

admitted); and, perhaps most appositely in the context of this volume, that archivists must be prepared to lay out patterns or guidelines to which they conform in their descriptive practices.

Finally, it may be said that this volume stands in stark contrast to the sort of work done by the National Information Systems Task Force in the United States. There will be those who will regard the efforts of this working group as old-fashioned. Such a judgement would be unwise. The difficulties archival agencies have in leaping into the computer age are as much a product of the ragtag and bobtail nature of the finding aids they produce as it is a matter of defining elements of description and feeding them into a computer in a standardized format, as agencies which try to translate existing descriptions to machine readable form quickly discover. Even more do the difficulties trace back to weak methodological conceptualization in the first place. Such a rigorous taxonomy of finding aids as is offered in this volume ought to ease the transition and present the opportunity for some inventive applications of new technology. At any rate, there is something immensely satisfying in reading a book which gives so little quarter to the sort of manic individualism which seems to rule our descriptive practices. The authors and *L'Association des archivistes du Québec* are to be applauded for the very high standard of professional publication this book delivers.

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**The Role of Archives and Records Management in National Information Systems: A RAMP Study.** JAMES B. RHOADS. Paris: UNESCO, General Information Programme and UNISIST, 1983. iv, 256 p. (PGI-83/WS/21)

**Development of Records Management and Archives Services Within United Nations Agencies: A RAMP Study.** MARIE CHARLOTTE STARK. Paris: UNESCO, General Information Programme and UNISIST, 1983. iv, 215 p. (PGI-83/WS/26)

**Records Management 7.** Society of Archivists, Records Management Group, 1984. ii, 36 p. ISBN 0-902886-10-2 £1.80.

**Records Management 8.** Society of Archivists, Records Management Group, 1983. v, 38 p. ISBN 0-902886 11 8 £1.80.

**La gestion des documents administratifs.** MICHEL ROBERGE. La Pocatière: Documentor Inc., 1983. 216 p. ISBN 2-89123-101-5 \$19.50.

Archivists and records managers are becoming increasingly aware of the common threads linking their two professions. Some even go as far as proclaiming the existence of one profession containing the two disciplines. The usual model is that of a "life cycle" or, more appropriately, a continuum that provides for management of recorded information from its birth to its death — or forever, if that information is of sufficient value to be retained permanently. The archives

is the final element in a comprehensive records management programme. In attempting analysis of the records management/archives relationship, two issues present themselves: the relative weight given to records management and archives concerns, and the extent to which the process takes into account recorded information in non-traditional forms.

There are, of course, two sides to the records management *versus* archives issue. As only a small proportion of the records will be retained permanently, should not emphasis be placed on the records management functions? On the other hand, the records that are to be retained permanently are probably among the most important during their active stage too — requiring an archival concern from the outset. When reviewing literature in this field, therefore, one might ask: Is there a balanced understanding of the relative roles of the two disciplines in the life cycle?

The second question is more important if one accepts the premise that both records managers and archivists have a responsibility to ensure the effective management and preservation of recorded information irrespective of its physical format. While all recognize this fact, most continue to restrict their attention to the management of traditional paper records, either because the sheer bulk of documentation cries out for systematic management and disposal or because they do not understand the technology involved in other formats. To what extent does the literature deal with, or at least express sympathy for, the management of recorded information in forms other than paper?

Five publications touching on records management have recently been prepared by archivists. One of the more interesting is James B. Rhoads' *The Role of Archives and Records Management in National Information Systems* — a publication of the Records and Archives Management Programme (RAMP) developed by UNESCO's General Information Programme to promote the development of rational records systems around the world. Rhoads is, of course, the recently retired Archivist of the United States. His study effectively describes the American approach based on the theory of the life cycle of records. Intended primarily for use in developing countries, the study concentrates on traditional paper records systems. Nevertheless, it offers a complete, well-reasoned description of a highly successful system, and should serve as a basic text for some time. Archivists and records managers should find it to be staple fare.

A second RAMP study of some interest is that prepared by Marie Charlotte Stark, formerly archivist/records manager with the International Monetary Fund. Stark's *Development of Records Management and Archives Services Within United Nations Agencies* is an extensive case study of the management of the records of UN Agencies throughout their entire life cycle. Two chapters of special interest are entitled "Managing the Life Cycle of Records and Archives" and "Control, Appraisal and Disposal of Records: the Bridge Between Records Management and Archives Administration." The study contains a useful set of guidelines for establishment of a records management/archives service. While it deals in some detail with the use of microforms, including computer output microfilm, it virtually ignores the management of machine readable data.

