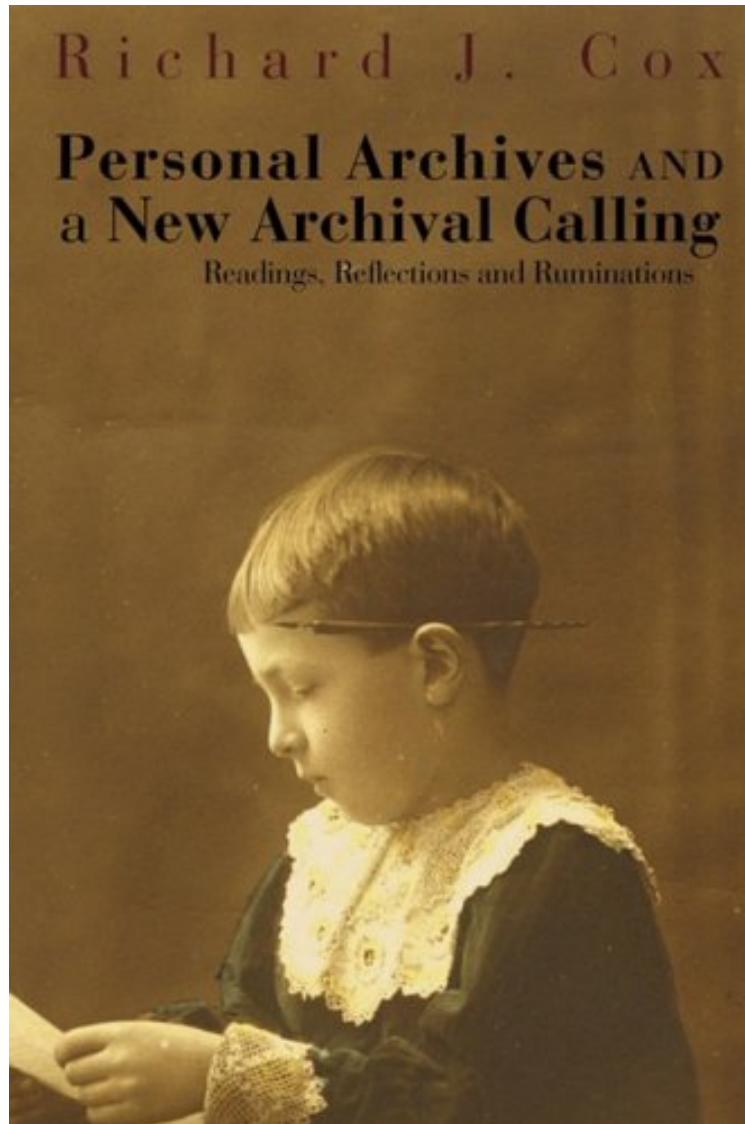


(Ebook free) Personal Archives and a New Archival Calling: Readings, Reflections and Ruminations

## Personal Archives and a New Archival Calling: Readings, Reflections and Ruminations

*Richard J. Cox*

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In *Personal Archives and a New Archival Calling: Readings, Reflections and Ruminations*, Richard J. Cox argues that personal archives might be assuming a new importance in society. As the technical means for creating, maintaining, and using documents are improving and becoming more cost-effective, individuals and families are seeking to preserve their old documents, especially traditional paper forms, as a connection to a past that may seem to be in risk of being swallowed up in the immense digital gadgetry in our Internet Age. There is a reversal to other technologies as well, such as leather bound journals and fountain pens, by some individuals resisting or protesting the increasingly digital world they reside in. Behind these very different approaches are similar impulses, and, these divergent paths raise identical questions about the role and purpose of traditional archives dating back two centuries and more. Personal recordkeeping raises a remarkable array of issues and concerns about records and their preservation, public or collective memory, the mission of professional records managers and archivists, the nature of the role of the institutional archives, and the function of the individual citizen as their own archivist. Archivists need to develop a new partnership with the public, and the public needs to learn from the archivists the essentials of preserving documentary materials. We are on the cusp of seeing a new kind of archival future, and whether this is good or bad depends on how well archivists equip citizen archivists.