

Abstracts of Theses in Archival Studies at the University of British Columbia

The following is a list, in order of acceptance, of theses submitted for the degree of Master of Archival Studies at the University of British Columbia in addition to those reported in the Winter 1985-86 issue of *Archivaria*.

Once they are filmed, all MAS theses are available for purchase from Canadian Theses Microfiche Service, National Library of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0N3.

Rhonda L. Llunggren, "Camera Lucida: The Moving Image as Evocative Document: Film Form, Film Meaning and the Grammatology of Archival Selection." March 1986.

This thesis examines the characteristics of moving image documents which pertain to the selection of films for archival preservation. It is advanced that both the physical nature of the film record and the nature of the evidence it presents are prime considerations in the development of archival selection criteria. Furthermore, it is argued that the structure and content of film are interrelated factors which have significant impact upon the determination of archival value, and the suitability of the film record for permanent preservation. Finally, a major factor affecting selection involves accounting for the impact of film as a reflector and purveyor of popular culture. Given the powerful influence of film in moulding popular ideas, attitudes, and value systems, archival selection criteria must take into account film of all types if there is to be any future prospect of assessing the impact of film on society in a given period.

The sources used for this study include the writings of historians and archivists concerning film, as well as traditional film literature. The study proceeds from a consideration of the technical and structural aspects of film to a content-oriented discussion involving the reflective and influential nature of the moving image document. Archival selection is considered in terms of its necessity and justifiability with regard to the nature of the film record, and alternative modes of selections are investigated.

Margaret Mary Hutchison, "Cartographic Records in Archives: A Shared Resource." April 1986.

Cartography is often viewed as such an esoteric discipline, employing art and science in the creation of records, that little is known outside cartographic agencies about the evolution of the maps. Archives concerned with acquiring cartographic records have tended to concentrate on collecting published maps. Maps are most often consulted for their illustrative value or reference quality. However, this illustrative value often obscures the character and evidential value of maps. This thesis attempts to show that cartographic materials have important evidential value and that archives have a responsibility to help ensure this value is recognized, both in the acquisition of records and in their eventual use.

The first problem for archives is to identify the full range of agencies which produce cartographica and the records generated within each agency. Therefore, this study examines the range of cartographic records which have been produced in British Columbia over time, and the types of cartographic records which three British Columbia repositories acquire. The second problem is that archivists need to gain an awareness of the cartographic communication process itself. To this end, this study outlines some aspects of cartographic communication which bear on matters of archival administration. Each of these factors in turn affects the appraisal of the evidential values of cartographic records. These indications of the complexity, together with the increasing sophistication, of the cartographic records argue strongly for the archivist's knowledgeable ability about their production as an aid in their use or interpretation.

Cartographic materials have a valid place in archives but the archivist must take an active part in acquiring and understanding the records documenting the procedures linking data collection and map publication. Maps can serve a wider public, and archives can be an important milieu for the more comprehensive use of the medium by acquiring the full range of cartographic records as well as helping researchers towards a better understanding of the motivating ideas behind the records they are using.

Mary Kathleen Barlee, "Cooperative Total Archives for Kelowna, British Columbia." June 1986.

Major factors in the underdevelopment of local archives in the municipality of Kelowna, British Columbia, have been a lack of public and administrative awareness of the value of archival institutions and archival documents, a lack of local political interest in the subject of archives, a lack of federal, provincial and local aid or legislation to facilitate local archival development, and thus, a lack of funding at the community level for archives. There has also been a need for direction from the provincial government in planning effective records management/archival systems for Kelowna, as well as for most other municipalities in British Columbia.

An interdisciplinary approach to the resolution of these problems has been taken, with literature and primary sources from the archival, museum, library, historical, political science, and records management fields being studied. In the archives domain, two major studies, the Symons and the Wilson reports, with their emphasis on federal, provincial, and local networking, formed an excellent basis for further investigation. Where they were available, statistics concerning local archives in British Columbia have proven most helpful, as have provincial government reports. These sources have been supplemented by letters and questionnaires to provincial and territorial archives, as well as to local municipalities in British Columbia.

Two conclusions have been reached. First, "total archives" that collect both official and unofficial documents in all media, and use systematic records management procedures have become a Canadian public archives tradition which can provide a valuable example for smaller municipalities. Second, in order to achieve economies of scale, private and public agencies may have to cooperate in joint funding efforts at a local level. By combining public and private endeavours, a new type of archives is created. It is posited that this amalgam, a "cooperative total archives,"

could become the basis for archival development in the municipality of Kelowna, British Columbia.

Glen E. Isaac, "University Student Records: Privacy and Research Access." August 1986.

