

# Discharging our Debt: The Evolution of the Total Archives Concept in English Canada<sup>1</sup>

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**RÉSUMÉ** Dans cet article, l'auteure examine l'histoire du concept d'« archives totales » au sein des services d'archives canadiens. L'auteure défend l'idée que le concept tire son fondement de l'acceptation d'une responsabilité publique pour la préservation d'une panoplie de documents archivistiques, sur tous les supports et de toute provenance, dans le but de conserver le patrimoine documentaire d'une société. Par la suite, on considère son évolution dans la perspective d'un réseau archivistique et comment ce dernier est affecté par plusieurs réalités d'ordre archivistique, social, économique et technologique. L'auteure suggère que l'acquisition d'archives « non-institutionnelles », c'est-à-dire celles créées par d'autres personnes ou d'autres organismes que par l'agence à laquelle le service d'archives est rattaché, est en déclin et que l'objectif de la gestion archivistique est embrouillé par cette quête de nouvelles stratégies de gestion des documents et des réseaux archivistiques dans un environnement de plus en plus complexe sur les plans administratif et technologique.

**ABSTRACT** In this article, the author examines the history of the “total archives” concept in Canadian archives. The author argues that the essence of “total archives” came from an acceptance of public responsibility for the preservation of a wide range of archival materials, in all media and from all sources, in order to preserve society's documentary heritage. The author then considers the evolution of the total archives concept into the vision of an archival system and discusses how that system is being affected by archival, social, economic, and technological realities. The author suggests that the acquisition of “non-institutional” archival records, that is, those records created by organizations or individuals other than a repository's sponsoring agency, is in decline and argues that the ultimate goal of archival management is being obscured in the search for new strategies to administer records and archives systems in an increasingly administratively and technologically complex environment.

## *Introduction*

The nature of archives management in any society is dependent on a range of technical, historical, and political realities, from the communications technologies available at a given time to the cultural orientation of the society, from the financial priorities of governments to the professional interests of records keepers. In Canada, a concept known as “total archives” emerged in the archi-

val lexicon in the 1970s to explain a particular style of archival management. The total archives concept was understood by many to mean that publicly funded archival institutions – such as national archives, provincial archives, and city archives – would acquire, preserve, and make available for public use both government and private sector records in all media, including paper documents and visual and cartographic images, sound recordings, and in more recent years, magnetic and digital media.<sup>2</sup>

This concept of total archives, while not unique to Canada, differed significantly from archival practice in many other jurisdictions. The United States has evolved a tradition of separating the care of public and private records between state archives, on the one hand, and historical societies and university libraries on the other. British and European practice, particularly at the national level, has also divided the preservation of public and private sector records between agencies such as England's Public Record Office, France's Archives de France, or Germany's Bundesarchiv and these countries' national libraries, university libraries, and state and local historical societies. As well, in many countries a number of institutions specialize in the care of specific media materials; in England, for example, specific media materials may find their way to the British Film Institute or the National Sound Archives; in France, the Bibliothèque nationale maintains a specialized Département de la phonothèque et de l'audiovisuel.

In Canada in the 1990s, the concept of total archives has evolved into a belief in a national "archival system." The idea that public archival institutions, particularly national or provincial archives, must acquire and preserve all records of significance to Canadians has been replaced with a perception that archival materials are best kept as close as possible to their place of origin. According to advocates of the archival system, responsibility for the care of records rests with the agencies responsible for their creation; corporate, municipal, and community archives are the keys to preserving Canada's documentary heritage.

At the same time, a related tenet of total archives, that every archival institution must keep records in all media, is becoming more problematic as technologies grow more sophisticated, increasing the costs of preservation and access. Archives, particularly community-based repositories, have insufficient resources to preserve everything from paper records to films to electronic records. Yet the idea that regional, provincial, or national institutions might serve as centralized repositories for such material seems to many to violate the principle of the archival system by requiring that records be removed from their location of origin.

In the midst of this shift from total archives to archival system has come a redefinition of the concept of record (as is discussed later). Archivists are trying to reconcile the importance of institutional records management, which is increasingly perceived as critical to the preservation of authentic records, with

the traditional work of acquiring non-institutional records, a practice at the heart of total archives. Archivists are particularly concerned that the appraisal and preservation of the electronic record requires active intervention in the records management and information system, design, development, and management processes. To wait for electronic records to be donated or transferred by an individual or organization may mean the very loss of the records, as electronic data may not be saved or, perhaps worse, preserved on disks or tapes that are inaccessible owing to archives' lack of suitable storage and retrieval technologies.

In this paper, the author examines the evolution of the total archives concept. What were the origins of total archives? How did history force an evolution and, eventually, entrenchment of the concept? Why, once the term "total archives" was finally coined, did the idea seem to move in and out of favour so quickly? What is the perception today of archival responsibility for the care of non-institutional records?

This analysis is premised on the author's belief that records and archives do not exist outside of a social and cultural context. Records are created by people, used by people, and kept by people. The very definition of a record lies in the choices people have made to create and keep it. A record comes from a conscious decision to create and preserve a memory. Thus the role of the archivist, and the archival community, is critical to an understanding of what Canada values as archival and how Canada has chosen to preserve its documentary heritage. Even though archivists claim they must respond to society's needs and wishes, archivists themselves play a significant role in guiding society's decisions about such issues as whether or not to pursue total archives or seek to develop an archival system.

### *A History of Total Archives*

The total archives concept has developed over more than 150 years of Canadian archival history. Its evolution can be grouped into three distinct periods. The first era of archival activity in English Canada, from the 1800s to the early 1900s, saw a small population of archivists take on a wide range of responsibilities, from collecting historical information, to copying foreign-owned records, to interpreting Canada's past. Their activities and mission emerged out of a recognition among Canadians of the need to collect historical records amid a noticeable dearth of original documentary evidence. The acquisition of historical materials from sources other than government records offices was considered a primary archival responsibility. The term "total archives" was never used, but its broad sweep was evident in the work of early archivists such as Thomas Beamish Akins and Douglas Brymner.

The second era of archival development in English Canada, from the mid 1900s to the late 1970s, was defined by a continued desire to strengthen a

sense of national identity, coupled with the public sector's need to manage an increasing quantity of institutional records, the products of an increasingly complex bureaucracy and burgeoning communications technologies. The archivist, usually a public servant in a national or provincial archival repository, served a dual role: he managed the organization's own record and served as collector, historian, and interpreter not only of that public record but also of records from other sources.<sup>3</sup> The number and nature of archival repositories in Canada grew, and each pursued the all-encompassing work of institutional and non-institutional records care. It was in this era that the term "total archives" was first coined.

The third era of archival history, from the early 1980s to the present, brought the world of archives into the information world of the late twentieth century. The two responsibilities of the archivist, care for the corporate record and acquisition of the private record, became so complex they could not be easily done simultaneously by one person or perhaps even within one archival agency. Records management programmes emerged in governments across the country. The acquisition of private records by larger public agencies lost favour, while community-based archival institutions developed and expanded. Whether or not the former activity precipitated the latter, or vice versa, is a question considered, but not answered, in this paper. Regardless, the concept of total archives has been replaced by a belief in an "archival system," wherein a network of community, municipal, corporate, and other archives will ensure the preservation of society's documentary heritage.

### **Hewers of Wood and Drawers of Water**

[The archivist] collects the documents from which history is to be written ... the rough material to be formed into structures of exquisite beauty in the hands of the skillful workman.

Douglas Brymner, 1889<sup>4</sup>

During Canada's first era of archival management, from the mid-nineteenth to early twentieth centuries, the primary orientation of archival work was the collection and copying of records from such diverse sources as the personal papers of former governors general of Canada and the collections of missionaries and explorers. The emphasis on collecting and copying grew out of a desire on the part of Canadians to foster their own uniquely Canadian cultural identity. The decision to copy and collect rather than manage institutional records emerged out of a concern for the preservation of those records central to Canada's history of exploration and settlement, records not necessarily found in Canada, and particularly not in the offices of the governments of the day.

*An Emerging Canadian Society*

Until the middle of the nineteenth century, the sense of Canadian society was limited and localized. Fur traders, missionaries, and government agents had traveled the land, exploring, converting, and settling. Native people, with their own established cultures and traditions, remained for the most part alienated or apart from European settlements, while Europeans preserved their own traditional customs and social systems. Until towns and cities developed, with their attendant institutional and bureaucratic structures, there was no cohesive sense of a Canadian community distinct and separate from more localized and limited communities, whether English, French, or Native.

By the mid 1800s, Canadians of European descent had become sufficiently settled to start to see themselves as intrinsically different in various respects from their British and French parents. (French Canadians, of course, had had a long period of settlement on the North American continent.) According to their citizens, the British North American colonies were emerging communities in their own right, with their own distinctive collective memories. It was no longer sufficient to draw exclusively on European histories and traditions to define identities. A locally based history was needed to distinguish the new societies from their overseas origins.

In the mid to late 1800s, this collective memory, this locally based history, was gradually being defined in increasingly scientific terms. The recent emergence of Darwinian principles and Rankean tenets, which stressed exhaustive archival research and exact reconstruction of the historical past, led to the evolution in Europe and England, and increasingly in Canada, of a scientific history, one which stressed evidence, objectivity, and analysis over literary flourish and mere narrative.<sup>5</sup> Evidence and objectivity in historical study meant analysis of documentary sources; archives were needed.

*The Start of an Archival Enterprise*

The first archival work in Canada grew out of the efforts of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec, established in 1824, whose members traveled to France, England, and the United States to copy historical records relating to Canada. Their work was funded in part by grants from the Legislative Assembly of Lower Canada. Later the Library of Parliament assisted with this work, and the sphere of interest grew to include historical information about Upper Canada and the War of 1812.<sup>6</sup> In the 1850s, Nova Scotia began its own programme to preserve historical records. Nova Scotia journalist and politician Joseph Howe was a great advocate of the preservation and dissemination of historical materials. "A wise nation," he claimed, "preserves its records, gathers up its muniments, repairs its great public structures, decorates the tombs of its illustrious dead, and fosters national pride and love of country by perpetual

reference to the sacrifices and glories of the past.”<sup>7</sup> In 1857, Howe brought a resolution to the Nova Scotia House of Assembly, begging that “the ancient records and documents illustrative of the History and progress of Society in this Province ... be examined, preserved and arranged.”<sup>8</sup>

But where were these “ancient records and documents” to come from? England, France, and Germany could turn to well stocked storerooms of government records and could focus their energies on arrangement and description. Canada did not have vast quantities of original historical materials at hand. Canada had to go looking for its history. Thomas Beamish Akins, appointed Commissioner of Records in Nova Scotia in 1857, and Douglas Brymner, appointed in 1872 to preserve the archival records of the Dominion of Canada, did not begin by arranging and describing the historical records of their own present governments. These records were too few and too recent in origins. Brymner did seek to acquire and preserve the records of the former colonies, as did Akins, who concentrated some efforts on the identification and preservation of the historical records of the Nova Scotia government and its predecessors. However, neither focused on the care of post-colonial or even later nineteenth-century government records.<sup>9</sup> They felt that much of the “real” history, the colonial history, lay in British and French records. The culture of Canada required that historical information be largely searched out from elsewhere. As Henry Miles of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec stated,

Owing to various causes, and, amongst these, to the former migratory character of our Governments and Parliaments, and, partly to the recent establishment of the Constitution of the dominion, it is yet impossible to pronounce what we really have in the shape of Archives, or to point out precisely the localities in which they are lodged.<sup>10</sup>

Not only was it difficult to find records, but what was one to do with the records once they were found? Owners, whether governments or individuals, were uniformly loathe to relinquish their property. Without mechanical reproduction technologies, archivists were forced to copy information from original materials and bring the copies back to a strongroom for safekeeping. The first Canadian archivists copied, by hand, thousands upon thousands of British and French Colonial Office records, missionary files, fur trade records, and anything else relevant to the Canadian experience.

Brymner’s successor in Ottawa, Arthur Doughty, was particularly adept at collecting; in the first three years of his tenure as Dominion Archivist, from 1904 to 1907, Doughty oversaw the expansion of the holdings of the Dominion Archives from 3,157 to 12,600 bound or leather-bound volumes, the vast majority of which were copies. Included were such records as thirty-five volumes transcribed from the records of Colonel Henry Bouquet, a Brigadier General with the British Army in the Seven Years’ War, and 247 volumes tran-

scribed from the correspondence of Sir Frederick Haldimand, the Commander-in-Chief of Canada from 1778 to 1784. Doughty also acquired copies of the Elgin-Grey Papers, which included correspondence between Lord Elgin, Governor General of Canada and Commander-in-Chief of British forces in North America, and Charles Grey, Secretary for War and the Colonies from 1846 to 1852 and Elgin's superior officer.

