

*for Information Managers in Archives, Libraries and Record Centres* (Toronto: Toronto Area Archivists Group Education Foundation, 1986).

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**The Management of Oral History Sound Archives.** FREDERICK J. STIELOW. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1986. XVIII, 159 p. illus. ISBN 0-313-24442-1 \$35.00 (U.S.).

This book provides a well written, up to date, and practical manual for archivists entering the world of computerization and deserves to be read throughout the archival community. Unfortunately, this is unlikely to happen since the author has chosen to articulate these computer insights within the small and specialized area of sound archives. As such, this book must be reviewed first as a book on sound archives and then as a book on automation.

To understand the purpose of this book, one must first understand its title. For its author, an American librarian with a folklore background, the inclusion of the word "sound" in the title simply indicates his preference for collecting oral history on tape rather than the usual American penchant for complete transcripts. Thus, *The Management of Oral History Sound Archives* translates as the archiving of oral history and folklore collections on tape within a library environment. This explains why the author's theory of sound archives draws heavily on folklore references, why his section on processing and cataloguing reflects a library orientation, and why his chapter on legal and ethical concerns is framed within the American experience. It also explains why this book will have limited value to Canadian archivists for whom sound archives also means radio broadcasts, speeches and talks, proceedings of meetings, and other varied documents in addition to oral history.

Stielow does, however, share common cause with Canadian archivists in his preference for tape over transcript and it is in this area that his remarks are most useful. The chapter on conservation management is a detailed, yet readable, rendition of the pertinent information needed by archivists in this field. The section on acquisition wisely suggests that archivists can save time and resources by both rejecting outright those collections which do not meet identification, technical, or accessibility standards and at the same time arranging to have worthwhile collections described in advance of deposit by the donor. His call for archival scholarship, based not on the role of the interviewer but on the study of existing archival oral history collections (to ascertain questions of memory, interviewing effectiveness, and validity of evidence), posits a much welcomed and positive intellectual role for archivists in the field. Yet much of the information on oral history, while significant, can also be found in other sound archives literature. When this fact is added to his highly specialized definition of sound archives and the price of the book itself (\$45 Canadian), it is easy to advise Canadian readers to consult the Province of British Columbia publication, *Voices*, as a definitive book on oral history collections.

If this book does not succeed in addressing the small universe of sound archives, it does succeed in addressing the much larger universe of archivists interested in automation for it is precisely these sections of the book that represent a new and valuable addition to

archival literature. The author introduces the subject of computers by pointing out that their successful implementation is dependent on the manual systems upon which they are based. The first step towards computerization may therefore involve a complete rethinking of existing manual procedures and for this reason, the author begins with a section on how to create and design effective archival forms to act as a guide in this exercise. The author then attempts throughout the book to detail where library and archive techniques converge with computer application and, more importantly, where they diverge. Although a case is made in the sections on processing and microcomputer applications for archivists to follow a library standard, the author admits that library formats such as MARC do not presently accommodate the uniqueness of the archival document and that the solution to this problem must await future software advances. In the meantime, archivists will have to chart their own course in selecting a computer package best suited to their needs. The chapter on microcomputers addresses this task.

Although primarily designed for archivists in small- to medium-sized institutions, the chapter on microcomputers provides a good starting point for all archivists planning to thrust themselves into the world of automation (or for archivists having automation thrust upon them). The section provides a basic explanation of how a computer system functions and offers an overview of the current state of the computer market. An outline is given of what archivists should look for when shopping for a computer system and what hardware and software features lend themselves to archival applications. The section on how microcomputers can be applied to specific archival functions, while useful, will probably be better understood after a brief hands-on encounter with the "narcotic toy" itself. The chapter concludes with idealistic speculations on how the computer will open new avenues of archival scholarship, and a more practical note on technical maintenance and security.

One of the more interesting aspects of this work is the author's ability to use Marshall McLuhan to interpret the philosophical implications of the computer age in a way that may cause many readers to view McLuhan in a more positive light. Unfortunately, it is the irony of this book that, due to its specialized medium, its message will not be widely received.

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**The Collected Writings of Louis Riel/Les Ecrits Complets de Louis Riel.** 5 volumes. GEORGE F.G. STANLEY, General Editor. Volume editors: RAYMOND HUEL, GILLES MARTEL, THOMAS FLANAGAN, GLEN CAMPBELL. Edmonton: The University of Alberta Press, 1985. Vol. 1: liii, 546 pp. Vol. 2: 1, 482 pp. Vol. 3: lii, 637 pp. Vol. 4: xlvi, 544 pp. Vol. 5: xvi, 360 pp. ISBN 0-88864-091-9 (set) \$250.00.

After a while, I know the Boys  
Will gather all my little scrips;  
Publish them as one of their joyce [joys]  
And as a tie of our friendships!  
To celebrate  
A true Prophet: Louis "David" Riel.

— Louis Riel (4-143)