somewhat simplistic. Economic, social, technical and academic developments have gone alongside the growth of knowledge, and the technologies and systems which have tried to control the resulting increases in information, records and documents. These developments have never been as orderly as they may seem, as each influences, and is influenced by, the others. We can, nonetheless, learn lessons from the information past, and use them to understand the information present, and to imagine the information future.

> - Understanding the history of information and documents is not only intrinsically interesting, but is helpful in understanding the present, and in seeing analogies with past problems and issues.
> - There are several different approaches and perspectives in the study of the history of information and documents.
> - The developments which have, in turn, changed the information environment drastically have been language, writing, printing, mass communications, and networked digital information.
> - We live in what is still, to a large extent, a Victorian information environment.

Key readings

William Aspray, The history of information science and other traditional information domains: models for future research, *Libraries and the Cultural Record*, 2011, 46(2), 230–48.

Margaret Zeegers and Deidre Barron, *Gatekeepers of knowledge: a consideration of the library, the book and the scholar in the Western world*, Oxford: Chandos, 2010. [Two authoritative and readable texts, focusing on the history of information science and of librarianship respectively.]

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