As a result of this activity, the holdings of Canadian archives grew into a diverse collection of materials – some originals, some copies, some whole *fonds* (though no one in Canada used the term), some single items. Little distinction was made between official and non-official materials, and scant attention was paid to the concept of provenance or the need to document the origins of the records or context of their creation. Of critical importance was the need to gather information into one location and make it safe from loss or destruction.

In Ottawa, there were attempts in the late 1800s to try to focus attention on care of the federal government's records, in part because several spectacular fires in the 1890s had destroyed valuable public property.<sup>11</sup> In 1897, Canada's Under-Secretary of State, Joseph Pope, lamented the state of records care in the government, proclaiming that "a match would set the whole thing in a blaze and the loss would be irreparable."<sup>12</sup> Ironically, a fire broke out in the West Block on Parliament Hill only five weeks after Pope made his plea, which urged the protection of all records, including government records. "The paramount idea in my mind," he declared, "is that they should be in one safe place and under one control."<sup>13</sup> However, the overwhelming archival concern remained the collection of historical information from all sources, not the protection of original government records.<sup>14</sup>

### *The Concept of Archives*

The archivists of this time drew their understanding of archival management from the study and love of history and a desire to collect the evidence from which the great stories of Canada would be written. As Douglas Brymner noted, the archivist was "the pioneer, whose duty is to clear away obstructions; the cultivated fields will follow."<sup>15</sup> To these archivists, copied information held the same historical power as originals; private was as important as public. The idea that the context within which records were created had some importance and ought to be documented was overshadowed by the quest for information, regardless of source. Brymner outlined this expansive philosophy of collecting in an 1878 "Memorandum on Archives," in which he identified two distinct records-related activities: the care of departmental records and the acquisition of historical materials. Records generated by departments were used, filed, and, "where the papers are not so numerous as to lead to inconvenience," retained in the same rooms where regular clerical work was done.<sup>16</sup>

These records were not archival priorities. Historical records, on the other hand, were “papers to be found in various quarters, bearing on the history of the Dominion and its various Provinces.”<sup>17</sup> Doughty stated the case more bluntly. “It is immaterial to the enquirer,” Doughty argued, “whether a letter of a Governor has been found in a particular collection in Europe, or in Canada.”<sup>18</sup>

As a result, the term “archives” evolved a distinctly Canadian meaning, different from European or English definitions. Anything historical was “archival,” from diaries and letters to government correspondence and corporate files. The passage of the *Public Archives Act* in 1912 provided the first clear definition of “archives,” a definition that emphasized historical significance over institutional importance; medium, form, and origins were of little consequence compared with the possession of the information.<sup>19</sup> According to the *Act*,

The Public Archives shall consist of all such public records, documents and other historical material of every kind, nature and description as, under this act, or under the authority of any order in council made by virtue thereof, are placed under the care, custody and control of the Dominion Archivist.<sup>20</sup>

The idea that copying would ensure the preservation of the information, and that the information was equally as valuable as the original record, was a pivotal tenet of archival practice. This perception was not born out of ignorance of differing approaches in England and Europe. Archivists such as Doughty and his assistant James Kenney communicated regularly with their counterparts overseas. But as Kenney noted in 1940 in a speech to the newly established Society of American Archivists, it was important for Americans and Canadians to develop archival methods “applicable to the needs of this continent.” Kenney lamented that existing manuals and studies applied more to European than North American conditions; he urged the maintenance of a “clear distinction between archival service and historical service,” noting that “our archives in Ottawa are consulted at least ten times for the purposes of history for the once that they are consulted for all other purposes.” Kenney did not see the value of distinguishing between the archives of government or corporate bodies and historical manuscripts, largely comprising personal or family papers. To him, it was a matter of “indifference.” As long as common sense prevailed, “no terrible disaster need be feared among our records, even though occasionally the laws of Hilary Jenkinson be flouted.”<sup>21</sup>

The *Public Archives Act* also opened the door to another peculiarly Canadian vision of archival work. Implicit in the widespread authority given to the Dominion Archivist to acquire records outside of the government sphere was the notion that the preservation of Canada’s documentary heritage was a public responsibility, to be borne by the Dominion government. As the *Act* stated:



The Dominion Archivist, under the direction of the Minister, may acquire for the Public Archives all such original records, documents and other material as he deems necessary or desirable to secure therefor[e], or he may acquire copies thereof, and all such originals or copies so acquired shall form part of the Public Archives.<sup>22</sup>

This perception of public responsibility was echoed by the historian Duncan McArthur in 1936. “The function of archives is twofold,” he claimed, “first to preserve all available historical records for present and future historians, amateur and professional; secondly to encourage in every way possible an interest in the history of the province and country.”<sup>23</sup> The newly established Canadian Historical Association also advocated the view that government was directly responsible for the care of archival materials from all sources, arguing that “the primary obligation rests on governments, Dominion, provincial, and municipal, each in its own sphere of responsibility. If public bodies will not discharge this debt to themselves and to posterity there is little hope of any effective action.”<sup>24</sup>

This sense of public responsibility arose not just from fundamental archival considerations, such as the dispersal of original source materials and the desire to protect materials from loss or damage. Equally important were the realities of Canada as a country. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Canada was a geographically vast country with a small and scattered population. Nation building was evidenced in construction projects such as the building of canals, ports, bridges, and railroads. The public sector had been prominent – the private sector remarkably absent – in the establishment of universities, colleges, and schools.

There had developed in Canada no tradition of private beneficiaries for arts and culture, no philanthropists such as Carnegie or Rockefeller endowing cultural, artistic, literary, or educational activities. There was no network of provincial institutions similar to the state library system evolving in the United States. There were only a limited numbers of historical societies; there was no national library and no national museum. In short, there was a dearth of those sociocultural institutions that in other countries led to a different orientation in archival endeavour. The government played a leadership role in the identification and preservation of the documentary heritage, just as it served as leader in Canada’s culture, economics, education, and transportation infrastructure.<sup>25</sup>

Thus was born the foundation for a distinctly Canadian view of archives, a view that perceived the acquisition of both originals and copies of both public and private records as a legitimate and primary archival function for the Public Archives, as it was now called. The concept of total archives, while not yet articulated by that name, found its origins in this belief in the central role of government in the preservation of historical records from all sources. The heart of total archives lay in this acceptance of public responsibility for society and citizen.

*The Archivist, the Records Manager, and Total Archives*

While we welcome, and indeed urge, the acquisition of collections of private papers and documents of all kinds from the Public Archives, we believe firmly that the great source of the history of this country is and will remain the official documents of its national government and especially the official papers of its public men.

Canadian Historical Association, 1948<sup>26</sup>

The mid 1900s brought the second era in Canada's archival development, and a stronger elucidation of the concept of total archives. A new combination of technology and culture changed Canada's – and the world's – methods of communication and, inevitably, the resulting records. The widespread use of technologies invented in the nineteenth century – such as the wireless telegraph and the telephone – increased the speed at which people could communicate. The refinement of reprographic technologies, such as micro-photography, multiple copy carbon paper systems, and photo reproduction machines meant not only that records could be created faster and in greater quantities, but also that they could also be retained and reproduced indiscriminately. Photography, invented in the mid 1800s, had moved out of the studio and into the hands of anyone with a Brownie camera. Sound recording, broadcast, and film-making technologies grew more sophisticated, and the computer began to move from the realm of science fiction to the world of reality.

Even more important perhaps was the change in bureaucracy, as business efficiency and office management became buzzwords in North American society. The records boom of the Second World War was simply the tip of the iceberg, a massive communications-based growth in records-keeping. Never before in Canada's history was it so patently necessary to appraise records, to see to the destruction of some of the vast bulk of materials being created by bureaucracies. The concept of records management emerged, a revolutionary idea indeed to those whose archival careers had been spent collecting and copying.

As methods of communication became more sophisticated, Canadians were also better able to reach out and contact one another and the wider world. Increased access to that world led to questions about Canadians' place within it. Canadians' need to have a sense of self was demonstrated in their search for ways to strengthen their heritage and culture, particularly in the face of the growing cultural and economic power of countries such as the United States. Historical research moved beyond what had become "traditional" political history; subjects such as ethnicity, business history, social and cultural studies emerged, culminating in a focus on Canadian studies as a legitimate study in its own right.

*The Paper Boom and a Shift in Thinking*

Archivists began to recognize that the public record needed as much attention as the private. Doughty's acquisition-oriented system had been suitable for the identification and preservation of privately generated historical materials but not for the care and management of current government records. As Kenney wrote in 1936, if unneeded modern public records were not destroyed, "the country would soon be paying more for the housing of records than for the housing of the administrative offices of the Government."<sup>27</sup> The historian George Brown agreed with the need for sound management, contending that government records "are going to be of increasing and essential importance in providing information on which sound policy and administration must rest."<sup>28</sup>

With the changing nature, and quantity, of public records, there was a shift away from Doughty's collecting legacy. The editors of the *Canadian Historical Review* commented that:

there is far too prevalent an idea that an archives is a kind of antiquarian museum – a desirable possession, doubtless, for any government, but very remote from the problems of the practical world. No misconception in this matter could be more unfortunate ... Any archives, if it is to play its essential role must be a growing repository to which records of government departments are transferred after a lapse of years.<sup>29</sup>

However, the perception that government materials required care was not based exclusively on a recognition of the need for their management; the primary concern remained the historical importance of public records. The historian and archivist Arthur Morton argued that more attention should be paid to government documents, as these formed "the most important single body of historical material."<sup>30</sup>

Others within the archival community in North America expanded on the concept of public records care, arguing ever more strongly for a "records management" component to archival work. Writing in the United States in the late 1940s, the archivist and educator Ernst Posner commented on the relationship between archives and records management:

The management of records, from the time of their creation up to and including the time they are accessible in an archival agency is essentially one process and one problem for the solution of which the archivist and the records administrator must cooperate.<sup>31</sup>

*Archives and National Identity*

This vision of a need for records management was met with a growing need to strengthen the fragile identity of English Canadians, an identity battered by

regional fragmentation on the one side and American influence on the other. Canada's place in the world had been reshaped by its participation in the Second World War. The country had joined the war independently of Britain, and the tremendous successes and tragic failures experienced served to bring English Canadians together as never before. After the war the country sought to build on this emerging national identity. Canada was beginning to see itself as truly distinct from its British antecedents, and endeavoured to distance itself even further from its American neighbours. As the historian Walter Sage noted in 1945:

It is just possible that to Canada the Second World War may be what the defeat of the Spanish Armada was to Elizabethan England, the letting loose of a genuine and all-embracing patriotism. It might and should be accompanied by a real advance in Canadian art, literature, and in the writing of Canadian history.<sup>32</sup>

Recognizing that the arts and culture were critical to the promotion of this sense of nationalism, the federal government in 1949 established the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences (popularly known as the Massey Commission). The commission was charged with examining the role of the government in the area of arts and culture. There was a strongly nationalistic imperative to the work of the commission, which did not deny the danger from Canada's neighbour. The commission urged Canadians not to be blind to the risk of "permanent dependence" on American aid. "Our use of American institutions, or our lazy, even abject, imitation of them," the commission charged, "has caused an uncritical acceptance of ideas and assumptions which are alien to our tradition." The commission hoped that its recommendations would put a stop to this foreign infiltration.<sup>33</sup>

The recommendations of the Massey Commission were to change Canada's cultural environment in areas ranging from theatre and dance to fine arts and literature. Among the areas investigated was the Public Archives, which the commission saw as playing an important cultural role in Canadian society. While the commission recognized the administrative realities of records management, in its recommendations it did not emphasize administrative concerns to the exclusion of the societal value of archival records. The commission recognized that archivists had traditionally paid little attention to the care of public records in general, and modern records in particular, and acknowledged that records management was an important new role. The paper boom could not be ignored.

