mind changed to the endless cycle of content based on one's interests, whether unsubstanti-ated health information or far-right conspiracy theories. At the same time, librarians have a significant role to play in drawing attention to the perceived banality of search and to make apparent the workings of search engines and the commodification of information to library users. Doing so is an important step toward identifying the different shapes and forms of the *search-ification of everyday life*, making evident the impacts as well as the immense amount of trust we put into the results appearing on our screens.—*Eamon C. Tewell, Columbia University*

Amy Hildreth Chen. *Placing Papers: The American Literary Archives Market*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2020. 192p. Paper, $33.95 (ISBN 978-1-62534-485-4).

Published as part of the University of Massachusetts Press series on Studies in Print Culture and History of the Book, *Placing Papers: The American Literary Archives Market* is a well-written and fascinating history of how various stakeholders—and their differing motiva-tions—shaped the literary archives trade in the United States of America. Amy Hildreth Chen, who holds a PhD in English from Emory University, previously was an academic librarian at the University of Iowa and now is an independent scholar. She traces the largely overlooked history of the trade in literary papers from its post-World War II origins through to the mid-2010s. The book comprises an introduction, conclusion, and six chapters. After a brief first chapter on the vari-ous values implicated in archives (financial, scholarly, and public), *Placing Papers* examines the literary archives market from the perspective of several key stakeholder groups: authors and their families (chapter 2), agents and dealers (chapter 3), directors and curators (chapter 4), archivists and digital archivists (chapter 5), and, finally, scholars and members of the public (chapter 6).

Chapters on "Brand: Authors and Families" and "Access: Scholars and the Public" book-end *Placing Papers*. Plenty of archival literature already exists on both donor relations and on reference and access. Chen places this discourse into a much wider context by examining how authors' cultural capital on the one hand, and scholars' fetishization of literary manuscripts on the other, create value and drive demand in the literary archives market. The chapter "Profit: Agents and Dealers" discusses the two professions often involved in sales of authors' papers. While agents are focused on obtaining the best prices for their authors, and dealers value their relationships with institutions and downplay the financial aspects of their transactions, both are invested in ensuring "the survival of their business by looking out for writers' best interests" (43). A subsequent chapter on "Competition: Directors and Curators" explores dynamics among institutions vying for papers that bring in the most cultural capital, while attempting to balance (in some cases enormous) budgets.

Of particular note is the chapter on "Provenance: Archivists and Digital Archivists." It acts as a corrective to the frequent oversight that leaves archivists' work uncited in research. Especially sophisticated is the discussion of acquisition, preservation, and access challenges created by the advent and increase of born-digital records. As Chen demonstrates, these are particularly acute for archivists working with personal born-digital records. If the current lack of resources to deal with digital records continues, the utility of collections to depict an

author's compositional process could diminish. Given her recognition of the emotional value of archives to authors, families, scholars, and members of the public, I would like to have read more about the emotional dimension of archivists' work in processing, preserving, and making available the records of individuals. While scholarship on the topic of the emotional and affective dimensions of archival work is still emerging, conversations on this topic have been ongoing since at least 2016, with the publication of key articles by Michelle Caswell. Archivists' contribution to the market is to "create literary archives through their management of these writers' physical, digitized, and born-digital documents" (81). Examining the roles of archivists' emotions during the process of preserving records would add more nuance to the discussion of values. Emotions may play a role in which collections are prioritized for processing, and they certainly impact how the archivist(s) (re)present the collection in the finding aid.

Of the many things this book does well, two stand out. First, Chen expertly blends qualitative and empirical quantitative research to produce a highly engaging narrative. Her initial approach to tracking the history of her topic is data driven. Needing to delineate the parameters of her research, she settles on defining canonical authors as those included in the *Norton Anthology of American Literature*, while acknowledging the racist and sexist past of anthologies. Her data set of canonical authors includes their genders and ages, the identity of the people who deposited or sold their papers and the time at which they sold it, the extent of the collections and their content, and finding aid information. Her data-driven conclusions are complemented and illustrated by fascinating case studies drawn, by necessity, from a selection of grey literature such as blog posts, professional white papers, newspapers and magazines, and trade publications. As Chen states, the "often ephemeral locations of these texts highlights how the literary archives market came to be overlooked in scholarship discussing twentieth- and twenty-first-century American literature" (10). She also draws upon scholarship in the fields of literary studies, archival and library studies, and digital humanities.

Second is the transparent and publicly engaged nature of Chen's research. All of her data sets, accompanied by a data dictionary, are easily accessible online through the University of Iowa Library. Interested users can download and reconfigure the data sets. Chen writes clearly about her process, making this book an example of how to conduct quantitative research in the humanities. Chen sends a shoutout to her "interdisciplinary cohort" on Twitter in the acknowledgments (xi). Her citational politics are borne out by references to Twitter conversations in the text of the book and in endnotes that credit Twitter conversations with sparking ideas or providing information.

As is inevitable with a work that identifies a gap in the existing scholarly literature, Chen is unable to pursue all of the interesting questions raised by her research. As a Canadian, I couldn't help wondering how some of the scenarios Chen discusses would unfold differently outside the United States. It is a compliment, rather than a criticism, to say that I was occasionally left wanting more detail, more illustrative anecdotes, or more in-depth analysis. Chen is a disciplined scholar who is able to make the necessary tough choices to keep her project manageable. She is transparent about topics that are beyond the scope of her research and provides suggestions both in the text and in footnotes for areas that would benefit from further research.

Given these strengths, I can imagine this book being assigned in MLIS programs. It serves as an introduction to the topic of literary archives, provides a template for how to conduct research that blends quantitative and qualitative approaches, and affords inspiration for

research essay topics. It is relevant for current or aspiring special collections archivists and librarians, digital humanities librarians, and data librarians. It is also a lively and enjoyable read and would appeal to anyone, regardless of their level of familiarity with the topic, who is interested in authors' papers and the thorny question of "value" in literary archives. I hope that literary scholars and archival/librarian scholars alike respond to Chen's call to conduct more research on this topic.—*Alexandra Wieland, Simon Fraser University*