

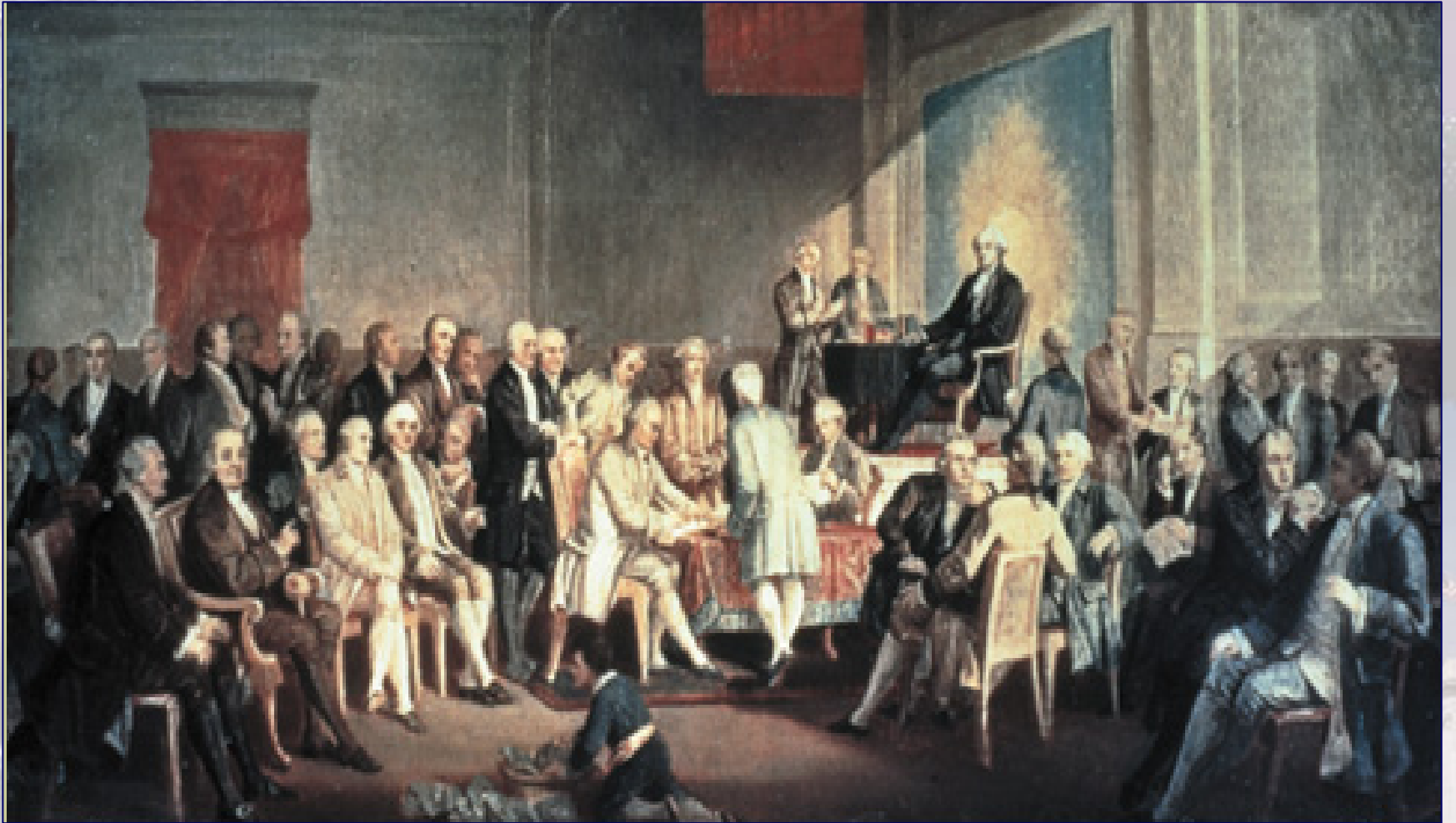
Everything You Need to Know About Records