This thesis examines the legal, ethical, and procedural issues faced by Canadian university archivists who seek to develop sound policies for research access to student records. The study begins by reviewing the basic types of student records created by university administrative offices — academic, personnel, financial, medical, and counselling files — as well as some of the current and potential uses of the records by researchers. The thesis then turns to a study of the "right to privacy" itself, and explores how the privacy concerns of the subjects of personal records have been addressed in government studies and in Canadian law. The existing records policies of Canadian universities, and various ethical statements of both university administrators and researchers, are also examined. In this manner, the complex problem of balancing privacy rights with research needs is viewed from the perspectives of the subjects, creators, and users of student records.

The study concludes by reviewing the choices open to archivists formulating access policies. Several opposing views of privacy are evaluated in order to identify those views which can be supported by archivists and those which cannot. The argument is made that archivists need to construct a solid theoretical framework for their access policies by analyzing carefully such factors as the ends to be served by the protection of privacy, the types of research access to be provided to student files, and the nature of the university administrative environment. It is contended that such an analysis indicates a need for policies consisting of graduated sets of access restrictions, policies which are sufficiently flexible and sensitive to guard against unwarranted invasions of student privacy while still permitting a broad range of research studies to be conducted.

Daisy McColl, "An Administrative History of the Supreme Court of British Columbia with Particular Reference to the Vancouver Registry: Its Civil Records, their Composition, and their Selection for Preservation." October 1986.

Through an analysis of the history of the administration of the civil jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of British Columbia and of the record-keeping practices of its Vancouver registry, problems and issues in the selection of case files in bankruptcy, divorce, tort, and probate law are addressed, and their value for social studies assessed. The study traces the origins and common law traditions of the court, describes court administration and rules of procedure in civil cases, tabulates the kinds of records kept of civil cases in the Vancouver registry, and addresses certain practical problems which archivists face when trying to select records of civil cases for preservation.

Diane Lynn Beattie, "The Informational Needs of Historians Researching Women: An Archival User Study." January 1987.

This thesis examines the informational needs of historians researching women as a subject in archives. The research methodology employed combines two types of

user studies, the questionnaire and the reference analysis, in order to determine both the use and usefulness of archival materials and finding aids for historians researching women. This study begins with an overview of the literature on user studies. The thesis then outlines both the kinds of materials and the information which historians researching women require. Finally, this study looks at the way historians researching women locate relevant materials and, concomitantly, the effectiveness of current descriptive policies and practices in dealing with the needs of this research group.

This thesis suggests a number of ways in which archivists can respond to the informational needs of historians researching women in archives. Firstly, a considerable amount of documentation relevant to the study of women remains to be acquired by archival repositories. While archives should continue to acquire textual materials, more emphasis needs to be placed upon the acquisition of non-textual materials since these materials are also very useful to historians researching women in archives. Secondly, archivists must focus more attention on the informational value of their holdings, since the majority of historians researching women are interested in the information the records contain about people, events or subject area rather than the description of institutional life contained in records. Thirdly, this study demonstrates the need for more subject-oriented finding aids. Archivists can improve subject access to their holdings through the preparation of thematic guides, by the creation of more analytical inventory descriptions, and by indexing or cataloguing women's records.

Russell Lewis Martin, "Archival Indexing: Problems and Issues." March 1987.

The last decade has seen an unprecedented flood of material coming into archival repositories. As a result, there is a great need for procedures which provide a high degree of intellectual control over records. One such procedure is the indexing of archival materials. An archival index provides access to a large number of name and subject terms, without being bound by the traditional archival structures dictated by provenance. This process has not traditionally been widely understood by archivists, but it is important to grasp the fundamental principles of archival indexing, as well as the problems and issues that follow. This is especially true in a period when methods of automated information processing have reached new levels of sophistication.

This thesis is an exploration of these problems and issues. The place of indexing in a complete system of archival description is established, and the process defended as a valid part of archival retrieval. The thesis also offers guidelines for conducting the actual indexing process, and making several basic decisions during the implementation of indexing in an archival descriptive system. In addition, the merits of such alternative methods as controlled-vocabulary and uncontrolled-vocabulary indexing, and coordination of desired terms before and after index creation, are weighed, and the positive and negative aspects of certain recently-developed systems evaluated. The thesis concludes by stating ways in which archivists must re-evaluate the indexing process in order to use it effectively in the future.

Grant Alan Mitchell, "Canadian Archives and the Corporate Memory: A Case of Amnesia?" March 1987.

For some years, North American archivists have argued that public archival repositories are unable to bear the burden of preserving the records of modern business corporations, and have suggested that firms should shoulder this burden themselves by establishing corporate archives. This suggestion, however, fails to address the issue of preserving the records of small businesses, and the records of defunct firms, that are unable to support a corporate archives.

