1956). The appraisal of modern records. *Bulletins of the National Archives*, (8) Retrieved from <http://www.archives.gov/research/alic/reference/archives-resources/appraisal-of-records.html>.

**Abstract:** “Perhaps the most difficult problem facing an archivist concerned with modern public records is that of appraisal. In the case of the Federal archivist this problem is particularly acute because of the recency and the mass of the records with which he deals. To help solve this problem, the present bulletin has been written. In it the values of public records are discussed in relation to the evidence they contain on the organization and functioning of Government bodies and the information in them on persons, things, and phenomena that were the concern of such bodies. While the bulletin contains no exact standards by which the value of records may be judged, it suggests certain broad approaches that should be taken in appraisal work.”

**Annotation:** This is the bulletin that started the debate over appraisal. Schellenberg wrote this so the National Archives could handle the larger size of modern records. In his paper Schellenberg outlines different strategies to determine if a record should be kept or disposed of. This set the standard for American archival practices. Schellenberg worked at the National Archives and wrote this paper to detail how he was going to deal with the new amount of government documents. Other repositories borrowed his ideas and adapted them to their needs. A lot of the literature from this point forward is comprised of criticisms of his ideas and the different ways scholars have tried to improve his ideas as well as actual studies that have been done to show how effective they have been. This is the grandfather document that must be read for all the later documents to be understood.

**Search Strategy:** Most of the modern articles on appraisal cite this paper, and quite a few articles name Schellenberg in the title. In order for later arguments and discussions to make sense to the reader it is necessary to read this paper. One paper in particular argues for his ideas on appraisal against a European archivist titled “Et tu Schellenberg? Thoughts on the Dagger of American Appraisal Theory.”

**Database:** N/A

**Method of Searching:** Footnote chasing

**Search String:** Referenced in:  
Boles, F., & Greene, M.A. (1996). Et tu Schellenberg? thoughts on the dagger of American appraisal theory. *American Archivist*, 59(3), 298-310.

**Entry 2:**

Duranti, L. (1994). The Concept of appraisal and archival theory. *American Archivist*, 57(2), 328-344.

**Abstract:** “In the last decade, appraisal has become one of the central topics of archival literature. However, the approach to appraisal issues has been primarily methodological and practical. This article discusses the theoretical implications of appraisal as attribution of value to archives, and it bases its argument on the nature of archival material as defined by traditional archival theory.”

**Annotation:** Duranti is an English archivist who believes Schellenberg has done the archival community a disservice. Duranti’s article begins with a philosophical discussion of Archival practice. She traces what she describes as the fundamental practices of archival work from ancient Rome to the modern day with an emphasis on the idea that

records placed in an archive are to be permanently retained. She concludes her article by stating the question that she wished to answer with the paper was whether or not appraisal should be made a necessary component of archival science. She firmly disagrees with this statement. Boles and Greene on the other hand agree with appraisal. In order to understand the pros and cons of archival appraisal one must read both articles.

**Search Strategy:** I found and read the Boles and Greene article where they defend Schellenberg's ideas against Duranti. In order to understand the argument better I found and read the original article.

**Database:** N/A

**Method of Searching:** Footnote Chasing

**Search String:** Referenced in:  
Boles, F., & Greene, M.A. (1996). Et tu Schellenberg? thoughts on the dagger of American appraisal theory. *American Archivist*, 59(3), 298-310.

**Entry 3:**

Boles, F., & Greene, M.A. (1996). Et tu Schellenberg? thoughts on he dagger of American appraisal theory. *American Archivist*, 59(3), 298-310.

**Abstract:** “Luciana Duranti’s article, “The Concept of Appraisal and Archival Theory” challenges the very foundations of American appraisal practice. Duranti believes that through several fundamental errors American archivists have embraced a unique body of appraisal thought that “betray[s] archival accountability.” This article examines Duranti’s arguments and finds them unpersuasive.”

**Annotation:** Boles and Greene are two American archivists who defend Schellenberg’s contributions to archival studies from a European archivist. Duranti discusses in her article, “The Concept of appraisal and archival theory” (entry number 2) how Schellenberg’s ideas of destroying documents deemed “unworthy,” and how the entire

American archival system that has followed him is destroying archival practice. She bases this on what she views are universal archival policies that define what an archive is. Boles and Greene disagree with her and refute her claim that archival constants actually exist. A lot of her arguments are based on archival practices that took place in Antiquity. Boles and Greene put her arguments in their historical place and discuss how archives must adapt and change according changes in society.