While the commission understood the need to reverse the long history of neglect of federal government records, it also saw a role for the Archives in the promotion of national identity. The commission insisted that the preservation of a wide range of archival records was critical to strengthening Canada's identity. Canadian archivists, the commission declared, had a dual role: to pro-

protect public records throughout their life cycle, and to acquire and preserve private records relating to Canada, no matter what their media, age, or source. The archivist was to be *both* records manager and records keeper of history. And, the commission argued, public money must be committed to both records management and the acquisition of private records. Only in this way would both public and private records be kept safe for posterity.<sup>34</sup>

The commission commended the Public Archives for undertaking “valuable services performed by no other agency.” It praised the “zeal and energy” of public servants, who fortunately did not limit themselves to “a narrow interpretation” of their duties. While the commission agreed that archival practice in other countries, including Great Britain and the United States, was to maintain public records and private records separately, it urged that “the present useful arrangement in our Public Archives should not be altered.”<sup>35</sup>

#### *National or Regional?*

The Massey Commission did not ignore another growing reality affecting both archival work and English Canadians’ sense of identity. There was an increasing call, particularly from historians, for the establishment and expansion of provincial and regional archival repositories. The notion that the Public Archives would alone serve as Canada’s historical laboratory was outdated and inappropriate. One anonymous historian argued that

it is neither practical nor advisable that the preservation of provincial records should be undertaken by the Dominion archives. Provincial records should be available for consultation both by students and government departments in the capital of the province. There are provincial interest and loyalties which can only be served adequately by the province itself.<sup>36</sup>

Another historian, George Brown, called for provincial activity, arguing that “the provinces are morally, at least, responsible ... to see that these essential records of Canada’s development are not neglected;”<sup>37</sup> his colleague Lewis H. Thomas argued that local interests were best served by local collections.<sup>38</sup>

The Massey Commission accepted this regional reality but urged that national identity be fostered through close cooperation between the two levels of institution:

The local archival collection, whether provincial, municipal or private, is an essential factor in the effectiveness of the national institution; first, because of the source of materials which it contains; second, because through its functions it serves as an agent in gathering and preserving, no matter where, materials that might otherwise be destroyed; and third, because its existence and its services encourage scholarly historical investigations which are one of the principal interests of the national institution.<sup>39</sup>

The recommendations of the Massey Commission re-enforced both the accepted notion of archival institution as cultural centre and the growing perception of archival institution as keeper of public records. Public and private records were equally important to the study of Canada's history. Their care was a natural responsibility of public agencies. Public repositories at the provincial and local level also had a role to play; the federal archives could not act alone as Canada's great "storehouse" of history.<sup>40</sup>

As well, the Massey Commission recognized the need to preserve materials in a range of media. At the time of the commission's study, there was no national library and only a limited national museum. The commission recommended the establishment of both, but encouraged the Public Archives to continue to play a central role in the acquisition of materials of all types. While it suggested that the library be given responsibility for "such records, films and photographs as are considered necessary supplements to the printed collection of books, pamphlets and newspapers," the commission did not encourage the transfer of other archival responsibilities from the Public Archives to the national library. For example, the commission agreed that artifacts should be moved to the museum but resisted suggestions that the Archives' maps and books move to the library. According to the commission, "a joint collection of public records and of other historical documents has admirably served the country's needs in the past, and ... should not be interfered with."<sup>41</sup>

This expansive concept of records care was accepted by the Glassco Commission, Canada's Royal Commission on Government Organization. National and regional institutions were both legitimate, but more important, both had a responsibility to care for both public and private records. The Glassco Commission wrote in 1963 that

a national institution can hardly be expected to assume in totality the inherent responsibility of private enterprise. However, the national interest does require if the ... history of the nation is to be preserved, that the responsibility must be assumed on the national level if private industry is not prepared to do so.<sup>42</sup>

In part as a result of the Glassco Commission's recommendations, changes were made in the administration of the Public Archives. Between 1958 and 1968 the Archives' staff expanded from 107 to 263, and its budget grew from \$500,000 to \$2.25 million. With the passage of a Public Records Order in 1966, the Archives took responsibility for a comprehensive records management programme, determining and enforcing records schedules and advising government on records systems. The Dominion Archivist presided over an Advisory Council on Public Records.

The Archives also expanded the acquisition of private records. In 1961, work began on a survey of archival institutions across Canada; the records identified were listed in the *Union List of Manuscripts in Canadian Reposito-*

ries, published in 1968. In 1965, the Archives took responsibility for maintaining a register of graduate theses in progress in history and related disciplines. In 1967, the Archives moved into its new building at 395 Wellington Street, which it shared with the National Library.<sup>43</sup>

#### *The Emergence of “Total Archives”*

The “total archives” concept was finally labeled as such in 1972, when Dominion Archivist Wilfred Smith confirmed the Public Archives’ wide ranging responsibilities in his introduction to *Archives: Mirror of Canada Past*, a publication commemorating the centennial of the Public Archives of Canada. Smith agreed that public repositories were to be responsible “not only for the reception of government records which have historical value but also for the collection of historical material of all kinds and from any source which can help in a significant way to reveal the truth about every aspect of Canadian life.”<sup>44</sup>

From the 1800s to 1972, history had brought together five related factors, which combined to create this Canadian orientation to archival work. The total archives concept grew from (1) a recognition of the central role of government in archival enterprise, (2) an understanding of the need to foster the identity of English Canadians, (3) an acceptance of the continuing validity of acquisition and copying of private sector records by public institutions, (4) a recognition of the importance of records management, particularly in the public sector, and (5) a recognition of the importance of preserving records in a range of media. The core principle behind the total archives concept was that publicly funded archival repositories had a responsibility to manage public records throughout their life, for both administrative and research purposes, and to acquire and preserve private records of historical value. Total archives was an archival manifestation of Canada’s – particularly English Canada’s – desire to preserve society’s documentary memory regardless of medium and thereby shore up its cultural defences and strengthen an identity still fragile and tender. All records, from all sources, for all people.

The Public Archives had been expanding its own archival programmes with the evolution of its “Systematic National Acquisition Programme.” The SNAP programme divided private acquisitions into a variety of subject areas, including arts, business, labour, judicial, medical and scientific, military, public affairs, and sports. The National Ethnic Archives, for example, was to acquire records of ethnic groups in Canada. The head of the National Ethnic Archives acknowledged that there would be a cost attached to managing records in many languages, but claimed that this was “the price of seeking to reflect Canada’s past fully and accurately.”<sup>45</sup>

The Archives also sought to acquire the products of various communications technologies, such as films and sound recordings. A National Film, Tele-

vision and Sound Archives, established in 1969, actively acquired moving image materials and sound recordings, including broadcasts and oral histories. The Archives also expanded the acquisition of photographic collections and architectural records.<sup>46</sup> As well, the Archives began to acquire what were called machine readable records: “the latest newcomer to the family of archival media.”<sup>47</sup>

*Long Live “Total Archives?”*

The total archives concept, particularly its media orientation, was questioned by some in the archival community and, eventually, by members of the academic world. Terry Cook of the Public Archives of Canada wrote in *Archivaria* in 1979 that the increased attention to records in specific media was endangering the archival principle of provenance. Concentration on the form was at the expense of the “functional unity of the original record.” Cook argued that as various administrative units of the national archives took responsibility for a particular medium, such as visual or electronic records, the archival *fonds* as a whole risked being divided; its integrity could be lost. The division by media was also hindering scholarship, he argued. Researchers were required to work through a multitude of archival systems in order to find the information they sought.<sup>48</sup> Cook proposed that there be only two units of administration in an archives: public or institutional records, and private collections. Media materials should naturally fall within those groupings.

Cook’s perspective was criticized by a colleague at the Public Archives, Andrew Birrell, who considered Cook’s enunciation of the principle of provenance to be “tyrannical and fundamentalist.”<sup>49</sup> Other Public Archives representatives joined the debate, expressing concern for “media solitudes” and worrying that the concept of total archives could lead to the establishment of separate media archives. Without responsibility for the archival unit as a whole, archivists would not have the contextual understanding of the records within which to conduct their work.<sup>50</sup> This debate focused attention only on the media aspect of total archives; the term “total archives” was soon perceived by many to refer largely, if not solely, to archival responsibility for the totality of media materials, such as photographs, maps, films, and sound recordings.

At the same time as archivists were discussing the issue of media management, a growing interest in Canadian studies again focused attention on the preservation of the historical record as a tool for strengthening Canadian identity. As an example of emerging concerns, the Commission on Canadian Studies, established in 1972 to examine the role of universities in Canada, expressed a sense of “alarm” about Canada’s sovereignty. The commission sought to prove that “Canada provides a North American alternative to life under the Government of the United States.”<sup>51</sup> The commission’s investiga-



tions grew out of the interest in the 1970s in “made in Canada” national and regional studies, social and political science, and heritage management.

Although the commission’s mandate did not specifically include an investigation of archives, it nonetheless considered the role of archival repositories, proclaiming them “the foundation of Canadian studies” and encouraging a general increase in the acquisition of historical records and an expansion of the role of university archives.<sup>52</sup> The Symons Commission’s vision of archives, like the vision of the Massey and Glassco commissions, was all-inclusive. All types of records, in all media, were to be preserved, largely at public expense, for historical and research use.

While the Symons Commission was never specifically mandated to investigate archives – this was only one issue among many – the report’s recommendations prompted an active debate among archivists about the role of the archivist. Marion Beyea, at the time the archivist at the Anglican General Synod Archives, remarked that “I cannot find a satisfactory statement or discussion by a Canadian archivist on the definition of an archives.”<sup>53</sup> Scott James of the City of Toronto Archives suggested that “many of us are guilty of assuming that what we do as archivists is what all archivists do.”<sup>54</sup> Gordon Dodds, the first president of the Association of Canadian Archivists, expressed a “deep concern” about the role, status, and credibility of archivists in Canadian society.<sup>55</sup>

A dichotomy was emerging in archivists’ understanding of their work. Some archivists emphasized the role of the archivist as a manager of records for their sponsoring agency; many felt that a focus on the acquisition and preservation of private sector records drew attention away from the central responsibility of the archivist as the institution’s record keeper. Gordon Dodds believed that no “self-respecting” archivist could function without a records management programme: the keeper of the record, particularly the public record, must be responsible for all aspects of records administration. Marion Beyea commented that without a functional records management programme, records would become static, limiting their value not only for administrative purposes but also as research tools.<sup>56</sup> Scott James saw the total archives concept as “an archival aberration” and complained that it had obscured the “fundamental” work of the archivist. He defined this work as administering the “permanently valuable records” of the sponsoring agency. James also criticized the “popular misconception” that the primary job of archival repositories was to preserve material for research use.<sup>57</sup>

Others in the archival community instead supported the total archives concept of preserving both government and private records, some advocates of total archives decrying the focus on records management. Critical of the emphasis on systems and technology, Terry Cook agreed that the image of archivist as historian was growing less popular but asked, “is not the pendulum now swinging too far in the opposite direction?”<sup>58</sup> Historian T.D. Regehr

felt archivists should continue to regard scholarship as their “highest priority.”<sup>59</sup> Ian Wilson of the Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan and Robert Gordon of the Public Archives of Canada argued that it was right to consider archivists as historians.<sup>60</sup>

Wilfred Smith, who had enunciated the total archives concept just a few years before, recognized that archivists were struggling with the distinction between bureaucratic requirements and historical and research needs. Archival appraisal and retention, he argued, should be based upon a recognition that the use of records in government is different from the use of them in an archival repository. Archivists must appreciate the difference between “relatively short-term and long-term purposes” for keeping records. The archivist’s focus, he felt, must be on the long term.<sup>61</sup>

### *Identity and Diversity*

At the same time as archivists were considering their role in the care of records, Canadian society was changing, and a national orientation was giving way to regional or ethnic identities. By the 1970s, the Canadian population had grown ever more ethnically diverse. Citizens of English and French origin had been joined by immigrants from Germany, Italy, Eastern Europe, Asia, and elsewhere. Canadian nationalism had to be reconciled with the even greater distinctions between cultures, between provinces, and between languages. As Canada celebrated its centennial in 1967 and a number of provincial centennials in the 1970s, there was a recognition of the country’s multicultural nature. The federal government took the position that public funding was required to ensure that all races and societies received equal treatment. By the late 1970s, multiculturalism had become an explicit Canadian policy, with the appointment of the first Minister for Multiculturalism, the Honourable Joseph-Philippe Guay, in 1977. Canada was gradually evolving into a “mosaic” of distinct cultures, as opposed to the “melting pot” of the United States.<sup>62</sup>

The federal government had been funding social and cultural endeavours actively since the days of the Massey Commission in the 1940s and 1950s, if not before. In the 1960s and 1970s, it could afford to be generous with its funds; like other western nations, Canada was enjoying a period of sustained economic growth. But in 1975, the federal government experienced the first in a long series of budget deficits, as it fell increasingly into debt in order to sustain its extensive responsibilities. As, increasingly, the government found its widespread social obligations harder to afford, there were mounting calls for the decentralization of many public programmes. People in provinces remote from Ottawa grew less and less satisfied with centralist control of economic and social programmes; they searched for stronger local management. Regional identities were not easily overcome. Moreover, this reorientation

was not objectionable to the federal government, seeking to extricate itself from at least some of its rising costs. As one local politician noted in 1972: "We need real local government. We need it because there is no other way in which the government can become politically responsive. In no other way can it become an organ of the society rather than a manipulator of the society."<sup>63</sup>

This need for local control was considered particularly important in the cultural sphere. There was a new sense that cultural resources were often best managed at the local level. In 1972, for example, the Canadian government proclaimed a national museums policy that emphasized "decentralization and democratization." This policy meant that Canadian museums would work to distribute the cultural resources of the country through grants to regional or local institutions and through providing assistance with training and outreach. In this way, the government could stimulate the growth of local repositories.<sup>64</sup>

The field of archives was not exempt from restructuring and decentralization. In 1974, Michael Swift, the chairman of the Archives Section of the Canadian Historical Association, noted that only three provinces and four cities in Canada had developed satisfactory records management programmes.<sup>65</sup> There was a need for the local management of records, public *and* private, both to ensure government records were well managed and to preserve private records of historical value.<sup>66</sup> In this atmosphere of decentralization and diffusion the number of repositories in Canada rose from the sixty or so in the 1950s to nearly two hundred in the 1970s, as more regions established their own institutions. The provinces had each initiated some form of archival programme, and work had begun in the Yukon and Northwest Territories. As well, a range of community, organizational, and institutional repositories was established.