Before one can predict the effect the advocates of corporate archives will have on the preservation of business records, one needs to know what degree of responsibility repositories have accepted for preserving business records. Unfortunately, little information has been published concerning the business records holdings of Canadian archival institutions. A questionnaire asking for information on acquisitions policies and strategies, and on the characteristics of business records collections, was therefore sent to a select number of federal, provincial, municipal, and university archives. The business records holdings of the National Archives of Canada, the Provincial Archives of British Columbia, the City of Vancouver Archives, and the Special Collections Division of the University of British Columbia Library were examined in detail to augment the information obtained from questionnaire returns. The value of the business records collections held by Canadian repositories was further examined by means of a reference analysis of journal articles and monographs, published by economic and business historians, which measured the use made of business records collections by these historians.

Although some substantial collections of business records have been preserved, it appears that over three-quarters of the business records collections preserved by Canadian repositories are so small and fragmentary in nature that they are of dubious value to researchers. This impression is borne out by the sparse use of business records as sources by business and economic historians. The experiences of European and American archival institutions indicate that Canadian repositories will have to accumulate a significant body of business records collections before they will see increased use of their business records holdings.

Repositories cannot reasonably be expected to devote their limited resources to collecting the records of large integrated corporations. Nonetheless, archival institutions have a responsibility to ensure the preservation of records documenting the Canadian economy. Archival institutions, and the archivists they employ, should continue their efforts to persuade companies to set up corporate archives. Many firms, however, are unwilling or unable to take such a step. Canadian repositories must therefore continue to acquire business records if they wish to fulfil their mandates of preserving comprehensive collections documenting the various aspects of the history of their respective regions. This must be done in an active and systematic manner, using such strategies as public relations programs and the provision to firms of assistance in scheduling records. By persuading larger corporations to set up corporate archives whilst systematically collecting the records of smaller firms, archival institutions can improve both the quantity and quality of business records preserved.

Anne M. MacLean, "*The Acquisition of Literary Papers in Canada.*" September 1987.

During the past thirty years, Canadian literature has developed at a remarkable rate, with the result that many Canadian writers now enjoy national and international recognition. The personal papers of these writers have undergone a corresponding increase in their research and monetary value. Literary papers have therefore become highly attractive to archival repositories and libraries, many of which compete to acquire these papers through sales or donations. Open-market competition may be advantageous to authors because it allows them to sell their papers to the highest bidder, but it is harmful to archivists because it creates animosity within the archival community, inflates prices and causes collections to be split. This clash of interests between authors and archivists, and among archivists themselves, must be resolved if literary papers are to be preserved and administered properly.

A questionnaire was sent to 29 Canadian repositories to determine the ways in which archivists deal with the complex issues associated with acquiring literary papers: acquisition policies; acquisition budgets; the suitability of certain types of institutions to acquire literary papers; copyright/literary rights; tax credits; monetary appraisal; and automation. Results from this survey indicate that an increasing number of archival institutions now recognize the need for developing systematic collections policies in order to reduce competition and encourage cooperation among archivists. However, most institutions still do not have any formal written policies for acquiring literary papers, and have no plans to develop such policies in the near future. It will be some time, therefore, before a complete cooperative network among archivists in Canada becomes a reality.

Diverse types of institutions acquire literary papers; university archives and special collections, provincial archives, the National Archives and National Library of Canada, and smaller thematic archives are all involved in this type of acquisition. The survey sought respondents' opinions on this question: can or should the acquisition of literary papers be limited to certain types of institutions? Judging from the responses, the answer is a qualified "No." Universities are a logical repository for authors' papers because literary research is largely an academic activity, but it is not possible to prevent other types of institutions from acquiring in this area through laws or regulations. Donor preferences play a critical role; it is the author or his executors who have the last word on where the author's papers are deposited.

The author-archivist relationship lies at the heart of this issue. The onus is on the archivist to educate authors on the nature and function of archives and the legal implications of acquisition. Archivists can also educate themselves regarding authors' economic concerns and the literary activities which produce their records; such understanding will help to resolve the conflicts between authors and archivists and improve acquisition negotiations. Finally, archivists need to develop more systematic written acquisition policies for literary papers in order to reduce competition and ensure the continued preservation of this important cultural resource.

Heather Marie MacNeil, "*In Search of the Common Good: The Ethics of Disclosing Personal Information Held in Public Archives.*" August 1987.