**Search Strategy:** I knew about Schellenberg being the forefather of American appraisal practices. I decided to do a simple keyword search in Dialog's Library Lit. & Info. Science database to see what I would find. This was one of the seven results. Oddly enough Schellenberg's original paper was not listed.

**Database:** Library Lit. & Info. Science [**Dialog: file 438**]

**Method of Searching:** Keyword searching

**Search String:** s Schellenberg

**Entry 4:**

Green, M. (1998). "The Surest proof": A utilitarian approach to appraisal. *Archivaria*, 45, 127-169.

**Abstract:** "What follows is an analysis of research use in making appraisal and reappraisal decisions at the series level. Building on the "Minnesota Method" approach to selection and appraisal of modern business records as described in a paper published in *The Records of American Business*, this article analyzes and assesses application of the Minnesota Method's appraisal criteria, using three studies of rates of use of business records by scholars and the general public."

**Annotation:** Here Greene presents a method that has been developed to help with the appraisal of business records. It is called the “Minnesota Method” because it was developed at the Minnesota Historical Society. In this approach the repository ranks the individual businesses within its collecting policy according to its importance. A business that employs a lot of the people in the surrounding area would rank higher than one that does not, also the larger of two businesses that operate in the same field would be higher. The article goes in detail on how the method is used and was developed while discussing three different case studies.

**Search Strategy:** Browsing

**Database:** N/A

**Method of Searching:** Browsing through:  
Jimerson, R.C. (2000). *American archival studies: Readings in theory and practice*. Chicago, IL: The Society of American Archivists.

**Search String:** Found in Jimerson under Part Four: Appraisal.

**Entry 5:**

Boles, F., & Young, J.M. (1985). Exploring the black box: The appraisal of university administration records. *American Archivist*, 48(1), 121-140.

**Abstract:** “Although acknowledged as an essential archival function, appraisal is a complex process that is not fully understood. The authors examine the premises from T. R. Schellenberg derived many of the practices used to appraise modern records and identify some problems in the widespread use of his approach. As an alternative, they offer a model comprised of the elements that should be considered when making an appraisal decision.”

**Annotation:** Frank Boles and another American archivist, Young, attempt to build on Schellenberg's ideas and offer a case study of the authors' work with the records of the dean of a university. They introduce their own values that can guide one when making appraisal decisions. The values fall under the three main categories of value-of-information, costs-of-retention, and implications-of-the-appraisal-recommendations. They then break these down into different subheadings so the collection can be studied at a finer level. The only one that has no bearing on Schellenberg is the implications-of-the-appraisal-recommendations, which is more of the political considerations involved in either accepting or denying someone's donations. Schellenberg did not write about this topic because he worked for the National Archives and had the backing of the federal government, but it is an important consideration in public and university archives.

**Search Strategy:** Browsing

**Database:** N/A

**Method of Searching:** Browsing through:  
Jimerson, R.C. (2000). *American archival studies: Readings in theory and practice*. Chicago, IL: The Society of American Archivists.

**Search String:** Found in Jimerson under Part Four: Appraisal.

**Entry 6:**

Sink, R. (1990). Appraisal: The Process of choice. *American archivist*, 53(3), 452-458.

**Abstract:** "In 1987 the manuscripts and archives staff of the New York Public Library participated in the field testing of the "Black Box" appraisal model developed by Frank Boles and Julia Marks Young. Based on this experience, the author evaluates the Boles and Young model in light of its taxonomic function, its usefulness for staff training, and its contribution for furthering the development of appraisal theory. The discussion is

extended to consider other recent developments such as cooperative appraisal projects and documentation strategies. The article concludes by emphasizing the value to archivists of documenting and sharing their appraisal decisions.”

