This collection of essays issues from a series of seminars offered by Armando Petrucci and Franca Nardelli Petrucci at the Newberry Library, Chicago, from 1983 through 2005. Representing a wide range of scholarly interests and covering a temporal arc from late antiquity through the 1930s, each of these essays demonstrates how crucial an engagement with archival materials is to a historicized understanding of the role writing in its various manifestations has played in the articulation of Western culture.

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