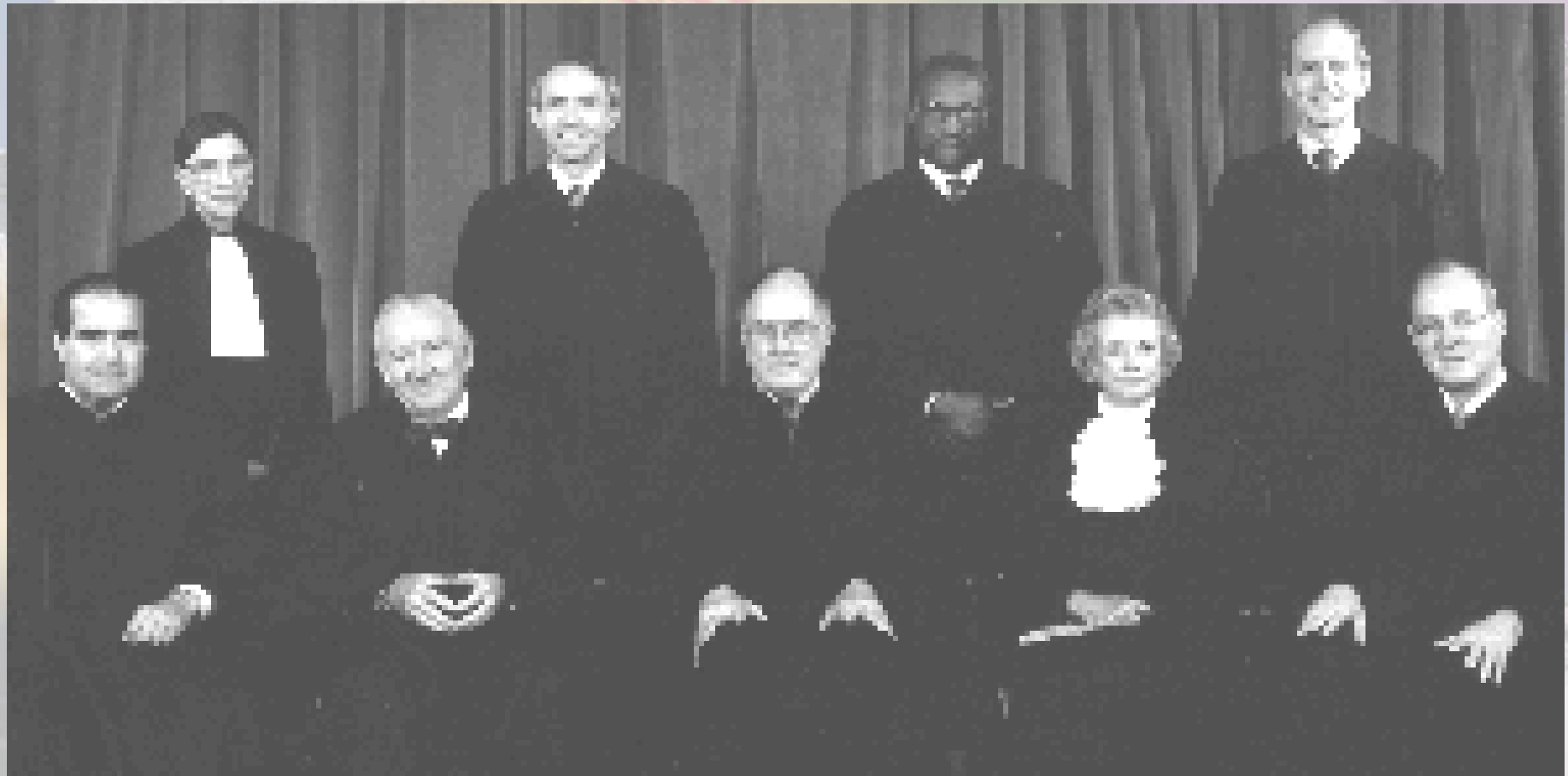
A Briefing for Managers



Congratulations on your appointment!

You've joined a distinguished company of public servants...





U.S. Supreme Court, <http://supct.law.cornell.edu/supct/justices/fullcourt.html>



George Bush Library WHPC-A-P18879(069A)

You have many important responsibilities!

- Managing people and other resources
- Reporting to the Secretary and the President
- Answering questions from the Congress and the public

and

- Managing your records

Managing my records??????????

Managing Records??

Isn't that something my secretary does?

Not entirely. First, you must set the policy and provide the example for the agency.