**Annotation:** Sink is an archivist in New York City and teaches at Columbia University, here he examines the theory set down in the previous paper by Frank Boles and Julia Marks Young. By examining the questions asked when appraising and how archivists arrive at those questions is the first step to developing a more broadly applicable theory for the entire profession. He concludes that the Boles and Young model actually takes away what archivists bring to the decision making process, which is intuition and good common sense. Sink then goes on to explain how the model has advanced archival science in that it presents a way for a repository to appraise consistently, it works as a teaching tool, and it made archivists reexamine the basic ideas that go into appraisal decisions.

**Search Strategy:** I noticed a few good results in Dialog had the descriptors Archives and retention. I then made a set for Retention in the descriptor field and ANDed it together with archiv? to get the relevant items

**Database:** Library Lit. & Info. Science [**Dialog 438**]

**Method of Searching:** Descriptor field

**Search String:** s retention/de and archiv?

**Entry 7:**

Tschan, Reto, (2002). A comparison of Jenkinson and Schellenberg on appraisal.

*American Archivist*, 65(2), 176-195.

**Abstract:** “Sir Hilary Jenkinson and Theodore R. Schellenberg, the two leading archival theorists in the English-speaking world in the twentieth century, held strikingly different opinions on the subject of appraisal of archival records. This paper examines their views on the nature of archival records, the reasons for their retention, and the role of the archivist in the appraisal process.”

**Annotation:** Tschan was a student of the archive theorist Terry Eastwood when he wrote this comparison of the two most influential Archive theorists of the twentieth century, T. R. Schellenberg and Sir Hillary Jenkinson. This paper does a good job of letting Schellenberg and Jenkinson speak for themselves by extensively quoting their key works on archival management. It also gives a historical perspective on how those two works came about. Most of the paper is the author’s study of their perspective on three theoretical issues: the nature of records and archives, the reason for the preservation of archival material, and the role of the archivist in appraisal. Other than reading Schellenberg’s and Jenkinson’s original writings this article clarifies their respective positions adequately and offers much needed commentary on their differences that a new student to archives would find helpful.

**Search Strategy:** I knew about Schellenberg being the forefather of American appraisal practices. I decided to do a simple keyword search in Dialog’s Library Lit. & Info. Science database to see what I would find. This was one of the seven results.

**Database:** Library Lit. & Info. Science [**Dialog: file 438**]

**Method of Searching:** Keyword searching

**Search String:** s Schellenberg

**Entry 8:**

Kolsrud, O. (1992) "The evolutions of basic appraisal principles – some comparative observations." *American Archivist*, 55(1), 26-39.

**Abstract:** "The vast increase in the production of documents during and after World War I led to a reconsideration of the role of the archivist in the appraisal of records. This reconsideration took various and quite opposite directions, in particular among English and German archivists. The German archivist has always put preservation before destruction; the English archivist has wished to defer to the office of origin for decisions on records retention. In addition to these two national variations, the author expands his review to include the Norwegian, eastern European, and United States archival contexts."

**Annotation:** Kolsrud is an Archivist in Norway. He gives an overview of European models of appraisal. He traces the historical development of archives and appraisal techniques that are used in Britain, Norway, and Germany. Most of the article is spent detailing Germany's archive system because the Prussian system, which later became the German system, influenced all the other European systems. He concludes that the English system is greatly different from the rest of the European systems, and now the Germans are actually looking to the American system for strategies on how to handle the volume of modern records.

**Search Strategy:** Used SciSearch in Dialog to see if it would give me better results when searching for articles that cite Schellenberg. This did not work out so I changed my search strategy to do a keyword search on my basic topic, and I got a small number of results, so I searched through each of them.

**Database:** SciSearch [**Dialog: file 2**]

**Method of Searching:** Keyword search

**Search String:** s archiv? and appraisal

**Entry 9:**

Steinwell, S. (1986). Appraisal and the FBI files case: For whom do archivists retain records. *The American Archivist*, 49(1), 52-63.

**Abstract:** “*American Friends Service Committee et al. v. William H. Webster, et al.*, commonly known to archivists as the FBI files case, illustrates appraisal challenges that should concern all archivists. The author relates the history of the case and reviews archival appraisal literature.”