Thus, in this second era of archival development, archival responsibilities were shifting. In the first era, archivists in large centralized repositories had been concerned with building up a historical collection of originals and copies primarily to support the needs of historians. In the second phase, archivists in repositories from federal to provincial to municipal were now focusing not only on preserving private records but also on developing records management systems and processes in order to appraise and acquire government or institutional records, the archival and historical values of which were increasingly acknowledged. While earlier archivists may have overemphasized the acquisition of the private record, archivists in the 1960s and 1970s were stretched in two directions: to secure a good quality institutional record and to preserve historical evidence from non-institutional sources. Their decisions were influenced by the establishment of ever more archival institutions: corporate archives, municipal archives, community archives, and others, each of which claimed a "piece" of the archival territory. Which approach took precedence, institutional record-keeping or private records acquisition? Which institution should keep the record: provincial, federal, or local? Which type of

record had priority: textual, visual, aural? Was there, in fact, a need to choose between one direction or another, or could the various institutions continue to be all things to all people?

### *A Canadian Archival System*

In 1978, a "Consultative Group on Canadian Archives" was established, its purpose being to examine the myriad of archival activities appearing across the country. The resulting study conducted by the Consultative Group was "the first attempt to present a full portrait of the [archival] system, warts and all."<sup>67</sup> The diversity of needs, interests, and opinions the study uncovered brought into question the continuing validity of the total archives philosophy. The Consultative Group offered recommendations for the development of an "archival system": a coordinated approach to national archival management.

In its report, the Consultative Group redefined, if not actually rejected, the total archives concept. The Group did praise the early proponents of total archives for "casting a broad net"; total archives was an efficient way to use limited resources, the Group argued, as it maximized the economies of scale. Researchers were well served by total archives, as their search for materials was simplified. "The concept of 'total archives' is excellent," the Group stated; "its fault lies in its application."<sup>68</sup>

Total archives, the Consultative Group suggested, should not mean that publicly funded archival institutions were the only or primary agencies responsible for the preservation of archival records. Instead, the Group argued, the principle of total archives was better applied by decentralizing records care and by helping the creators of records to look after for their own materials, for their own benefit and for the benefit of society. "Where now there are incentives to place older records in the major public archives," the Group argued, "these incentives should be reversed or parallel incentives should be established to assist the [creating] institution in preserving its own records."<sup>69</sup> According to the Consultative Group and its supporters, the growth of a collection of community archival institutions was a new and innovative way to foster a comprehensive acquisitions programme across the country, rather than relying on what now appeared to be the paternalistic and centralist acquisitions activities of the few large archival repositories in Canada.

The Consultative Group's concern with the total archives concept was that it did not accommodate the hundreds of archival repositories appearing across the country. Responsibility for private records acquisition had traditionally rested largely with one national archives, ten provincial archives, and a handful of well-established university or municipal archives. "With the cream of local material skimmed off to the central archives, any movement to establish an institutional or local archives withers and dies," the Consultative Group's report commented. But local repositories were being established, and a strict

adherence to the total archives concept risked the sustainability of these smaller institutions.”<sup>70</sup>

The Group emphasized the value of archival records to their communities, declaring that “the place local records have in local identities, pride, or heritage concerns is suggested by the emotion with which some communities defend their records, poorly housed though they may be.” The Group felt that public repositories must retain “broad responsibilities” to ensure the preservation of neglected private records. But the formation of local archives was both necessary and inevitable. People would want easy access to their history; they would prefer to access both public and private records locally, rather than having to travel to metropolitan centers far away.<sup>71</sup>

To encourage the development of corporate, institutional, and regional archives, the Group envisioned a “comprehensive system of archives in Canada.” Such a system would not be based in universities, as envisioned by the Symons Commission. Instead, it would encompass all types of archival facilities, public and private, university and business. The Group envisaged institutions such as oil companies, banks, or other businesses and organizations establishing their own corporate archives and providing public access to their holdings. Personal and family records would be preserved by municipal or local archives or perhaps as private collections in corporate or institutional archives. Rather than dictating who might or might not care for archival records, the system would encourage cooperation among both existing and new repositories. These institutions would work together to develop standards of practice and cooperative programmes and services.

The Consultative Group pictured a series of provincial networks across the country. It never actually defined the concept of a network, but implied that such a system could improve communications and practices, allowing archival repositories to establish common priorities and balanced programmes. The network would encourage an exchange of services and the development of descriptive standards. Further, it would improve the public image of archives.<sup>72</sup>

The Group did not reject ideas of public sector responsibility. Instead, larger public repositories, it contended, had a duty to foster the development of institutional, corporate, or local archives, rather than “simply gathering all available archival material” themselves. Cooperative action, the Group argued, would allow a broader range of archival materials to be preserved, with the financial burden spread among public and private agencies. Assistance to smaller archives must become a legitimate part of the work of larger repositories. They would need to balance their traditional archival programmes with this new leadership role.<sup>73</sup>

#### *The Formation of the Canadian Council of Archives*

One of the results of the Consultative Group’s report was the establishment of

the Canadian Council of Archives (CCA), which held its inaugural meeting with provincial and territorial council representatives on the 7th and 8th of November 1985 at the Public Archives of Canada in Ottawa. The CCA's budget for its first full year of operations was \$1,433,139.<sup>74</sup> One of the first tasks of the CCA was to fund provincial and territorial councils to conduct a survey of their local needs and priorities. These surveys were carried out between 1985 and 1987; the results were published in 1988. Drawing on the data gathered from 627 archival agencies identified across the country, the CCA's Planning and Priorities Committee then identified national needs and developed a programme to address them.<sup>75</sup> One component of the CCA's programme was to establish a strategy for the coordinated acquisition of archival records across the country, as part of its plan for an archival system. To develop this strategy, the CCA established an Acquisition Committee in 1989 to examine mechanisms for the cooperative management of acquisition and consider appraisal requirements for contemporary records. The committee was also responsible for raising awareness among records creators of the importance of managing their archival records.<sup>76</sup>

With the establishment of an Acquisition Committee at the national level, and the development of other archival programmes at the national, provincial, and territorial levels, the Canadian Council of Archives could claim to be making progress in the development of a Canadian archival system. By 1995 the funds available had increased to \$2,436,492; from 1985 to 1995 a total of \$18,864,221 had been expended directly by the CCA.<sup>77</sup> In that year the CCA boasted that, since its establishment, it had funded the processing of 34,500 meters of textual materials, 4,000,000 photographs, 160,000 maps and architectural drawings, and 104,000 hours of sound and moving image records. In one of the most heavily funded programmes, aimed at reducing the backlog of unprocessed records in archival repositories, the CCA had by 1995 provided more than \$10 million, which had been supplemented by matching funds from archival repositories.<sup>78</sup>

Thus as the end of this second era of archival development approached, there was a shift from an emphasis on "total archives" toward the search for an "archival system." No longer did total archives mean direct governmental responsibility for the preservation of society's documentary heritage. Now, total archives reflected the diversification and diffusion of archival responsibility, from national to provincial to city to community. Instead of emphasizing the central role of government (particularly the national and provincial governments) in archival enterprise, the archival community now argued for increased local, regional, and private sector participation in records care. Public sector funds would be used, but diffused among many institutions. The role of public institutions in acquiring and copying private sector records was being replaced by a responsibility for records management, not only for administrative purposes but also to ensure that a valuable public record was preserved for future use. The preservation by archives of materials in all media

was not questioned in theory and CCA funds were being applied to the care of multiple media holdings; but it is not clear if the wide-ranging approach to media acquisition followed by large institutions such as federal or provincial archives was, or could be, as easily followed by smaller institutions with fewer resources. The need to strengthen identity in English Canada remained important, but that identity was evolving from a national to more regional sensibility, making localized record-keeping more important, again fueling the argument for diffusion of resources and decentralization of responsibility. In 1980, the Consultative Group had identified 200 archival repositories. In 1982, Statistics Canada reported 491 institutions, and in 1989 the Canadian Council of Archives identified 627, including public and private, community and regional, thematic, religious, business, and educational.<sup>79</sup> The Canadian archival system appeared to have replaced the concept of total archives.

### *The Fork in the Road: Information or Culture?*

Private acquisition is not a primary information records responsibility for the archives or the archivist ... the archives will not be an archival welfare office ... its staff will not be archival welfare workers.

Gary Mitchell, 1995<sup>80</sup>

The years from the mid 1980s to the end of the twentieth century have seen the emergence of a third era in Canada's archival evolution. The archival community has experienced more significant changes in these past few years than ever before in its history. The appearance and rapid acceptance of computer technologies has led to an emphasis on institutional records management, often at the expense of the acquisition of private records. The concept of total archives, once seen as perhaps Canada's pre-eminent contribution to archival theory, is fast becoming as archivally incorrect as indiscriminate collecting and copying, so very popular a mere four score years ago. It can also be argued that the Canadian archival system is now at risk, with reduced funding opportunities and reorientation of institutional responsibilities. Four factors have influenced this change in archival directions: reduced government funding; the rapid growth of computer technologies; the strengthening of public policy in the areas of information management and privacy, and in areas such as security, copyright, records management, and access to information; and the continuing devolution of identity among Canadians from national to regional to local.

### *An Age of Economic Rationalization*

Since the beginning of the 1980s, Canadian governments at all levels have faced a marked challenge to their economies. In 1975, the federal government

recorded a national deficit of \$3.8 billion. By 1982 the deficit was \$21 billion, with Canada suffering the second highest debt load among the then G7 nations, after Italy. By the late 1980s this debt had reached \$30 billion; by 1994 it exceeded \$41 billion. In 1994, the combined federal and provincial debt totaled almost one hundred per cent of the country's gross domestic product. Rising debt load caused a major and deep economic recession in North America and most of the world, causing all levels of Canadian government – federal, provincial, and territorial – to alter their activities significantly, removing, restructuring, or decentralizing programmes and departments.<sup>81</sup>

The most dramatic evidence of this restructuring is the fact that all of Canada's national and provincial governments currently in power in 1999 have campaigned on (if not always followed) platforms of economic restraint and reduced government spending. This pattern includes both traditionally conservative political parties and, notably, a large number of liberal or social democratic parties, which have historically advocated higher, rather than lower, public spending. In electing these governments, the Canadian people have sent a strong signal that the public sector must exhibit some fiscal rectitude. As the federal finance minister, Paul Martin, said in 1993, "one of the most important things we can do is to re-establish the credibility of government and, to do that, we must restore control over the nation's finances."<sup>82</sup>

Canada is not the only country faced with the need to restructure government activities. Changing technologies and a call for less expansive, more efficient government are affecting all societies.<sup>83</sup> But the Canadian government has had particular difficulty adjusting to new economic realities, having had to rationalize its long history of significant public expenditure with the fact that many government programmes can no longer be sustained at the same levels. Government services have grown over the years to accommodate the Canadian philosophy that the public sector has a direct responsibility to provide services to all its citizens on an equal basis. These services have included publicly funded and universally available medical and health services, comprehensive old-age security pensions and family allowance payments, and a range of unemployment, welfare, and social assistance benefits. In the sphere of culture and communications, public funding has been used to support postal systems, railways, airports, a national highway, national radio and television networks, and literature, music, and the visual and fine arts.<sup>84</sup>

In the 1990s, archival repositories, along with other publicly funded institutions, have been forced to refocus their resource allocations in light of their governments' concern for fiscal responsibility, which has usually if not always led to budget cuts. At the very least archival institutions have had to re-examine or restructure existing programmes, particularly the widespread private records acquisitions programmes that developed when total archives was the vision of the day. This reduction and reorientation has been evident within the Canadian Council of Archives itself, which has experienced regular reductions



in its budget in recent years. Its 1994–1995 budget of nearly \$2.5 million was reduced by approximately \$250,000 in 1995–1996 and was reduced again in 1996–1997 and 1997–1998. (It was suggested in the 1997–1998 annual report that the losses to the archival community were being compensated for by new funds available through programmes such as Young Canada Works and SchoolNet.) As of 1995, the Canadian Council of Archives had also canceled its acquisition planning programme, although funding continues to be allocated to such projects as preservation management, archives advisor services, and training initiatives.<sup>85</sup> In an era of limited resources, the expansive nature of the total archives concept has been difficult to defend and promote in the public sector, and responsibility for the archival system has fallen more and more to the private sector or to temporary and grant-based funding rather than core funding.

