

**5C—PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AND VALUES 1: PHILOSOPHICAL
EXPLORATIONS #1**

Reading Libraries: Past Perspective Informs Future Practice in Humanities Libraries

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The history of the book is an interdisciplinary mode of enquiry that has enriched the understanding of reading practices from the Middle Ages to the modern era, providing valuable insight into the material, epistemological, and cultural implications of texts as vehicles for information in the West as well as their crucial influence on the development of institutions, ideas, and people. For librarians, this scholarly paradigm illuminates the information-seeking behaviour of readers as a series of priorities, practices, and preferences. Similarly, the history of libraries and the library profession have occupied scholars interested in questions of access, of what to collect, and of where and how it should be housed. This emphasis on the past sheds valuable light on the present and future by proposing origins for key concepts, as well as a larger context in which to understand ongoing debates about format, space, and researcher priorities.