**Annotation:** The author details the 1979 case where a group of social organizations, historians, and journalists filed a suit against the FBI to stop their destruction of files. One point of concern was the National Archives and Records Service (NARS) gave the FBI permission to destroy records from filed offices that had been closed. NARS then continued to allow the FBI to destroy records that either FBI agents believed were not records (such as photographs and correspondence), or records the FBI led NARS to believe were duplicated elsewhere. This gets to the heart of why this case matters for all archivists. This article details the dangers of when nonarchivists make appraisal decisions. In the trial a NARS employee detailed the appraisal processes they go through when choosing what records to keep and what records to destroy. The main point the FBI files case has is that when archives rely on individual agency's descriptions of their records it eliminates the necessary checks and balances in appraisal work.

**Search Strategy:** I noticed a few good results in Dialog had the descriptors Archives and retention. I then made a set for Retention in the descriptor field and ANDed it together with archiv? to get the relevant items

**Database:** Library Lit. & Info. Science [Dialog 438]

**Method of Searching:** Descriptor field

**Search String:** s retention/de and archiv?

**Entry 10:**

Henry, L. J. (1998). Schellenberg in cyberspace. *American Archivist*, 61(2), 309-327.

**Abstract:** “In the last few years, advocates of the ideas of David Bearman have written that Archivists need a “new paradigm” for electronic records. The new ideas would change or overturn traditional archival theory and practice, as represented by T.R. Schellenberg and the first writers about electronic records. This article discusses several of the new ideas and the differences between traditional archival writers and those who support a new paradigm for electronic records.”

**Annotation:** Henry discusses whether Schellenberg’s ideas can be adapted to the nature of electronic records. He points out that with electronic records appraisal is stressed above the other archival practices because the archive does not need to take physical custody of the records, which would require preservation and descriptions. The author explains the argument that has been going on in the archival community over the need to develop new criteria for electronic records. He concludes that they have only made the situation worse by not coming up with practical criteria for taking care of electronic records. He believes most archivists have the feeling that electronic records will magically be safe with the record creators. This article is a little dated but still gives a good discussion on this important topic in archival practice.

**Search Strategy:** I knew about Schellenberg being the forefather of American appraisal practices. I decided to do a simple keyword search in Dialog’s Library Lit. & Info. Science database to see what I would find. This was one of the seven results.

**Database:** Library Lit. & Info. Science [**Dialog: file 438**]

**Method of Searching:** Keyword searching

**Search String:** s Schellenberg

**Entry 11:**

Walters, T. O. (1996). Contemporary archival appraisal methods and preservation decision-making. *American Archivist*, 59(3), 322-338.

**Abstract:** “Archival administrators are beginning the search for administrative tools that rationalize difficult preservation priority decision-making processes. Some are suggesting that the new appraisal literature be evaluated for its application to preservation selection. This article reviews the literature covering archival appraisal’s role in the process of selection of preservation in archives, and addresses recent efforts to create archival preservation assessment and selection tools.”

**Annotation:** Walters aims to give the archive profession a greater understanding of what goes into making good judgments when appraising collections. He attempts to develop reliable and testable models to use when selecting documents for appraisal. He then goes over different models of appraisal that are currently being written about and weighs the pros and cons of each. Included in this paper is a critique of the Boles and Young method that is mentioned in an earlier paper. He concludes the paper with what needs to be done next to adapt the appraisal models for other archival practices such as preservation.

**Search Strategy:** Initial search in ArticleFirst using the FirstSearch interface. I tried keyword searches for archives AND appraisal and got a lot of hits that were off topic, but quite a few that were relevant had archival appraisal in the title. My second attempt was a title phrase search for archival appraisal

NOT monetary. From my other searches I saw some hits that discussed the monetary appraisal of records that were off my topic so I wanted to eliminate them.

**Database:** ArticleFirst

**Method of Searching:** Title search

**Search String:** title: archival appraisal NOT monetary

**Entry 12:**

Cox, R. J. (2002). The End of collecting: Towards a new purpose for archival appraisal. *Archival Science*, 2(3-4), 287-309.

**Abstract:** “In this essay, the author ruminates on the relationship between collecting and archival appraisal. He argues that collecting does not necessarily equal appraisal, although society and even archivists value it as an important function. The author stresses that the critical need is for archivists to have a clear perspective, whether highly theoretical or immensely practical, so that future researchers and archivists can understand what archival appraisal meant.”