#### *The Spectre of Automation*

Another significant factor affecting the archivist's traditional functions, including total archives and the acquisition of private records, has been the development of increasingly complex computer and telecommunications technologies. The computer has fundamentally changed the means and nature of communication and information in society, not just in Canada but throughout the developed world.<sup>86</sup> Information technologies are having as significant a cultural impact today as printing had centuries before. Electronic communications technologies are the new tools of democracy and liberation, and of the dissemination of information to the mass of society (at least to those individuals who have computers). As a result, it is more than obvious today that computers have led to an information revolution. Instant information, and often too much of it, is the order of the day.

The primary functions of automated information systems – of computers – are to create, manage, manipulate, and disseminate *information*. Archival repositories, traditionally responsible for the management of readable, visible, recorded information, are now faced with having to identify and preserve information that is not readable with the naked eye, has been recorded using non-traditional methods, and is highly technology dependent. The content, structure, and context of electronic records cannot be discerned without assistance. Unlike “human readable” records such as letters and photographs, electronic records cannot be accessed in any way without the use of electronic technologies. Further, electronic records are easily manipulated; they can be easily altered and their integrity and authenticity damaged with a few keystrokes. Electronic records, moreover, cannot be preserved in their original digitized state without technological intervention. The technology used to create and store electronic records is largely untested; the long-term stability of electronic records remains in question. In an age of rapid techno-

logical obsolescence, the protection of the record over time becomes increasingly difficult.

The emergence of electronic technologies has forced archives to distinguish clearly between information and records, a distinction they have not necessarily had to make in the past. In a paper-based system, copies of correspondence, reports, or other documents may be physically retained in their appropriate files with relative ease. They form distinctly identifiable units, and their physical and informational properties do not change once they have been created. But the existence of "records" within many information technology systems is much more fluid. Records are easily constituted and reconstituted with the addition or deletion of data. With electronic records, a physical document may not even exist. Often a "record" is nothing more than a temporary user view, a short-lived snapshot of certain data fields. What days before may have been a significant record may now have vanished or been replaced by a code imbedded in a database or other software system indicating that a certain action has occurred or information communicated. Although many systems structure records, other systems serve both as a source of records and source of raw data. Preserving the electronic archival record requires identifying which items of information are or are not the actual record.

It is also true that, if archivists accept that electronic records cannot be well managed except within an active records management programme, then the acquisition of electronic records from sources other than the sponsoring agency is not logical. It is more likely and appropriate that an agency interested in long-term preservation of its electronic records will establish its own records management programme, ideally within its own institutional archives. While in the past, public repositories might have been willing to bear the expense of acquiring and preserving paper-based records from the private sector, they are not likely prepared to pay to support the intensive records management necessary to acquire an acceptable electronic record from a source other than their own institution. It could be argued that the acquisition of electronic records created by agencies other than its sponsoring agency will increasingly fall outside an archives' sphere of responsibility.

Some archivists have argued that, for additional reasons, other developments in the use of information technology have also conspired against archival acquisition of electronic records, whether privately generated or created by the archives' own sponsoring agency. The American archival consultant David Bearman has argued that, if various departments and agencies of an organisation all create their own electronic records for their own use, it may be impractical, if not impossible, for a centralized archival repository to acquire these records physically and manage them centrally for either administrative or reference purposes. He has argued that electronic records are:

organizationally beyond the control of custodial archivists; they are professionally out-

side the experience of archivists; the economics of their custody undermines traditional repositories; and the culture of electronic records creation makes them more vulnerable to destruction by their creators and thus raises the importance of requiring creators to assume responsibility for their care.<sup>87</sup>

Bearman has suggested that archives must abandon their “custodial identity, assumptions, and methods of operation.” The managers of archives need to see themselves not as custodians but as policy makers or auditors, or else they risk being “politically irrelevant, professionally inadequate, economically unaffordable, and culturally ineffective.”<sup>88</sup>

In order to ensure the preservation of valuable electronic records, archival institutions have had to focus on the way the record is created, used, and maintained. Records management has become essential. Douglas Brymner and Arthur Doughty were able to find records hidden in attics and lost in basements, records preserved as a result of, not in spite of, government neglect. Archivists working at the end of the twentieth century cannot expect to find an electronic record, or to understand it, let alone “keep” it, without playing an active role in records management. The only way to protect electronic records is to ensure that critical information about their content, structure, and context is captured at their time of creation and that steps are taken when systems are being designed, developed, and implemented to prepare for the eventual disposition of those records. Involvement in systems design and deployment becomes an essential act, not simply an option. To preserve records of ongoing value in an electronic age, archival repositories must strive to establish records management systems to control both electronic and paper records, working as they are in an economic and political climate that emphasizes government accountability and efficiency. As a result, they find that, again, they must often give priority to records management over other activities, such as the acquisition of private sector records.

#### *The Age of Accountability*

A third impetus for change in archival orientation comes from the archival community's concern for its role in the provision of access to public records arising from the passage of access and privacy laws across the country. Access to information and protection of privacy legislation requires government repositories to ensure that public records are arranged, described, and available for public scrutiny, and that sensitive and personal records are protected from unauthorized use. In a time of limited resources, adherence to this statutory function has led archival institutions across the country to examine their responsibilities in a number of other areas, such as private records acquisition. Many governments have established separate programmes for the administra-

tion of access legislation or have provided additional funds to archives or records management branches specifically to address access requirements. Thus some may argue that the evolution of access legislation has not directly influenced other work within a public archival repository. However, the principle behind access legislation does make archivists much more concerned with the effective administration of public records in order to comply with the legislation; in many cases a lower priority is then placed on private records acquisition.<sup>89</sup>

Access legislation requires efficient management of an agency's information. And information means records. The federal statute provides "a right of access to information in *records* under the control of a government institution."<sup>90</sup> In British Columbia, for example, the purpose of the legislation is "to make public bodies more accountable to the public and to protect personal privacy"; this will be done by "giving the public a right of access to *records*."<sup>91</sup> In this new information regime, public archives – the institutions responsible for their governments' records – face a significant challenge in ensuring that the public records under their care or within their jurisdiction are identifiable and accessible. As they strive to fulfil these requirements in an economically restricted environment, they may choose to reduce or eliminate less urgent programmes, such as the private records component of a total archives programme. The key issue, again, is not only the increased interest in access and privacy legislation, but the growing concern for government accountability in an era of economic restraint.

The statutory requirements of access legislation are also leading governments and archives to reconsider the reasons for keeping records and the length of time they should be preserved. When determining which public records are retained, there is an increasing emphasis on the legal, financial, and administrative importance of records, perhaps to the detriment of an examination of their informational, intrinsic, or historical value. Records management programmes have always been designed to remove unneeded records as soon as possible after their administrative life has ended, to allow for better preservation of valuable information. But with the controls imposed by access legislation, many records, particularly those containing sensitive or personal information, may be destroyed sooner rather than later. (One example from British Columbia is known as the "Bella Beach Bonfire" incident. In anticipation of the forthcoming access to information legislation in British Columbia, the administrator of a regional hospital in the community of Bella Beach ordered a maintenance worker to take eight boxes of confidential hospital records to the beach and burn them. The worker doused the records with fuel, and set them on fire, only to have the local fire department arrive to extinguish the blaze, as fires were not allowed on public beaches. The records, left on the beach, were carried out to sea, washing onto shore along the coast. People salvaging the records found they contained medical histories, adoption infor-

mation, and other sensitive documentation.) As Alexander Wright of the provincial archives in British Columbia argued, “there is a greater liability, financial and otherwise, associated with retaining records after their primary values have expired.” He laments that today’s archivists “must pay for the records management sins of the past.”<sup>92</sup>

### *The Devolution of Identity*

In the midst of this confusion over responsibilities for records comes another important reality. Whether or not public archival repositories such as provincial or territorial archives wish to acquire records, the fact is that many people, communities, and groups do not want their records in the hands of a large, centralized government, perhaps transported to archival storage in cities well removed from their point of creation or use. Since the 1970s there has been a continued decentralization of functions from federal government to province, from province to region, from region to community. This decentralization has taken place not just within the archival sphere but also in such diverse areas as health care, environmental regulation, public transit, and social services.<sup>93</sup>

The management analyst Nancy Adler has noted that, as the boundaries of economics have become global, and the boundaries of government have remained national or provincial, the boundaries of cultural identity have been reduced down to the community level. Adler has argued that “whether they are Anglophone or francophone Canadians, Czechs or Slovaks, or Malays and Chinese, people increasingly answer the question ‘Who am I?’ at a level smaller than the nation-state (and often not coincident with any particular country’s national borders).”<sup>94</sup>

This increasingly narrow sense of identity, this growth of community feeling over national orientation, is a continuation of the sense of regionalism evident as early as a century ago and the ethnic and cultural diversity that emerged in the 1970s. By the 1980s and 1990s, the search for identity had led Canadian society, like other societies around the world, to break into various “communities,” based on such issues as geography, politics, religion, gender, ideology, and ethnicity. These communities wished to establish their own identities, often by creating interest groups or associations, museums, libraries, resource centers, and archives.

The archival consequence of this shift in identities has been the establishment of more and more local, community, or private archival institutions. Canada boasts not just a national, ten provincial, and two territorial archival institutions; it also claims archival repositories representing geographic communities from Nanaimo to St. John’s, religious groups of all kinds; businesses and corporations from banks to railway companies; professional and community associations from medical groups to the Girl Guides; and repositories for the archives of ethnic or minority groups, special interest groups, and First

Nations organizations. Gary Mitchell, of the British Columbia Archives, has claimed that community-based archives are “the new growth area within archives.”<sup>95</sup> Hugh Taylor has argued that “oral history, folklore and the archives of families, businesses and institutions will find a natural home in the Community Archives where all can feel and experience a dynamic heritage experience in which they can be personally involved and which will be passed down to their descendants.”<sup>96</sup>

Taylor sees family and local history as “a search for personal identity in an era of intensive and rapid change” and suggests that the community heritage movement will continue to expand as societies seek meaning in locally generated activities.<sup>97</sup> He has also urged archivists, and society, to look past political and geographic boundaries toward a sense of community based on bioregionalism, that is, on organic relationships based on regional, geographic, and interpersonal commonalities, not on political boundaries.<sup>98</sup>

Some archivists have expressed concern about the ongoing sustainability of those local repositories which have emerged as community identities decentralize. Jean Dryden, at the United Church Archives in Toronto, has argued that the proliferation of funding for community archives could perpetuate the survival of archives that do not otherwise have the economic resources to sustain themselves.<sup>99</sup> Marcel Caya, who teaches archival studies at the Université du Québec à Montréal, sees a need to limit community archival development, arguing that if local archives do not have the basic resources to sustain their operations, it may be necessary to stop supporting them. Caya has argued that the role of the archives is “memory management”; therefore, repositories require adequate core funding to do their job.<sup>100</sup> On the other hand, Bennett McCardle, formerly of the Archives of Ontario, has noted that of two hundred archival repositories in existence in Ontario in 1993, only two had ceased operations, and one of these had later resumed its activities.<sup>101</sup>

### *The Changing Orientation of the Archivist*

Electronic records, the concept of accountability expressed in access and privacy laws, the continued reality of economic restraint, and the ongoing decentralization of identity and responsibility – all these factors have combined to lead public repositories, particularly larger city, territorial, or provincial repositories, to reconsider their role in the acquisition of private records. The archival community has renewed discussion about its proper role and functions – about the relative merits of total archives or an archival system. In this third era of archival development, archivists are debating the very purpose of their work and the very nature of the materials they acquire and preserve.

The questions raised are in fact those that archivists have considered since the beginning of archival work in Canada. Is the archivist responsible for the

preservation of the records of his sponsoring agency? If so, he must ideally play a significant role in the creation, administration, and preservation of records throughout their life. Is the archivist also responsible for the acquisition and preservation of non-institutional records? If so, he must look beyond his institutional records and seek out records created outside of his sponsoring agency and related to it or to its particular social or geopolitical environment. The issue has prompted strong debate amongst practitioners and theoreticians.