In 1977, the Records Management Group of the Society of Archivists in Great Britain undertook a series of one-day seminars as a forum for those involved in records keeping. *Records Management 8* reports on a seminar held in Portsmouth in October 1982; *Records Management 7* contains the proceedings of a conference at the University of Dundee six months later in May 1983. Each report contains four papers and a transcript of the discussion at the closing plenary session. The first article in *Records Management 8* is a straightforward analysis of the records management/archives continuum by Margaret Freeth, Assistant City Records Officer with the City of Portsmouth. The article ("Records Management: Putting the Principles into Practice") is based firmly on Canadian principles. An independent consultant in records and archives management, Derek Charman (who is also the current President of the International Records Management Council) analyzes "Standards and Cost-benefit Analysis for the Storage of Records in Records Centres." His presentation deals with the relevant physical standards and compares the costs of storing records in office space and in a records centre. It is probably of interest only to records centre managers. Peter Bloomfield, Senior Assistant County Archivist, Gloucester County Council, describes the elements of an effective records retention policy. Finally, Michael Roper of the Public Record Office reviews the status of "data protection" legislation in the United Kingdom. We would view the term "data protection" as a misnomer, since Roper really is talking about protection of individuals rather than of data — issues addressed in Canadian privacy legislation. Roper's paper is the only one to address issues pertaining to machine readable records.

The most interesting article in *Records Management 7* is "Total Records Control — a Crock of Gold?" by Bill Young, Records and Information Supervisor with Phillips Petroleum. Young argues for merging the traditional and modern records manager into a competent information specialist who can provide "total" records control through active participation in the creation of records and filing systems. He also sees a role for such a records manager in the conversion of paper to computer systems by working with the systems designer and the user to ensure that long-term records preservation requirements are met. J.H. Sime, Assistant Keeper with the Scottish Record Office, ("Records Management — Is it Really Necessary?") describes the unique British records disposal system which eschews retention schedules in favour of systematic review of all records after fixed periods of time. British and Scottish officials claim that this approach has led to a virtual standoff — the number of files being disposed of each year roughly equals the number of new files created. The other two papers are much more mundane. An assistant county archivist pleads for effective records management control systems and a management consultant presents a short exposition on the retention and disposal of business records. Both deal with paper records only.

Michel Roberge, head of systems development at the *Archives nationales du Québec*, is the author of SAPHIR, a system for the inventorying and management of archives. He also teaches records management at Laval University. *La gestion des documents administratifs* is an excellent manual on the management of current records. (It is instructive that the first Canadian manual in this field

was produced in Quebec; is there a message here?) The manual is arranged in two sections: the first defining different types of records, the second describing how to manage them. Clear, simple illustrations abound. Each of the sixteen chapters ends with a short list of complementary readings. The “current record” (*“document administratif”*) concept is introduced through a short analysis of the concepts of information, a document or record holding such information, current records as a logical subset, and, finally, historical or research documents. Such documents possess two types of value: administrative (including legal and financial) and research (including historical). They are created in different forms ranging from paper to micrographic and digital (tape or disc).

In discussing the management of records, Roberge takes a systems approach. That is, he describes each topic as part of a system — with an input, a process, and an output. Beginning with a narrative on the origins of the concept of records management, Roberge defines the overall records management system before going into detail on such functions as inventorying, scheduling, classifying, and retrieving records, controlling their creation and circulation, managing semi-active records, and installing a records management system. The writing is clear and succinct. This book is highly recommended. Although a useful textbook on the records management process, it also helps to explain the approach to records management and archives in the Quebec educational system. Those not thoroughly proficient in the French language will nevertheless find it relatively easy to comprehend. Its translation into English would be well worthwhile.

Taken together, these five works are solid evidence of the growing awareness of the records management/archives continuum. Unfortunately, with the exception of the single article by Michael Roper, none of these publications adequately deals with the administration of computer records and the interesting linkages and problems pertinent to that medium. Presumably, the community still views the administration of automated data as a mystic science better left to itself — a dangerous conception considering the rapidity with which the microcomputer is moving into our everyday office environment. Nevertheless, Rhoads’ study and Roberge’s manual, in particular, deserve to become required reading for us “traditional” archivists.

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**The Craft of Public History: An Annotated Select Bibliography.** DAVID F. TRASK and ROBERT W. POMEROY. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1983. 477 p. ISBN 0-313-23687-9.

**The Welfare State in Canada: A Select Bibliography, 1840 to 1978.** ALLAN MOSCOVITCH with the assistance of THERESA JENNISSON and PETER FINDLAY. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1983. 246 p. ISBN 0-88920-114-5.

Recent years have witnessed a dramatic change in the make-up of archival clientele which presents archivists with the significant challenge of meeting the diverse research demands of the new patrons. The academic historian, the tradi-