

our work, it is equally true that much of the media which we today hold as archival could not, as it were, be taken into court. It struck me that, since archives are held up as reflecting mirrors, something of the fluidity between records and memory (as described by Orwell) could be insidiously creeping into archives in our society. To what extent, for example, can films, photographs, paintings, posters, sound recordings — all so susceptible to manipulation and deceit — pose a threat to the integrity (as we understand it) of the collective record over time? Do the memories fed into oral history tapes eventually insinuate themselves into total archives to such a degree that they threaten the hitherto “proven” facts? Are archives, reaching to be kaleidoscopic, in danger of severing their roots and dissolving into an enormous cauldron of informational resources? How can, or should, archives escape the hallucinatory un-reality of hot video — where nothing is still, stable, or credible? Wrote Orwell: “And so it was with every class of recorded fact, great or small. Everything faded away into a shadow world in which, finally, even the date of the year had become uncertain.”

Nineteen Eighty-Four nourishes such feverish meanderings. The archivist does well to drop some of them into his own “memory hole” after due mulling over.

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The Rosenberg File: A Search For the Truth. RONALD RADOSH and JOYCE MILTON. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1983. xv, 608 p. ISBN 0-03-049036-7 \$29.95.

During the early years of the Cold War there was no event which roused such violent emotions and left such lasting scars as the executions of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg for atomic espionage in 1953. The image of the Soviet agents handing over to the USSR the terrible power of the atomic bomb galvanized feelings of rage and impotence on the part of American Cold Warriors. The image of the working-class Jewish couple sent to their deaths leaving their two little children orphaned raised a vast anti-American wave in Europe. In the United States, the Rosenberg case has taken on the resonance of the Dreyfus affair; an entire generation defined its politics by its attitude to the Rosenbergs. For the Right they were traitors who deserved to die; for the Left they were innocent martyrs framed by a vindictive and corrupt legal system.

When the American Freedom of Information Act came into force there were those who believed that the truth would finally be revealed. Pro-Rosenberg partisans, including their sons, one of whom has written extensively on the affair, were confident that if all the documents were released, the entire case would be revealed as a frameup. Cold Warriors spoke with equal confidence of damning evidence, withheld at the time due to national security considerations, which would definitively demonstrate the Rosenbergs' guilt. Walter and Miriam Schneir updated their *Invitation to an Inquest* unshaken in their belief that the entire spy-ring story was a gigantic fraud. Into this minefield stepped Radosh and Milton, who subtitled their study *A Search for the Truth*. Based on extensive documentation just released as well as interviews, Radosh and Milton claim their study is non-partisan. Their

conclusions, however, have set off a violent debate, especially on the American Left. A public debate between Radosh and Milton and the Schneirs in New York turned into such a circus that *The Nation* is selling cassette recordings of it.

Most of the debate has centred on Radosh and Milton's conclusion that Julius Rosenberg was guilty of engaging in espionage, some of which did involve information on the atomic bomb. The weight of the documentation, and the reevaluation of testimony in the light of this documentation, do seem to present a plausible, if largely circumstantial, case for Julius' involvement in espionage. Radosh and Milton are much less convincing on the value of the information to the Soviet atomic programme since it appears to have been of extremely limited and marginal use, but that Julius was attempting to assist the Soviet Union as best he could seems clear enough.

The question of guilt set off the left-wing Rosenberg partisans, but the ensuing controversy has obscured some other points made by the authors which would hardly sit well with the Cold Warriors. They are strongly of the opinion that the death penalty was not only excessive but also cynically used as a weapon by the American government to frighten the Rosenbergs into disclosing more names. Later still, their lives were dispensed with as pawns in the game of Cold War politics in the McCarthy Era. More chillingly, the authors suggest that there was no evidence that Ethel Rosenberg had ever been involved in espionage, even if she had been aware of her husband's activities. The US government chose to use her threatened execution as a lever to force Julius to confess. When this strategy failed, both went to the electric chair.

The authors note numerous breaches of procedure in the trial, and the collusion of the FBI, the prosecution, and the court. They leave no doubt that on procedural grounds alone, there was solid evidence for a mistrial. They also demonstrate in harrowing detail the incompetence of the Rosenbergs' defence. Declassified FBI documents reveal a repulsive picture of McCarthy Era America; for example, Morris Ernst of the American Civil Liberties Union actually tried (unsuccessfully) to join the Rosenbergs' defence team for the sole purpose of keeping J. Edgar Hoover informed.

It is, in the end, a very bleak picture which Radosh and Milton have drawn. Everyone involved was in one way or another a prisoner of the Cold War. On the prosecution side, there was a mean and vindictive appetite for blood and a readiness to undermine the liberal democratic process, simple justice, and humanity in order to strike back at the "enemy within." Yet the victims of this judicial persecution were neither innocent nor as sympathetic as their partisans claimed. They emerge as ideologues every bit as coldly singleminded as their persecutors. Humanity was the first casualty of the ideological passion of the Cold War.

Radosh and Milton have written a provocative and important book. The debate set off by its publication offers a lesson to historians. The belief that Freedom of Information legislation will result in the "truth" about historical events is naive. There is still information in this case which remains classified but, when this too is released, there will still be no final verdict. The truth is itself too complex, too ambiguous, and too dependent upon the values of the historian for documents to

answer the questions. At the same time, this book offers a good case for Freedom of Information; the debate has been sharpened and refined by the material released, and history is the better for it.

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Judicial Administration in Canada. PERRY S. MILLAR and CARL BAAR. Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press for the Institute of Public Administration of Canada, 1981. Canadian Public Administration Series. xxiii, 452 p. ISBN 0-7735-0367-6 \$22.50.

At first sight both the title and physical size of this book bring on promises of sleep that would delight an insomniac. This first impression, however, is misleading; between the covers of this book lies a radical proposition for improving the administration of justice in Canada. Although some may not consider judicial administration stimulating, Millar and Baar's enthusiasm for the subject is transmitted clearly to the reader. Beyond any strictly professional interest archivists may have in the sections concerning court records management, this book is of general interest to those who are concerned with the quality of justice in our society.

Millar and Baar propose a reformation of judicial administration in Canada. They begin with a description of current problems in the judicial system which both distort the nature of justice and prevent improvement. In judicial administration, there is the growth of the now ubiquitous "plea bargaining" arising from massive case backlogs in the courts; in courts administration, there is the varying quality and competence of court staff, which are either acquired through political patronage or tied to rigid and inequitable civil service classifications; and finally, there is the ever-present confusion between judges and executive departments over the "demarcation line" between judicial and administrative responsibility and authority. Reforming the justice system can take three approaches: the sociological-philosophical approach aims at substantive changes in the law and the legal process; the structural approach, which as its name implies, focuses on reorganizing the structure of the courts and their administration; and the managerial reform approach which attempts to introduce modern management techniques in judicial administration. Millar and Baar propose the latter. They are primarily concerned with how managerial reform in judicial administration can be accomplished and, specifically, with the development of a management philosophy in the judicial system.

Before discussing their proposals for managerial reform, Millar and Baar make a careful distinction between courts administration and judicial administration. Courts administration refers to the support services supplied to the judges by Ministries of the Attorneys General; judicial administration has a wider significance which includes court services as well as the judiciary's responsibility for court caseload and overall court policy. Unlike the United States, where court administration has always been the sole responsibility of the judges, in Canada there is a division of administrative responsibility between provincial Attorneys General and the judiciary. In the critical area of caseload management, which has reached crisis