According to Terry Eastwood of the University of British Columbia, archivists are “servants of evidence.”<sup>102</sup> They are compelled to preserve records for their evidential value, not for any informational or cultural qualities. The archivist has a duty to protect records from corruption, and so archival practices must “preserve impartiality.”<sup>103</sup> For records to be trustworthy, they must be managed right from their creation in such a way that their potential for accountability is protected.<sup>104</sup> “From the archivist’s perspective and need,” Eastwood has claimed, “archives are not historical source material.”<sup>105</sup>

Eastwood and his university colleague Luciana Duranti have promoted a definition of records that emphasizes this evidential value. They have defined records as “documents that are made or received by a physical or juridical person in the course of its practical activity.” (A juridical person, they explain, is a succession or collection of physical persons; a physical person is a human with the capacity to act legally.) They claim that records and archives are the same thing. The archival *fonds* is “the whole of the reliable, authentic, usable, comprehensive and compact records of one records creator.” “Non-records” consist of “any document that is not archival.”<sup>106</sup> Eastwood has identified five properties of records, each of which is essential to ensure their reliability as evidence: impartiality, authenticity, naturalness, interrelatedness, and uniqueness. According to Eastwood, recognition of these properties is essential to the preservation of a true record.

Given this orientation, one espoused by numerous other archivists, the archivist’s role is as a record-keeper. The focus of his responsibility is naturally the management of the records of his sponsoring agency. The acquisition of records from sources other than the sponsoring agency is not a valid archival action. The archival quality of a record – its value as evidence and its use for accountability – is directly linked to the management of the record throughout its life. If records must be impartial, then they cannot be acquired or managed by outside archival agencies that would impose value judgements distinct from the administrative requirements of record-keeping applied by the records originators. Otherwise the record will not be free from an external ideology. If records are to remain authentic, they must be in “continuous proceduralized custody.” The acquisition of records by other agencies risks breaking this continuous custody, damaging authenticity.<sup>107</sup> This perspective focuses attention on the bureaucratic record; there is little room in this sce-

nario for the acquisition and preservation of non-institutional records and particularly not for personal or private materials not created within an organized administrative structure.

Many Canadian archivists, however, do not accept the role of archivist solely as institutional record-keeper. They believe that records ought to be retained for more than their evidential value. Further, they are not confident that institutions will naturally and inevitably care for their records and make them available for public scrutiny. While the preservation of records for purposes of accountability is valid, these archivists argue that this criterion must be combined with a broader appraisal of records for their societal value. The archivist has a central role as the advocate of society's documentary heritage.<sup>108</sup>

Terry Cook, recently retired from the National Archives of Canada, has suggested that the redefinition of the archival profession toward information management is a threat to the independent role of the archivist as scholar of the historical record. He has agreed that "historian-archivists" ought not to deny the legitimate tools offered by professions such as records management or librarianship, nor should they ignore the impact of the information revolution on record-keeping. However, archivists must, he has argued, serve as historians of the record. They must move beyond information management to "search for, and lead others to seek, 'knowledge' and meaning among the records in their care."<sup>109</sup> He has claimed that "to deny or even to downplay the informational or secondary value of records simply reduces archives to registry offices and archivists to records managers."<sup>110</sup> To Cook, archivists are in the "understanding business" not the "information business." To serve society well they must turn "from being passive recipients of institutional records to becoming active documenters of the past."<sup>111</sup> While he agrees that with the advent of records management the archivist has a role as the agency's "chief information officer," he urges archivists not to confuse the archival and records management agendas.<sup>112</sup> They must not confuse "administrative means with cultural ends."<sup>113</sup>

At the University of Manitoba, Tom Nesmith has offered a holistic perspective on archival work. He has argued that, in order to handle the dramatic growth in documentation in recent times, archivists must understand the context of archival work, which requires an understanding not just of records but also of records creators and archival functions.<sup>114</sup> He has expressed concern that the "distinctive archival role" is being "overshadowed" by allied communications, technological, and information professions.<sup>115</sup> Nesmith has urged archivists to recognize and respect the intellectual aspects of their work, particularly in the areas of appraisal, description, and public relations. He has emphasized that

the study of archives is very much a study of human beings (including archivists) and why and how they act when recording, keeping records, and placing, using, and per-



ceiving them in archives. It is in large part the study of people and their institutions interacting with recorded memory.<sup>116</sup>

Hugh Taylor, long a prominent archival thinker in Canada, has consistently advocated a holistic approach to records care. He has acknowledged that North American archives experienced what he has called a “historical shunt” by not following the European tradition of a close connection with agencies of government and instead orienting themselves more toward information and research. He has suggested that, faced with new information technologies, archivists at the end of the twentieth century again have to reconsider their place in the records continuum.<sup>117</sup> Taylor saw the English archivist Hilary Jenkinson’s passive approach to appraisal and acquisition as the product of “the great era of industrial bureaucracy.” To Taylor, Jenkinson was just “a bureaucrat doing his bureaucratic thing.” Taylor has suggested that the time for a passive approach is long over. Today’s archivist must be an advocate and mediator: someone who will “be going out there and fighting for the preservation of records.”<sup>118</sup>

Those archivists who see their role as records advocate have argued that the preservation of a wide range of archival materials, both public and private, is necessary to ensure the preservation of a balanced documentary heritage. In order to document society’s memory, archival repositories have a responsibility not just for their own institutional record. The acquisition of records from other creators remains valid. Otherwise, society loses the well-rounded picture of its past afforded by a variety of different perspectives.<sup>119</sup>

In 1994, a lone historian entered the acquisition debate. Robert McDonald, of the University of British Columbia, wrote to the British Columbia archival association protesting the decline in private records acquisition by public repositories. McDonald expressed his concern for “the tide of diminishing commitment by ... publicly-funded institutions to collect private records.” He suggested that all those who believed in the importance of private records to society “must become more vocal.”<sup>120</sup> He lamented the turn away from a recognition of the wider societal value of archival records, criticizing archivists for “losing sight” of their cultural responsibilities.<sup>121</sup>

Thus, in this third era of archival development, many in the Canadian archival community are arguing that care of the institutional record is paramount and that a valid archival record will result only from strong and effective institutional records management. Others are clamouring for increased attention to the private record, arguing that private sector acquisitions are diminishing as institutional records work garners more and more public funding. Some claim the archival system is flourishing, evidenced by the distribution of CCA funds across the country. Others fear that the influx of grant funds is in fact masking a decline in public sector responsibility for Canada’s documentary heritage.

*An Archival System, or Every Man for Himself?*

Looking back from the late 1990s, we see an archival community moving from a centralized core of repositories, exercising expansive collections mandates, to a more decentralized group of institutions, each focusing more intently on the care of its own sponsoring institution's records. However, it is not economics alone, or accountability, the electronic record, decentralization, or changing identities that have led to these shifts in archival approach. It is the archivist's reaction to these social pressures that has affected how archival materials are identified and preserved. When, in the absence of documents, society wanted its history preserved, archivists responded by collecting and copying. When society sought an identity through public and private records care, archivists adopted a dual role. In the 1990s, government appears to be dictating the agenda, and it seems clear that governments today – which still pay the bills for most archives in Canada – are not listening to “cultural” arguments. They prefer instead to hear discussion of the administrative and legal value of protecting records. To sustain archival programmes, many archivists have focused on institutional records management as a top priority. The focus is often narrow, not even including the records of quasi-governmental agencies or government-funded offices, no matter what arguments might be offered for doing so.

This shift away from the acquisition and preservation of non-institutional records – the very core of the total archives philosophy – is evident not only in larger national, provincial, or territorial institutions but, increasingly, in city and municipal archives and university archives, which were seen only a few years ago as the new leaders in total archives management. It falls increasingly to the local historical society or museum archives to acquire and preserve the records of individuals, families, associations, or other groups within the community. These community institutions support themselves on public grants, and many can only guarantee their survival from year to year.

There is still a public declaration of support for total archives, for the preservation of a balanced documentary memory of Canadian society, public and private, urban and rural, corporate and personal. On the 7th and 8th of December 1995, the National, Provincial, and Territorial Archivists Conference met in Ottawa to consider “the plight of the private record.” In the National Archives of Canada's discussion paper circulated before the meeting, it was clear that the National Archives believed in the validity of preserving a wide range of public and private records, claiming that the two types of records were “complementary components of our archival heritage.”<sup>122</sup> The Archives acknowledged that the private record was threatened by new economic realities and the consequent re-examination of archival priorities. But it rejected a strict adherence to accountability and proclaimed its belief in the importance of preserving a wide range of records: “Society benefits from the preservation

of the most complete and comprehensive record of its history and future generations would be impoverished if the acquisition of private records were to be abandoned.”<sup>123</sup>

The question raised in the discussion paper was one of responsibility. The National Archives acknowledged that “from a legal perspective,” the national, provincial, and territorial archives hold a responsibility for private records. This was stated either explicitly or implicitly in their archival legislation. However, because acquisition was not limited to government agencies, a question of the balance between public and non-public responsibility within public institutions remained. The National Archives offered its opinion:

If archival records can be considered as part of the cultural assets of a particular region, then the government can be seen to have some responsibility for ensuring the preservation of private records for the public good ... The government therefore has a responsibility towards the archival records of all its constituents, especially those not in a position to maintain their own archives.<sup>124</sup>

The National, Provincial and Territorial Archives Conference drafted a resolution on private sector records, in which it affirmed its belief that “private records, in all media, are an essential part of our common heritage,” and that “the Canadian Archival System must provide for the safekeeping of private records of enduring value.” The conference members agreed that they had a responsibility to provide leadership and coordination within their own jurisdictions, “to ensure the preservation of a balanced record of our society for posterity.”<sup>125</sup> According to these statements, the total archives concept – at least that part of the total archives concept that states that the public sector has a responsibility for the preservation of the documentary heritage of Canadian society – is accepted, alive, and well.

Perhaps there is no problem. Perhaps total archives has evolved into an archival system, and all is well. But why is it that archivists seem to declaim their support for documentary heritage and yet spend their working days advocating the implementation of business processes and information management systems? Will more efficient office systems lead to a balanced documentary record, or will they simply ensure that the institutional record is well protected? Ironically, while archivists are advocating records management programmes, improved accountability measures, and effective electronic record-keeping, they are then heard decrying cuts to their budgets for archival conservation and storage, and for community outreach and exhibitions. Even those archivists who advocate a broad cultural responsibility for archives have argued that governments are not interested in discussions of culture or heritage.

Is it really the case that governments are not hearing the message that both publicly and privately generated archival materials have long-term value? Or

is it in fact that archivists are not spreading the word that there is more to record-keeping than accountability and efficiency, and that a balanced documentary heritage must come from both the public sector and the private sphere? Or, ultimately, is there simply no longer support for the very traditional, very Canadian belief that the public sector has a responsibility to support the preservation of a balanced documentary record from all parts of society?

### *Overcoming “Us” and “Them”*

Canadian society at the end of twentieth century is a society still struggling, openly and painfully, with its identity. The possibility that the province of Quebec may separate from the rest of Canada remains real. Native groups have sought redress for past injustices, claiming the loss of their property, and identity, at the hands of Europeans. The multicultural complexity of our country is increasing, with many ethnic groups identifying with their countries of origin – perhaps in a few cases even more than with our more indefinable Canadian society. Gender, class, sexual orientation, and even age are increasing the fragmentation of the country.

This fractured sense of identity is in part an outcome of this age of accountability. It is also part of the global nature of our world. Not only Canada but other ex-colonies such as the United States, Australia, and South Africa are finding that the complex interrelationships of Europeans, indigenous peoples, and new immigrants are leading to questions of national and individual identity. The fact is, when groups are more “homogeneous,” they have less occasion to question differences in custom, style, or culture. Canada has always struggled with a lack of homogeneity from the early days of French, English, and Native conflict. Today, Canada continues to devolve into pockets of “us” and pockets of “them.” In spite of the ongoing quest for a sense of Canadian identity, our sense of ourselves is, as Taylor has suggested, increasingly “bioregional” rather than “political.”<sup>126</sup>

As a result, each side of the “us” and “them” is asked to be accountable to the other. People do not trust their governments, and governments do not always demonstrate trustworthiness. Consider the destruction and falsification of records by public officials during the enquiry into the actions of Canadian forces personnel in Somalia. Consider the increasing publicity about “leaks” of government documents and mismanagement of public information. The rise of access to information legislation in Canada is not simply reflective of a desire for accountability or a means to manage the electronic environment but, more fundamentally, a sign of the collapse of trust in society. The devolution of responsibility from the public to private sectors is not just a factor of economics but a reality of fragmentation, of the continued growth of “us” versus “them.”

The archival community too seems to be fragmented. Its efforts to address

the diverse information needs of the third era of archival management have left archivists divided, worn out, dissatisfied, and lacking in trust. How can archivists, ultimately responsible for the protection of society's documentary memory, possibly ensure the protection of the record if they cannot manage every aspect of its life? How can they trust the records creator, records manager, records user, and so on to respect the record and ensure that it is preserved and protected with context and content intact? The answer has been that they cannot trust records managers or records creators, so they have to do the job themselves. They have had to become archivists, records managers, and, increasingly, systems analysts. The archival community has ended up with what seems to be a dualism in archival work – institutional versus cultural, public versus private – because they have tried to be responsible for all aspects of records care.