**Annotation:** The well-known archives scholar Richard Cox takes a look at how the process of appraisal has changed over time. It is a more philosophical piece on the nature of what appraisal is and what the archivist does when appraising. The author describes an auction of Kennedy belongings to highlight how excited people get to collect certain memorabilia. He also uses it to demonstrate how some people attribute a lot of value to seemingly worthless objects. He then goes over the differences between how an actual archivist goes about collecting and how it is portrayed in fiction. Cox concludes his article detailing different appraisal models and urges the archive community to have clear and achievable goals in mind when appraising.

**Search Strategy:** Initial search in ArticleFirst using the FirstSearch interface. I tried keyword searches for archives AND appraisal and got a lot of hits that were off topic, but quite a few that were relevant had archival appraisal in the title. My second attempt was a title phrase search for archival appraisal NOT monetary. From my other searches I saw some hits that discussed the monetary appraisal of records that were off my topic so I wanted to eliminate them.

**Database:** ArticleFirst

**Method of Searching:** Title search

**Search String:** title: archival appraisal NOT monetary

**Entry 13:**

Lockwood, E. (1990) "Imponderable Matters:" The influence of new trends in history on appraisal at the National Archives. *American Archivist*, 53(3), 394-405.

**Abstract:** "The field of history has changed a great deal since Theodore Schellenberg wrote *The Appraisal of Modern Public Records* in 1956. Although trends in social history, Afro-American history, and women's history have suggested new subjects, themes, and periodization for historians during the last twenty years, archivists at the National Archives and Records Administration continue to rely primarily on Schellenberg's guidance in their appraisal of the records of the federal government."

**Annotation:** Lockwood is an archivist but in this paper she focuses on the changing nature of historical scholarship. The author argues that because historical scholarship and hence research is changing focus archive appraisal has to change. She details some examples where records from the past that were thrown out or scheduled to be thrown out would be used extensively by the changes in historical research. She argues that

appraisers should simply have some knowledge of how historians conduct their research, which would allow the appraiser to save the records that would be used the most. Her point of view is not new since many of the original archivists were at first historians but she is reintroducing the concept to complement Schellenberg's ideas that were developed before historians began focusing on women and minority groups.

**Search Strategy:** Used SciSearch in Dialog to see if it would give me better results when searching for articles that cite Schellenberg. This did not work out so I changed my search strategy to do a keyword search on my basic topic, and I got a small number of results, so I searched through each of them.

**Database:** SciSearch [Dialog: file 2]

**Method of Searching:** Keyword search

**Search String:** s archiv? and appraisal

**Entry 14:**

Menne-Haritz, A. (1994). Appraisal or documentation: Can we appraise by selecting content?. *American Archivist*, 57(2), 528-542.

**Abstract:** “The author outlines the various roots of today's appraisal theory and traces their influence on issues today. She describes the influence that early twentieth-century Weberian bureaucracy had on archival principles, and she suggests linkages with theories that precede the Second World War and were the basis for the Schellenberg bulletin. She shows how archival theories and debate were overlaid by the political impact of the Cold War confrontation before the fall of he Berlin Wall and Iron Curtain, noting that since that time, archives have been able to assume their role as windows on government. Now archives must clarify their tools and methods to ensure that traces of decision-making processes are visible and transparent.”

**Annotation:** Menne-Haritz's goal in this article is to answer the fundamental question, why do we appraise? She leads the reader through the history of archives with a focus on the changing nature of the records that were available and needed to be preserved. She spends a good deal describing who influenced Schellenberg's thoughts on archival practices and goes on to briefly describe his contributions. She concludes her study by describing today's trend of documenting society based on provenance and the documentation strategy's impact on appraisal. At the end the author argues the pros and cons of the documentation strategy and how it impacts appraisal.

**Search Strategy:** Was searching the online version of *American Archivist* 57 for Duranti's article and found this one too.

**Database:** N/A

**Method of Searching:** Browsing

**Search String:** Browsing the *American Archivist* issue for the Duranti article.

**Entry 15:**

Schaeffer, R. C. (1992) "Transcendent concepts: Power, appraisal, and the archivist as social outcast." *American Archivist*, 55(4), 608-619.