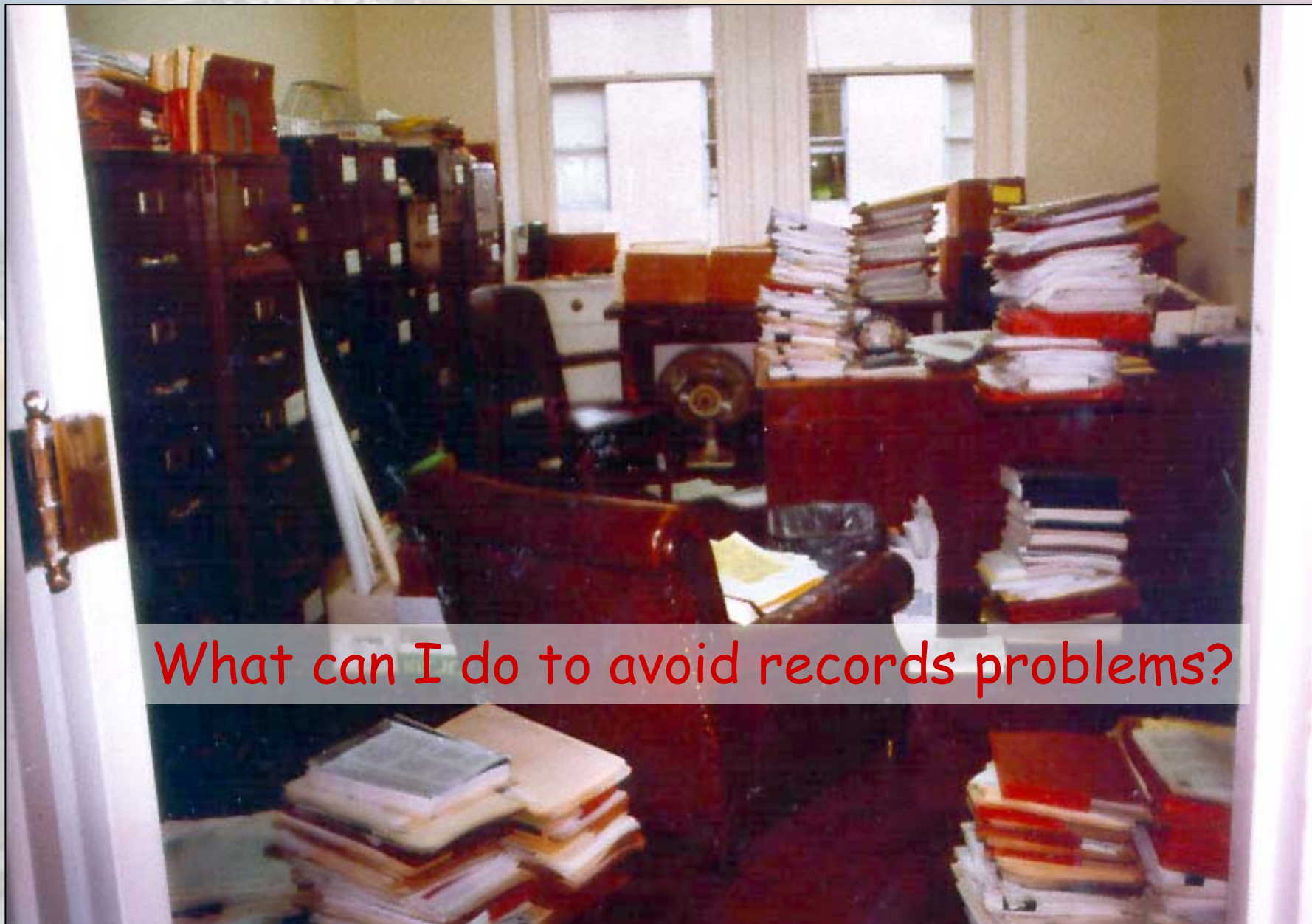
Why should I care about my records?

- It's in your interest
 - To find the information you need
 - To document your accomplishments
 - To avoid embarrassment, litigation, loss of security clearance, dismissal from Federal service, prosecution

Also....

- To protect democratic values
 - Rights of citizens
 - Accountability of government





What can I do to avoid records problems?

Start right and the rest is easy!