It is essential that the archival community move beyond an “institutional” versus “cultural” dualism. Archives are not just government or corporate records, nor are they just personal diaries or journals. Archivists are not theoreticians, to be educated in principles to the detriment of practical skills. Nor are they file clerks, who know *where* to put documents but perhaps don't know *why*. Archival management in Canada's twenty-first century needs to recognize the diversity within Canadian society and serve the many levels and types of archival enterprise. Perhaps the acceptance of this diversity will help archivists find commonalities of approach, and these commonalities may help them seek to develop a more unified archival profession and perhaps ultimately help create a more cohesive Canadian society.

The essence of total archives was that Canadian society took collective responsibility for the preservation of a documentary heritage. The core of the archival system was that this responsibility must be shared. At the end of the twentieth century, the archival system has devolved from that position of collective responsibility to what seems to have become a collection of distinct and separate agencies, each with its individual responsibilities, but perhaps not equipped to carry its weight of responsibility within the network. The concepts of life cycle, of continuum, of integrated records management are all worthwhile strategies for managing the record. And managing the record is critical to preserving that core worth keeping. However, strategies are not goals. The heart of total archives is that a good society remembers itself, honestly and with respect. The goal of archival management ought to be to preserve a balanced documentary memory of Canadian society – of all aspects of Canadian society – so that future generations have a complete memory. The goal is not the past, and the goal is not the present. The goal is the future. *How* we manage the record through its life ought to be of less concern than *why* we manage it. As archivists, we must strive to ensure that our primary motivation is preservation and access, in order to help society preserve that part of its memory found in its documentary heritage.

## Notes

- 1 A version of this paper was presented as “Whose Memory? In Whose Custody? Archival Management in the Twenty-First Century” at the Association of Canadian Archivists Conference, Ottawa, Ontario, 8 June 1997. Much of the historical information in this paper is based on the author’s doctoral dissertation, “The End of Total Archives: An Analysis Of Changing Acquisition Practices in Canadian Archival Repositories” (Ph.D. Dissertation, University College London, 1996). The reader is directed to that source for further details of discussions about the history of archival management in Canada. The author is grateful for the guidance and support of a number of colleagues, in particular D. Richard Valpy, who took the time to offer valuable comments on several drafts of this article, and Terry Cook, who has provided a detailed and insightful critique of this article and the thesis from which it is drawn.
- 2 In this paper, the term “public archives” is used in reference to repositories funded directly by national, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments; it is recognized that other institutions in Canada, such as community archives, receive public funds both directly and, more often, indirectly through government grants. The terms “private sector acquisition,” “non-institutional acquisition,” and “acquisition” are intended to refer to the identification and collection of records created by agencies other than the institution doing the collecting; the focus in this paper is largely on the acquisition by publicly funded repositories, such as national or provincial archives, of records from sources such as businesses, families, groups, and associations.
- 3 The masculine is used here in the generic sense to represent both male and female archivists, recognizing of course that the vast majority of archivists in earlier times were men.
- 4 Canada, Archives, *Report on Canadian Archives, 1889* (Ottawa, 1890), pp. x, xv.
- 5 For a discussion of the evolution of historical work in Canada, see C. Berger, *The Writing of Canadian History: Aspects of English-Canadian Historical Writing, 1900–1970* (Toronto, 1976). For the period in question see particularly pp. 6–9.
- 6 For more information on the work of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec, see Literary and Historical Society of Quebec, *The Centenary Volume of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec, 1824–1924* (Montreal, 1924).
- 7 J. Howe, quoted in J.C. Webster, “The Opening of the New Archives Building of Nova Scotia,” *Canadian Historical Review* 12, no. 1 (March 1931), pp. 44–45.
- 8 Nova Scotia, House of Assembly, *Journals* (30 April 1857), quoted in J.H. Archer, “A Study of Archival Institutions in Canada,” (Ph.D. Dissertation, Queen’s University, 1969), p. 48.
- 9 Akins was also commissioned as Provincial Librarian, “without pecuniary remuneration,” on the assumption that the two tasks, preservation of records and acquisition of books, could be done simultaneously. Public Archives of Nova Scotia, T.B. Akins Collection, MG 1, vol. 1504, no. 37, Akins to the Earl of Mulgrave, Lieutenant Governor and Commander in Chief of Nova Scotia, 23 March 1860.
- 10 H.H. Miles, “On Canadian Archives,” *Transactions of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec* (1870), pp. 63–64.
- 11 For more information on this period, see, for example, Jay Atherton, “The Origins of the Public Archives Records Centre, 1897–1956,” *Archivaria* 8 (Summer 1979), especially pp. 35–42.
- 12 National Archives of Canada, Records Management Branch registry file 5100–1, “Historical Matters – General,” Joseph Pope to R.W. Scott, 7 January 1897, pp. 5–6, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 39.
- 13 The Canadian Archives, *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Canada* (1907), pp. 47–48.
- 14 Donald Macleod addresses the care of the public record in Ontario in “Quaint Specimens of the Early Days’: Priorities in Collecting the Ontario Archival Record, 1872–1935,” *Archivaria* 22 (Summer 1986), pp. 12–39.
- 15 Canada, Archives, *Report on Canadian Archives 1899*, pp. x, xv.
- 16 National Archives of Canada (hereafter NA), National Archives of Canada Records, RG 37, vol. 104, D. Brymner, “Memorandum on Archives,” 11 December 1878.

- 17 Ibid.
- 18 Canada, Archives, *Report* (1905), p. ix.
- 19 D. Parker, in the introduction to his 1913 *Guide to the Materials for United States History in Canadian Archives*, commented on the evolution of the Canadian national archives, stating that “the Dominion Archivist [Brynmner] had no archives, in the strict sense of that term, to administer.” D. Parker, *Guide to the Materials for United States History in Canadian Archives* (Washington, DC, 1913), p. 3.
- 20 Canada, *An Act Respecting the Public Archives* (1912). Shortly after the passage of the *Act*, the Privy Council transferred responsibility for the archives and the commission from the Minister of Agriculture to the Department of Secretary of State. See NA, RG 37, vol. 303, File: Public Archives of Canada, PAC History, part 2, Canada, Privy Council, “Report of the Committee of the Privy Council,” 6 June 1912.
- 21 NA, MG 30, Kenney Papers, C176, vol. 7, File: 8/19, James Kenney, Speech, 1940.
- 22 Canada, *An Act Respecting the Public Archives*.
- 23 D. McArthur, “The Ontario Archives and the Historical Societies,” *Ontario Historical Society Papers and Records* 31 (1936), p. 5.
- 24 “Historical Records and the Canadian War Effort,” *Canadian Historical Review* 21, no. 2 (June 1940), pp. 239–40. See also “Canada,” *The American Archivist* 4, no. 1 (January 1941), pp. 70–71.
- 25 For more on the history of public sector responsibility for Canadian development, see such writings as P. Easingwood, K. Gross, and W. Kloos, eds., *Probing Canadian Culture* (Augsburg, 1991); A.F. Key, *Beyond Four Walls: The Origins and Development of Canadian Museums* (Toronto, 1973); C.F. Klinck, ed., *Literary History of Canada: Canadian Literature in English* (Toronto, 1976); Paul Litt, *The Muses, the Masses, and the Massey Commission* (Toronto, 1992); Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extension of Man* (London, 1994); Bernard Ostry, *The Cultural Connection: An Essay on Culture and Government Policy in Canada* (Toronto, 1978); Maria Tippett, *The Making of English-Canadian Culture, 1900–1939: The External Influences* (North York, 1988); Maria Tippett, *Making Culture: English-Canadian Institutions and the Arts Before the Massey Commission* (Toronto, 1990); George Woodcock, *The Monk and His Message: Understanding the Myth of History* (Vancouver, 1992). These are only a small sample of the extensive writings on the topic.
- 26 Saskatchewan Archives Board, Hilda Neatby Collection, A139, No. 129, Canadian Historical Association, “Brief Prepared by the Canadian Historical Association,” Appendix I, A. Maheux to Prime Minister W.L.M. King, 17 July 1948.
- 27 NA, RG 37, vol. 61, File: 65-5-10, vol. 1, J. Kenney, Acting Dominion Archivist, to W.K. Lamb, Provincial Archivist, British Columbia, 4 December 1936.
- 28 G.W. Brown, “Provincial Archives in Canada,” *Canadian Historical Review* 16, no. 1 (March 1935), p. 3.
- 29 Editorial, *Ibid.* 16, no. 2 (June 1935), pp. 218–19.
- 30 University of Saskatchewan Archives, Morton Papers, MG 2, I: Subject Files, 15: Provincial Archives, 1917–1944, Morton to Major Barnett, Department of Natural Resources, Regina, Saskatchewan, 8 January 1930.
- 31 Ernst Posner, quoted in K.L. Trever, “The Organization and Status of Archival Training in the United States,” *The American Archivist* 11, no. 2 (April 1948), p. 159.
- 32 W.N. Sage, “Where Stands Canadian History?” *Canadian Historical Association Report* (1945), p. 5.
- 33 Canada, Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences, *Report* (Ottawa, 1951), pp. xi, 15, 18.
- 34 *Ibid.*, pp. 111, 115–16.
- 35 *Ibid.*
- 36 “A ‘Practical Plea,’” *Canadian Historical Review* 15, no. 3 (September 1934), pp. 245–47.

- 37 G.W. Brown, "Provincial Archives in Canada," *Canadian Historical Review* 16, no. 1 (March 1935), p. 3.
- 38 University of Saskatchewan Archives, George Simpson Papers, MG 7, S 2, Series 5, Provincial Archives, L.H. Thomas, "Memorandum on the Promotion of the Study of Provincial and Community History in Saskatchewan," p. 15.
- 39 Canada, Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences, *Report*, pp. 118–22.
- 40 Two perspectives on provincial records management development are found in Barbara Craig, "Records Management and the Ontario Archives, 1950–1976," pp. 3–33, and Marion Beyea, "Records Management: The New Brunswick Case," pp. 61–77, both in *Archivaria* 8 (Summer 1979).
- 41 Canada, Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences, *Report*, esp. pp. 323–43.
- 42 Canada, Royal Commission on Government Organization, *Report*, Volume 1 (Ottawa, 1963), p. 574.
- 43 For more information on this period, see W.G. Ormsby, "The Public Archives of Canada, 1948–1968," *Archivaria* 15 (Winter 1982–83), pp. 36–46.
- 44 W.I. Smith, "Introduction," *Archives: Mirror of Canada Past* (Toronto, 1972), pp. 9–10.
- 45 W. Neutell, "National Ethnic Archives," *Canadian Library Journal* 33, no. 5 (October 1976), p. 436.
- 46 See the Public Archives of Canada, *Public Archives Report 1972–1973* (1974), esp. p. 15. See also M.D. Swift, "The Canadian Archival Scene in the 1970s: Current Developments and Trends," *Archivaria* 15 (Winter 1982–83), p. 49.
- 47 Public Archives of Canada, *Report 1972–1973* (1974), p. 13.
- 48 Terry Cook, "The Tyranny of the Medium: A Comment on 'Total Archives'," *Archivaria* 9 (Winter 1979–80), pp. 144–45.
- 49 A. Birrell, "The Tyranny of Tradition," *Archivaria* 10 (Spring 1980), p. 252.
- 50 E.J. Dick, J. Gagné, J. Langham, R. Lochead, and J. Moreau, "Total Archives Come Apart," *Archivaria* 11 (Winter 1980–81), p. 227.
- 51 A. Ridge, "Canada," *The American Archivist* 36, no. 4 (1973), pp. 584–86, and T.H.B. Symons, *To Know Ourselves: The Report of the Commission on Canadian Studies*, vol. 1 (Ottawa, 1975), pp. 2, 11–12, 20. Shirley Spragge had also discussed the role of the archivist in her article, "The Quest for Professional Status: Examples and Inferences," *The Canadian Archivist* 2, no. 5 (1974), pp. 29–40.
- 52 Symons, *To Know Ourselves*, vol. 2, pp. 69–74.
- 53 Marian Beyea, "Archives and Religious Records," *Archivaria* 4 (Summer 1977), p. 211.
- 54 R.S. James, "ACA Annual Meeting 1977: A Personal View," *Archivaria* 5 (Winter 1977–78), p. 189.
- 55 NA, ACA Records, MG 28, I 340, Laval University [Minutes], 2 June 1976, vol. 2, File: 2–13, Gordon Dodds, Presidential Address, Association of Canadian Archivists, First Annual General Meeting, 2 June 1976.
- 56 Beyea, "Archives and Religious Records," p. 211.
- 57 James, "ACA Annual Meeting 1977: A Personal View," p. 189.
- 58 T. Cook, "Clio: The Archivist's Muse?," *Archivaria* 5 (Winter 1977–78), p. 199.
- 59 T.D. Regehr, "Do We Need New and Improved Archivists?," *Archivaria* 3 (Winter 1976–77), p. 118.
- 60 Ian E. Wilson, "Canadian University Archives," *Archivaria* 3 (Winter 1976–77), p. 27; NA, MG 28, vol. 4, File: 4–32, R.S. Gordon to Jay Atherton, 24 July 1978.
- 61 W.I. Smith, "Archival Selection: A Canadian View," *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 3, no. 6 (October 1967), p. 276. Smith reiterated this view many times, including in his article on "The Public Archives of Canada," where he stated that "archives, unlike books, are not cre-