The right to privacy is the right of individuals to determine, within reasonable limits, the extent to which they are known to others. Over the last twenty years the

enormous increase in the amount of personal information on citizens maintained in government record-keeping systems has led to increasing public concern for information privacy. Computer technology has contributed to the collection, preservation, and use of massive bodies of highly-detailed personal information documenting individual characteristics as well as a broad range of social transactions. Automated record-keeping systems permit the linking of personal information from a wide variety of government data banks, a capability which civil libertarians fear is vulnerable to abuse.

The social contract underlying relations between citizens and the state requires that individuals surrender some measure of privacy in return for physical and social protection. But how far does that contract extend? Does the social contract which, implicitly, governs the collection of personal information in the interests of administering various social benefits, also entitle archivists, as the official keepers of government records, to permit subsequent uses of that information once its administrative usefulness has been exhausted?

Social researchers, including social historians, take an affirmative position, arguing that the closure of records containing personal information is a violation of the principle of freedom of enquiry or the scholar's right to pursue and to communicate knowledge in the interest of a greater societal good. The question is, does freedom of enquiry possess the same moral value as the right to privacy? In situations where the two values conflict, where does the archivist's moral duty lie? The thesis will address these questions by examining the ethical justifications for and against research uses of personal information and the social role the archivist plays in mediating the competing moral claims for privacy and access. The thesis concludes that, in a democratic society, the right to privacy supersedes the scholar's freedom of enquiry. In situations where the two values conflict, archivists, as the public trustees of the record, must act on behalf of the public to ensure that the right to privacy is not violated.

Victoria Louise Blinkhorn, "The Records of Visual Artists: Appraising for Acquisition and Selection." May 1988.

The responsibility of archivists is to preserve society's documentary heritage. Visual artists contribute to this heritage through their creative vision of man and his civilization. Because the archival purview to preserve some representation of the artist's activity is evident, it is necessary to determine, from a theoretical perspective, which part of the artist's output is of an archival nature and how archivists may appraise this output for acquisition and selection.

This thesis uses published sources of European and North American archival theory, aesthetic philosophy, business, and law, and data gathered from interviews with four British Columbian artists, to investigate the validity of theoretical appraisal principles for the evaluation of records generated and received by artists.

The study concludes that artistic activity is clearly divisible into functional components and productive of many basic record types. Because of the pressures and requirements of the often-conflicting interests of art, business, and law, artists must depend on their records as a basis of security, used and then retained for the use of their creator. Except under certain circumstances, the finished work of art is not of

archival nature. Consequently, archival repositories do not have the right to preserve works of documentary art.

Artists' records can be appraised in accordance with the theoretical principles of archival science. Appraisal results in a decision about acquisition and a decision about selection. Both decisions are based on the archivist's knowledge about the artist's contemporary society, his life, and his activities and records. The result of the first decision will be the acquisition of organic bodies of records representative of their contemporary society, complementary to the primary and secondary sources preserved in the area where the repository acts, and relevant to the acquisition policy of the repository. The second decision will be the selection and preservation of those records considered as having been most essential to the organization, function, security, and memory of the artist's activities.

Linda Louise Cobon, "Problems and Issues in the Arrangement and Description of Photographs in Libraries and Archival Repositories." May 1988.

Until recent years, archivists have been reluctant to consider photographs as being archival in nature. The evidential value possessed by some photographs was ignored and archivists also failed to see where the informational value of a photographic image could be enhanced when viewed within the context in which it was created. Instead, archivists preferred to arrange and describe photographs as discrete items. For assistance in this endeavor, archivists turned to members of the library profession. Librarians, for their part, found that photographs were not amenable to standard bibliographic formats or classification schemes devised for printed monographs. The result was the creation by members of both the library and archival professions of numerous and often idiosyncratic methods for the physical and intellectual control of photographs.

The volume of photographic images acquired by libraries and archival repositories now makes it virtually impossible to continue dealing with photographs as discrete items. The research needs and methodologies of users have also changed; photographs are increasingly being sought as historical documents in their own right, and not just as illustrations to accompany the written word. In response to these two factors, librarians began organizing, and describing photographs as "lots," and archivists moved slowly toward the arrangement and description of photographs as archival *fonds*. This evolution, far from complete, resembles an earlier evolution affecting the arrangement and description of textual archives, particularly manuscripts.

Today archivists in many Western countries are seeking to establish standard formats for the description of archival materials. This goal has become particularly urgent in the face of computer technology and the desire to form automated archival networks. It remains to be seen whether the final standards adopted in Canada, for instance, will encompass photographs or whether photographs will retain a "special" status. Without question, photographs have presented and will continue to present members of the library and archival professions with problems in arrangement and description, a fact demonstrated through a survey of the professional literature and through field work undertaken in six libraries and archival repositories in the Vancouver area and in Victoria, British Columbia. However, the existence of problems should not mean that the approach to photographic archives should be different from the approach applied to other archives.