- Separate Federal records and personal files. (most will be Federal)
- Keep Federal records as long as required by law & regulation. The National Archives & Records Administration (NARA) provides authorities specifying retention periods
- Ask your records officer whether you can make copies for personal files
- Ensure that those you supervise are also managing their records correctly

Your records officer can help by...

- Briefing you and your staff
- Identifying new types of records that will need new disposition authorities
- Reviewing separation of personal from Federal records
- Providing tools
 - folder labels
 - retention lists
 - written instructions



What is a Federal record?

1. Documentary material
Regardless of physical form (paper, electronic, audiovisual, etc.)
2. Made or received by an agency of government
3. Useful as evidence of agency functions, organizations or activities

Say that again?

- 📄 Did you receive this document as a result of your Federal job?
- 📄 Did you create or use this document to conduct or facilitate agency business?
- 📄 Did you distribute this document to others?
- 📄 Did you put the document in an agency file?
- 📄 If not, did you still need to refer to this document later to conduct government business?

If any answer is "yes", the document is probably a Federal record.

Types of Federal records:

- Paper (letters, memos, completed forms, reports, maps, etc.)
- Electronic (databases, e-mail, spreadsheets, geographic information systems, etc.)
- Audio recordings
- Photographic prints and negatives
- Video recordings & motion picture films



Is my e-mail a Federal record?

Probably yes, unless truly personal in content and use.



Can I delete e-mail?

- Ask your records officer:
 - Do I have authority from NARA to delete email?
 - What is the agency email policy: keeping copies electronically or in paper files?
 - How does the agency capture the whole e-mail record—the transmission data as well as the content of the message?

Can I remove, delete or destroy other types of Federal records?

- No! Not unless your records officer provides a NARA disposition authority
- Unauthorized destruction or removal may result in prosecution and criminal penalties

What are personal files?

- Materials not connected with the conduct of government business

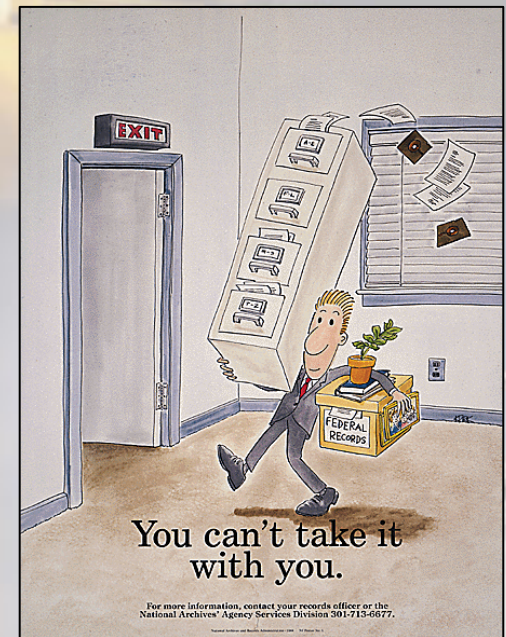
For example:

- Files created before entering public service
- Personal, family or social correspondence
- Insurance or medical papers
- Your copies of personnel-related documents



Can I take copies of Federal records with me when I leave?

- Only if the removal of these copies
 - Is approved by records officials
 - Will not diminish the official record
 - Will not exceed normal administrative costs
 - Does not include information that is security classified, subject to the Privacy Act, or otherwise prohibited from release



Can I donate Federal records?

Federal records are not yours to donate, but you may be able to donate copies of certain records.

You may, of course, make arrangements to donate your personal papers.

What happens to the records in my office when I leave?

- Some may be needed for continuing business
- Others may be sent to storage or destroyed
- Your “permanent” records will eventually be transferred to NARA

You can arrange to have access to your records after you leave the government.

What are the benefits of managing my records well?

- Carry out your responsibilities for records management
- Document your public service
- Save the government money by operating more efficiently
- Ensure accountability to the Congress and the public
- Avoid embarrassment and prosecution

It's in your interest!

It's in the public interest!

Where can I get more information?

- Consult your agency's records officer
- Consult the NARA web site (www.nara.gov)
- See the NARA publication: *Documenting Your Public Service*
- Ask the advice of your agency's legal counsel, historian, inspector general, and information security officer



National Archives, Still Picture Branch, 4-P-21