

usage (which usually determines terminology) employed by records managers may eventually predominate.

The committee has been perhaps too conscientious in including terms which belong in a manual rather than a professional glossary. It has prepared a dictionary of usage as well as a glossary. Nonetheless, there should be no questioning of the value of the committee's work in attempting to standardize such vital terms as archives, manuscripts, records, provenance, collection, record group and series.

Hartwell Bowsfield
York University

Forms Manual. Prepared by the COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES COMMITTEE of the SOCIETY OF AMERICAN ARCHIVISTS. 1973. v, 236 p. SAA members: \$5.00, Non-members: \$8.00.

Forms should be simple and direct, designed to speed up the functions of an office. This *Forms Manual* forces one to conclude that university and college archivists are no better at designing forms than are some of their colleagues. The objective of the Society of American Archivists' Committee on College and University Archives in publishing the *Forms Manual* was to "disseminate forms," and now that the linen is all out on the line, it leads to the conclusion that, while the systems may be operational, there is a need for a designer. Selected by the Society of American Archivists' College and University Archives Committee as a project in 1972-73, the *Manual* is a selection of samples from 531 university and college archives across North America. It was impossible for the Committee to publish every sample, and judging from some of the 305 forms which were published, we perhaps should be thankful.

The main criterion used in the selection procedure was that all functions of the "archival process" should be reflected in the *Forms Manual*, and there is no doubt that the Committee succeeded in providing us with a rich and diverse variety. Because a second criterion was uniqueness, a "disproportionate number of this type are included." The criteria of readability, explicitness, simplicity, and flexibility were also applied in the selection procedures.

The forms are arranged into "fifteen categories according to the various functions to the archival process." These categories include records management, collecting policies, accessioning, arrangement and processing, description and control, labels, reference and research requests, reference and research restrictions, reference and research services, retrieval and charge-outs, reproduction, microfilm, oral history, statistical reports, memoranda and business cards. The reader therefore has a broad selection to consider before improving his or her own series of forms. However it is not clear to this reviewer that the categories reflect the basic functions of an archives in an ascending order of priority. For example, the first category, records management, is a function of only a few college and university archives in North America. While a few have developed excellent policies and procedures (as is clearly evident in the forms), most have assumed this function in a vacuum. Of six records retention and disposal forms only three indicate an understanding of the different levels of approval required for the destructions or transfer of records. Publication of some of these forms was not desirable or necessary.

This basic criticism must be applied to the entire text which would have been more helpful had categories been decided upon before the forms arrived from participating institutions. It appears that the Committee received the forms and then categorized as many as possible. The categories could have been more exclusive, that is, records management, microfilm, memoranda and business cards, labels, oral history, and statistical reports are sections which could have been omitted, thereby permitting the basic archival functions of custodial services, information storage and retrieval, reference and research to be reflected in a more select list of forms. Although the committee's objective was to disseminate forms, it is annoying to thumb through a manual which includes forms "for which we did not have the name of the institution."

The sections on collecting policies, accessioning, arrangement and processing, description and control, contain many useful ideas but the latter three could have been combined in one section since it is difficult to distinguish among them. Except in large archival agencies, it is debatable whether elaborate work sheets are required to process accessions. An indication of the concern archivists have for reference and research is demonstrated by some of the excellent samples in these sections.

To one who has assiduously collected a filing cabinet drawer of forms from various institutions, and who has prepared forms which may never be used, the *Forms Manual* reveals a need to examine forms requirements from a records manager's view-point. The majority of forms appear to be the results of the efforts of individuals who, in solitude, strive to achieve an efficient archival program. The *Forms Manual* exposes many good samples; it is up to us as professionals to take the next steps of developing a guide to the basic forms required in a college and university archives program.

James M. Parker
University Archivist
University of Alberta

Archives Procedural Manual. WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY, SCHOOL OF MEDICINE LIBRARY. St. Louis, Miss.: Washington University, School of Medicine Library, 1974. v. 118 p. flowcharts. ISBN 0 912260 07 6 \$5.00.

Although the Washington University School of Medicine Library Archives is a young institution, it has in only fifteen years developed a major archival programme to document significant activities of the School of Medicine and its associated Medical Center, making full use in that programme of microforms, computers and oral history techniques. The anonymous archivists responsible for this *Manual* display great maturity in both its conception and execution. Keenly aware of their responsibility to process collections for the benefit of a wide clientele and equally aware of the need to systematize and document these processes to ensure uniformity of treatment, successive archivists have prepared instruction sheets for staff use outlining those procedures they have found most useful in dealing with scientific manuscripts. These sheets, collated and renumbered, have been printed by photo off-set and spirally bound into a volume designed to take heavy reference use. Publication of the *Manual* was animated by a desire to stimulate both "an interchange of ideas" and similar publications by other institutions responsible for collecting, preserving, and making available various records of bio-medicine. One cannot help but detect a certain excitement on the part of the authors at being in the van of a bright new field of endeavour, medical archives.

But how successful is this book? As a manual it is a first rate example of logical elucidation of procedures illustrated by simple yet comprehensive flowcharts. Each