

Archival Values: Essays in Honor of Mark Greene. Edited by Christine Weideman and Mary A. Caldera. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2019. 300 pp. Appendix, Index. Softcover. \$55.00. \$39.00 for SAA members.

In his August 2008 presidential address, Society of American Archivists president Mark Greene advocated for the creation of a set of shared core values for archivists to follow. He argued that such a set of values would make the vocation more professional, more united, and, ultimately, more empowered. But can these goals be accomplished if the values are not agreed upon or if they are subject to different interpretations and meanings? This is the unstated question in *Archival Values: Essays in Honor of Mark Greene*, a collection of articles that examine the 11 core archival values that SAA approved in 2011 following Greene's address.

In *Archival Values*, 23 respected archivists pen short essays on the values developed and defined by SAA, the nation's oldest and largest association of archivists. Those values, which are listed and defined in the book's appendix, address social responsibility, diversity, accountability, responsible custody, preservation, selection, advocacy, service, professionalism, history and memory, and access and use. Each author writes about one of the values, and, generally, two essays address each value. Dennis Meissner, who collaborated with Greene on the influential 2005 article "More Product, Less Process," provides an afterward for the book.

In creating and defining these values, SAA wrote, "Values embody what a profession stands for and should form the basis for the behavior of its members" (p. 273). One might have thought that these "values" would be etched in stone, much like the 10 commandments. One would be wrong. Greene, who passed away in 2017, had opened a discussion on what it means to be an archivist, and the discussion did not end with SAA's adoption of the core set of values. If anything, the discussion has continued and may very well be never-ending. SAA is to be commended for encouraging that discussion with this publication. And it is quite the discussion. Michelle Light, in her essay on custody, proposes revising SAA's definition of that value to "put people, rather than holdings, first" (p. 108). Trevor Owens, in writing about the value of service, suggests expanding the concept to not just archivists but to those who create and use archives (pp. 236–37). Scott Cline questions whether professionalism should even be considered a core value, stating that it is a virtue that "transcends and encompasses the other 10 values" (p. 258). Hillel Arnold, in his essay on social responsibility, criticizes the definition of that core value for "failing to clearly articulate what social responsibility is and how we can become more socially responsible" (p. 31). Some of the essays take an overly theoretical approach in reviewing the values, but as Matt Gorzalski notes in his essay on professionalism, a theoretical basis for archival work is important. He writes, "As I progress in my career as a university archivist, the value of theoretical knowledge becomes increasingly apparent. If we do not understand the 'whys' of what we do and their importance, we may be hindered in many aspects of archival work, especially when interacting with non-archivists" (p. 241).

The individual essays will likely appeal differently (or sometimes not at all) to archivists depending on the environments in which they work (government, business, academic,

solo arrangers, etc.). However, all essays in the book contain pearls of practical wisdom to which most, if not all, archivists can relate. Many of the essays provide a good review of archival history and recent literature. The best of the essays note that even if the values are seen as aspirational, they still have a practical use in archivists' daily work. Kaye Lanning Minchew's essay on accountability, Frank Boles's essay on selection, Elena Danielson's essay on access in a digital era, and Trudy Huskamp Peterson's essay on advocacy are just four examples of essays that provide both a critique of a value and practical advice for its implementation. In his essay on the value of social responsibility, Randall Jimerson does an outstanding job of explaining why all the values are important and can be used by archivists to successfully carry out their responsibilities.

The actor John Ratzenberger, who portrayed Cliff on the television show *Cheers*, is credited with saying, "Find people who share your values and you'll conquer the world together." Have archivists conquered the world? Of course not. After reading this book, it is obvious that archivists may not even share the same values. But the hope that these SAA-approved values will instill professionalism, unity, and even empowerment for the archives profession is no less valid. Debating the values, referencing them when questions arise in the profession, and using them as a guide in performing one's day-to-day job are what professionals in a given field should be doing. Whether offering practical advice or engaging in theoretical discussions, the authors in *Archival Values* encourage archivists to think critically about their profession in ways they may not have before. More important, the authors do a wonderful and appropriate job in showing that the values created by SAA can indeed provide archivists with a framework for professionalism, unity, and empowerment.

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