**Abstract:** "The appropriate application of personal, professional, and societal values in archival appraisal has been the subject of analysis and speculation since the origin of programs of acquisition. The author provides a historical overview of the issue, discusses the principle of accountability in appraisal, and explores the notion of a distinct set of values that are the product of the unique knowledge and experience of the archival practitioner."

**Annotation:** This is another article that covers the history of appraisal theory and how in only the last fifty years has it really been an issue. Schaeffer defines the archivist after appraisal as the active archivist. His view is that before the mass of documents associated with the modern world was a problem for archivists they took a passive role and just let the documents come to their repository. Now the archivist has to be an active member in modern bureaucracies by determining what records are worth saving and even working with the record creators. The rest of the article focuses on the issue of objectivity in archival appraisal. He concludes that objectivity should be something that every archivist aspires to but can never actually reach. This discussion of objectivity is not seen much in the literature and makes this article worthy to read even though it covers a lot of the same material as the other articles listed.

**Search Strategy:** Searched SciSearch for articles that have cited the scholar Richard Cox, and I limited to only articles that have to do with appraisal by ANDing in appraisal.

**Database:** SciSearch [**Dialog: file 2**]

**Method of Searching:** Cited author search

**Search String:** s (ca='cox r' or ca='cox rj') and appraisal

**Entry 16:**

Craig, B. L. (2001). The archivist as planner and poet: thoughts on the larger issues of appraisal for acquisition. *Archivaria*, 52, 175-183.

**Abstract:** “This article comments on issues related to private sector acquisition strategies. It discusses the relationship of acquisition to institutional mandates and ideas of significance. Appraisal is linked to larger concepts of time, memory, and the continuing preservation of records. Four larger areas for archives research are highlighted: the role of appraisal in preservation; the nature of records for private

persons; connections between archives and other social memorials; and the study of archives users.”

**Annotation:** Craig presents a topic that has been missing from the other articles. Craig’s main argument is that appraisal decisions in the same repository must remain consistent over time. Consistent with what was saved from earlier collections and consistent with the institution’s mandate. This prevents the repository from having inconsistent documentation over time and from acquiring new collections because of a change in the appraisal process. This happens when an archivists saves a collection that does not fall under the scope of the collecting policy because he was worried if he did not save it would be destroyed. Yes it is the archivists goal to save what is valuable, but as every paper has stressed archives cannot save everything. This articles cautions against the individual making the decisions outside of the scope of the repository, but admits it is often a difficult balance.

**Search Strategy:** Initial keyword search. Was hoping to find

**Database:** Library Literature and Information Science Full Text

**Method of Searching:** Keyword search

**Search String:** appraisal/kw and archives/kw

### **Conclusion and Personal Statement**

This project brought all the loose ends of the course together for me. I must have used everything I learned this quarter to complete this bibliography. I chose the topic archival appraisal because I am enrolled in the archives concentration and am interested in this debate in archival science.

To compile this bibliography I mainly used Dialog. I had a considerably easier time searching Dialog on this topic than I did completing the assignments. Using the Dialog subject guides made it extremely easy to determine which databases to search for my topic.

Doing this work in Dialog helped me work on the skills that were covered in the course. I was able to get into the different descriptors and search fields to find the relevant material. For each keyword of descriptor search that revealed a new author that I could then use to search in the author field. Using the field searches got me used to using the expand feature to find the right terms to search within the right fields. I did not exactly learn anything new conducting these searches but I know I refined my skills searching in a complicated database while completing this assignment.

Prior to this assignment I had only read two articles on the topic of appraisal. Looking through the articles' footnotes I saw there was a lot of material written on this topic and I wanted to learn about the debate. Like probably most people I figured archives were happy when someone donated or they received more records to preserve and so determining what records to destroy was not much of an issue. Learning about it in my archives class really opened my eyes to the debate among archivists. I was particularly surprised by the development of different ideas on appraisal in different countries. By reading these articles and critically analyzing them for the annotations I learned a great deal more on the debate and why it is not so easy to develop a one model that can fit everything.

I have done annotated bibliographies before but they were always shorter and of articles I was going to use for a paper. They were more for my professor to see that I was on the right track in my research. Compiling an annotated bibliography by itself eliminates the written paper but saves the part I liked the most, the research.