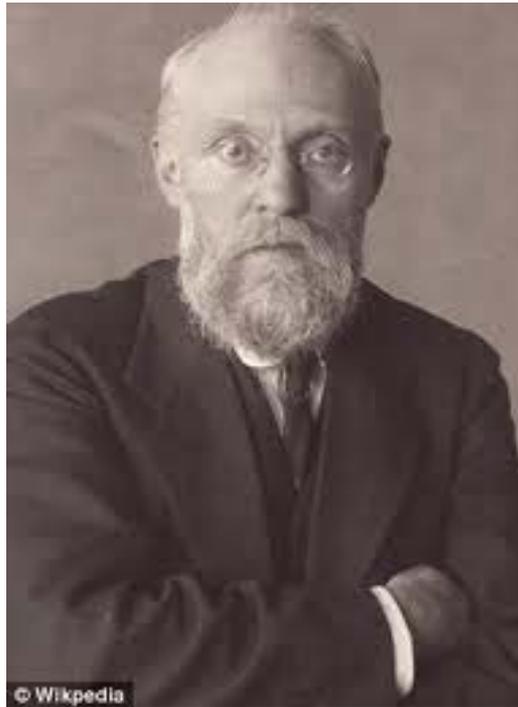


How can the study of documents
help?

A short history ...



A short history ...



A short history ...

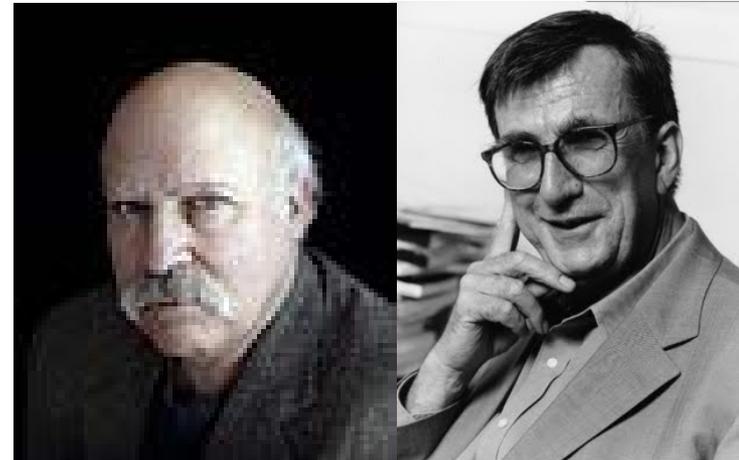
- Decline from the 1960s, especially in Anglo-American world
- But revival in 1990s

Benefits

- Documents are substantial, material
- Information is insubstantial, ethereal
- The materiality of documents points us in the direction of asking questions about
 - How they are constructed
 - By whom
 - And for what purpose

Benefits

- Example: scientific journal articles
 - Information focus would ask why scientists don't use journal "informatively"
 - A document focus allows us to move beyond that to understand the role journals play in science "games" or "wars"



Benefits

- Example: scientific journal articles
 - By reducing science to “games” or “wars” we can make room for alternative knowledges and a less hegemonic and perhaps more humane view of science

Benefits

- Example: medical records
 - Information as the focus tends to obscure the human element in medical records
 - Medical records a product of struggles between doctors, medical record keepers, and hospital management
 - Their development in particular ways allowed for the incorporation of more complex tests and procedures

Benefits

- Example: medical records
 - Today, we are faced with the issue of digitalization
 - What questions does a focus on document highlight?

Benefits

- Enhancement of the professional project
 - Requires a body of theoretical knowledge
 - Allows for an appropriation of a particular domain of expertise

Views of the doctor in the 18th century



Conclusion

- Argument that documentation allows us:
 - A new avenue for empowerment
 - A focus on human agency in an era of technological determinism
 - A means to build a professional project