

**An Introduction to Archives and Manuscripts.** DAVID B. GRACY II. Special Libraries Association Professional Development Series. New York: Special Libraries Association, 1981. 36 pp. ISBN 0-87111-288-4. \$7.25 pa.

This publication introduces the reader to both the principles and procedures of archives—no mean feat, one might say, in thirty-six pages, two of which are devoted to suggestions for further reading. In addition, three preliminary pages offer a short glossary of archival terminology.

The stated goal is to review the philosophy underlying the chief features of archival methodology. To this end, archival concern with the integrity of the record group and its original order is highlighted, and the terms *respect des fonds* and *provenance* are introduced in their historical and working contexts. Gracy demonstrates how the nature of the material leads the archivist to produce two sets of documentation: the accession file for administrative control, and the descriptive inventory which reveals the record group or manuscript collection to the researcher.

Perhaps the consequences of uniqueness are accepted too uncritically. It is not necessarily to the profession's credit that it has been unable to "codify its ways or synthesize its knowledge", and there is no recognition that AACR II does address itself to manuscript material, and that some in the profession are actively exploring ways of making its use more compatible with accepted archival principle. The responsibility inherent in the custodianship of unique materials is argued more effectively with respect to the commitment necessary for their preservation and security.

Archival work is examined to see how it compares with and differs from librarianship, and while archivists will applaud recognition of the "separate and distinct methodologies" of archivist, librarian and historian, they may be less flattered to learn that they have much in common with automobile mechanics. This reviewer's unthinking reaction to the familiar distinctions between archivist and librarian, between archives and manuscripts was, oh no, not again. A more sober reflection acknowledged their utility, particularly in a publication appearing in a professional development series for the Special Libraries Association. There has been a recent tendency for a vocal group of archivists to define all but the most purist of practitioners out of the profession. While this attitude has tempting elements of one-upmanship, it betrays a discreditable lack of concern for the records themselves. Instead of leaving in outer darkness those who are ignorant of archival principles, the profession should seize every opportunity to proselytize errant colleagues in the advantages of the correct methodology, both for themselves and, more particularly, for the records in their care.

Gracy concludes his theoretical section with some of the perennial and often irresolvable conflicts faced by archivists: to collect or create records, to honour the right to know or the right to privacy, to prescribe use in the interests of preservation, and to encourage technical mastery or scholarly aptitude.

Understandably, the procedural section draws upon the SAA Basic Manual Series, especially Gracy's own contribution on arrangement and description. The reader is guided briefly but competently through the procedures of acquisition, appraisal, accessioning, arrangement, description and reference, as well as the basics of conservation. In the latter, the Canadian reader should temper Gracy's advice with a knowledge of local climatic conditions. During our winters a relative humidity of "near 60%" will produce undesirable effects on most buildings currently used for archives and manuscripts. A minor criticism of this section is that its orientation is almost exclusively textual. Machine-readable archives and applications of computer technology to the processes of administrative or intellectual control are ignored.

The list of further readings includes the standard sources: Berner, Bordin and Warner, Brichford, Burke, Duckett, Lytle, and Schellenberg. Barrow and Cunha represent conservation. Items on records management, micrographics, confidentiality, security, reference and access, and exhibits, as well as on local history, ethnic, religious, college, university, photographic and architectural archives find a place in this short list. Select lists, by their very nature, are easy targets. This one lays itself open less than most to unfair criticism. Only one entry, Densmore's "Understanding and Using Early Nineteenth Century Account Books", seems out of place because of its apparent specificity. More puzzling is the absence of Norton, while an international flavour could have been achieved with the inclusion, for example, of Jenkinson, Cook, and Taylor, although in this day of lengthy intervals between manuscript and actual publication, the latter's ICA Handbook on arrangement and description may have appeared too late for inclusion.

Both Gracy's clean prose style and the pleasing production of this booklet make it easy reading. The sections are clearly indicated in bold type, and an absence of typographical errors bears testimony to the care that went into it.

The reviewer had one final, and to Gracy's intent, peripheral reaction. This booklet is a self-professed introduction, and introductions imply a next stage. It is a sobering reflection that, as Gracy himself states, general archival treatises, as opposed to the experiences of single institutions, can still be counted on one hand. When he succinctly states our principles and procedures in some thirty-six pages, and a special issue of *Communiqué* entitled *Archives in Canada*, with a considerably longer bibliography, takes not many more to cover essentially the same ground, one begins to experience heretical thoughts. It is to be hoped that the archival discipline *can* support more substantive syntheses of its particular theory and knowledge.

In the meantime, this is a booklet to be recommended to those who are deciding whether or not to enter the profession, or to those outside our ranks who wish to understand archival activity better.

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**Images in time: A Basic Guide to the Processing and Preservation of Historical Photographs.** JEAN E. DRYDEN, Provincial Archives of Alberta. [Edmonton]: Access, 1982. 56 p., illus. ISBN 0-919685-05-6. \$9.95.

Photographs are fast becoming the most widely used of historical documents. Collections are eagerly acquired by archives, museums and libraries, many of whom lack adequate information on their care. It was to meet this need that the publication *Images in Time: A Basic Guide to the Processing and Preservation of Historical Photographs* was prepared.

*Images in Time* presents the Provincial Archives of Alberta's approach to historical photographs. Through a series of short, well-illustrated chapters it covers topics of acquisitions, descriptive processing, technical processing and reference services. The reproduction of basic forms, sample pages, catalogue cards and so on, make it useful to