- ated to inform the public” and that “those who create records in the course of normal activities usually are not aware of the potential secondary interests and uses of the information they contain.” *ARMA Quarterly* 7, no. 1 (January 1973), p. 25.
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- 63 K.D. Jaffary, “The Role of the State in a Technological Society,” *Canadian Public Administration* 15, no. 3 (Fall 1972), p. 440.
- 64 Kent M. Haworth, “Local Archives: Responsibilities and Challenges for Archivists,” *Archivaria* 3 (Winter 1976–77), p. 31.
- 65 Michael Swift, “Chairman’s Message,” *The Canadian Archivist* 2, no. 5 (1974), p. 3.
- 66 See, for example, Haworth, “Local Archives.”
- 67 Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, Consultative Group on Canadian Archives, *Canadian Archives: Report to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada by the Consultative Group on Canadian Archives* (Ottawa, 1980), pp. 8–9.
- 68 *Ibid.*, p. 64.
- 69 *Ibid.*, p. 62.
- 70 *Ibid.*, pp. 64–65, 90–91.
- 71 *Ibid.*
- 72 *Ibid.*, pp. 63–75.
- 73 *Ibid.*, pp. 66–75, 109–11.
- 74 Canadian Council of Archives, CCA Budget, 1985–1995. Copy obtained privately.
- 75 Canadian Council of Archives, Report, Inaugural Meeting, enclosed in J.P. Wallot to M. Beyea, 27 November 1985. Copy obtained privately.
- 76 Canadian Council of Archives, *The Canadian Archival System: A Report on the National Needs and Priorities of Archives, Summary Report – August 1989* (Ottawa, 1989), p. 23. See also D.R. Valpy, “The Canadian Council of Archives and the National Acquisition Strategy: A Question of Accountability,” paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Association of Canadian Archivists, Regina, Saskatchewan, June 1995.
- 77 Canadian Council of Archives, CCA Budget, 1985–1995. Copy obtained privately. From 1985 to 1989 all CCA activities and programmes were administered and funded through the operations of the National Archives of Canada; in 1989 the CCA took responsibility for the financial management of its work.
- 78 One could question whether such backlog reduction funds helped develop a “system” or instead simply provided money to help institutions with their core responsibilities for arrangement and description. For more information on the acquisition programme of the CCA, see D.R. Valpy, “The Canadian Council of Archives and Archival Acquisition,” p. 10; and C. Hives, “The Evolution of the Canadian Council of Archives and the Question of ‘Accountability,’” *ACA Bulletin* 20, no. 1 (November 1995), p. 8.
- 79 Canadian Council of Archives, *The Canadian Archival System, Summary Report*, pp. 7–8.
- 80 G. Mitchell, “Private Acquisitions: Cut it Now or Cut it Later,” paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Association of Canadian Archivists, Regina, Saskatchewan, June 1995, pp. 3, 10.
- 81 See W.D. Coleman, “Macroeconomic Policy: Dwindling Options,” in M.M. Atkinson, ed., *Governing Canada: Institutions and Public Policy* (Toronto, 1993), p. 235. See also D. Dodge, “How Government Operates in an Environment of Fiscal Restraint,” in D. Dodge, ed., *Rethinking Government: The Dewar Series, Perspectives on Public Management* (Ottawa, 1994), esp. pp. 20–21, and W. Thorsell, “Canada Counts the Cost,” *The World in 1996* (London, 1995), p. 67.
- 82 Even the Parti Québécois, which advocates separation from Canada, has focused on fiscal

- restraint and streamlined government activities. Martin is quoted in J. Maxwell, "Rethinking Government," in Dodge, ed., *Rethinking Government*, p. 43.
- 83 The United States government was forced in November and December 1995 to close a range of federal operations temporarily, as the President and Congress debated the government's right to exceed budget allocations. In France, a series of public-sector strikes were held in November and December 1995 to protest government cuts to social service programmes, which the government claimed were essential to allow the country to gain the financial stability necessary to participate in the move toward a single European currency.
- 84 See J. Maxwell, "Rethinking Government," in Dodge, ed., *Rethinking Government*, esp. pp. 45–51. For a discussion of social policy in Canada, see C. Tuohy, "Social Policy: Two Worlds," in *Ibid.*, pp. 275–305.
- 85 See Canadian Council of Archives, *Annual Reports* for 1995–1996, 1996–1997, and 1997–1998 (Ottawa, 1996, 1997, 1998).
- 86 Three recent International Council on Archives publications on electronic records offer an overview of the challenges involved with their care. See the International Council on Archives, Committee on Electronic Records, *Guide for Managing Electronic Records from an Archival Perspective* (Paris, February 1997); Alf Erlandsson and the Committee on Electronic Records, *Electronic Records Management: A Literature Review* (Paris, April 1997), and International Council on Archives, Committee on Electronic Records, *Electronic Records Programs: Report on the 1994–95 Survey* (Paris, December 1996). See also David Bearman, *Electronic Evidence: Strategies for Managing Records in Contemporary Organizations* (Pittsburgh, 1994).
- 87 D. Bearman, "An Indefensible Bastion: Archives as a Repository in the Electronic Age," in D. Bearman, ed., *Archival Management of Electronic Records, Archives and Museum Informatics Technical Report No. 13* (1991), p. 23.
- 88 *Ibid.*, pp. 16, 22–23.
- 89 Of course, the issue of access to information was not uniquely Canadian. The 1970s saw the proliferation of privacy and information legislation throughout the western world, including Sweden, Norway, Germany, and Denmark. These legislative initiatives are described in J. Knoppers, "Freedom of Information and Privacy (Part I)," *ARMA Quarterly* 14, no. 4 (October 1980), pp. 28–35, 55–56, and (Part II), *ARMA Quarterly* 15, no. 2 (April 1981), pp. 18–32. For the purposes of this discussion, "access to information" shall be interpreted to mean both "access to information" and "protection of privacy," unless otherwise noted. It is also important to note that, in this discussion, the protection of personal information is distinguished from other privacy issues, such as protection against media intrusion, physical searches, and so on. For example, British Columbia established a privacy act in 1968 and Manitoba one in 1970, but these acts referred not to information privacy but to other aspects of personal privacy. For a contemporary perspective, see J.M. Sharp, "The Public Servant and the Right to Privacy," *Canadian Public Administration* 14, no. 1 (Spring 1971), p. 59.
- 90 Canada, *Access to Information Act*, Section 2(1). Emphasis added.
- 91 British Columbia, *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act Pt. 1, Section 2(1)(a)*. Emphasis added.
- 92 A. Wright, "British Columbia's *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and Archival Acquisition at the BC Archives and Records Service," paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Association of Canadian Archivists, Regina, Saskatchewan, June 1995, pp. 2–3. "Bungled Bonfire of Medical Records Call for Records Protection Law," *FIPA Bulletin* (Fall 1994), p. 3.
- 93 These activities are discussed in more detail in E.A. Lindquist and K.B. Murray, "Appendix: A Reconnaissance of Canadian Administrative Reform during the Early 1990s," *Canadian Public Administration* 37, no. 3 (Fall 1994), pp. 468–89. Decentralization and regionalization has been a constant issue in Canadian politics since Confederation in 1867. Some relevant articles

- on the topic include H.R. Baker, "The Impact of Central Government Services on the Small Community," *Canadian Public Administration* 3, no. 2 (June 1960), pp. 97–106; T.J. Plunkett and K.A. Graham, "Whither Municipal Government?" *Canadian Public Administration* 25, no. 4 (Winter 1982), pp. 602–18; G.R. Weller, "Local Government in the Canadian Provincial North," *Canadian Public Administration* 24, no. 1 (Spring 1981), pp. 44–72; N.B. Ridler, "Fiscal Constraints and the Growth of User Fees among Canadian Municipalities," *Canadian Public Administration* 27, no. 3 (Fall 1984), pp. 429–36; and R. Simeon, "Considerations on Centralization and Decentralization," *Canadian Public Administration* 29 (Fall 1986), pp. 445–61. One article advocating local government responsibility is A. O'Brien, "Local Government Priorities for the Eighties," *Canadian Public Administration* 19, no. 1 (Spring 1976), pp. 102–11.
- 94 N.J. Adler, *Globalization, Government and Competitiveness*, The John L. Manion Lecture, Canadian Centre for Management Development (Ottawa, 1994), p. 6.
- 95 Mitchell, "Private Acquisitions," p. 3.
- 96 H.A. Taylor, "Reconsidering Acquisition," paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Association of Canadian Archivists, Ottawa, June 1994, pp. 7–8.
- 97 H.A. Taylor, "The Collective Memory: Archives and Libraries as Heritage," *Archivaria* 15 (Winter 1982–83), p. 123.
- 98 For more on this argument, see Hugh Taylor, "The Archivist, the Letter, and the Spirit," *Archivaria* 43 (Spring 1997), pp. 1–16.
- 99 Interview with Jean Dryden, 2 November 1993.
- 100 Interview with Marcel Caya, 29 October 1993, transcript p. 9.
- 101 Interview with Bennett McCardle, 4 November 1993.
- 102 Terry Eastwood, "Towards a Social Theory of Appraisal," in Barbara L. Craig, ed., *The Archival Imagination: Essays in Honour of Hugh A. Taylor* (Ottawa, 1992), p. 74.
- 103 Ibid.
- 104 Ibid. Also emphasized in the interview with Terry Eastwood, 14 December 1993. For a discussion of the issue of accountability, see J. Parkinson, "Accountability in Archival Science," (M.A.S. Thesis, University of British Columbia, 1993).
- 105 Terry Eastwood, "What is Archival Theory and Why is it Important?," paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Association of Canadian Archivists, St. John's, Newfoundland, July 1993, pp. 9–10.
- 106 Luciana Duranti and Terry Eastwood, "Protecting Electronic Evidence: A Progress Report on the Research Study and its Methodology," *Archivi & Computer* 3 (1995), pp. 213–50. See especially Appendix D. See also T. Livelton, "Public Records: A Study in Archival Theory," (M.A.S. Thesis, University of British Columbia, 1991).
- 107 For detailed discussion of other adherents to this perspective, see the author's thesis, especially Chapter 8.
- 108 The argument is not found just in Canada. An American archivist, John Roberts, in his rebuttal of Eastwood's ACA paper presenting a definition of records, has offered a forthright criticism of Eastwood's theoretical vision. He has claimed that Eastwood's five properties of archives are simply "an elaborate restatement of a single concept: provenance." Roberts has suggested that "archival theory – when it goes beyond a point of diminishing returns – is inflated, pretentious, and virtually useless." He has claimed that the urge for a theory came directly out of the profession's need for "standards and recognition" and its effort "to establish independence and status for the archival profession and a struggle to determine what groups will dominate the profession." "Theory," he has noted, "as a tool to achieve professional status, can be tied to very self-interested goals." J.W. Roberts, "Practice Makes Perfect, Theory Makes Theorists," paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Association of Canadian Archivists, St. John's, Newfoundland, July 1993, pp. 1, 3, 14–15.

- 109 Terry Cook, "From Information to Knowledge: An Intellectual Paradigm for Archives," *Archivaria* 19 (Winter 1984–85), esp. p. 49.
- 110 Ibid., pp. 30, 33.
- 111 Terry Cook, "Rites of Passage: The Archivist in the Information Age," *Archivaria* 31 (Winter 1990–91), p. 176.
- 112 Interview with Terry Cook, 12 October 1993, esp. transcript pp. 2–3, 9, 16.
- 113 Cook, "From Information to Knowledge," p. 29. Terry Cook has also offered valuable insights on this topic in his consideration of this article in correspondence with the author on 29 September 1998 and 27 January 1999.
- 114 Tom Nesmith, "Hugh Taylor's Contextual Idea for Archives and the Foundation of Graduate Education in Archival Studies," in Barbara L. Craig, ed., *The Archival Imagination: Essays in Honour of Hugh A. Taylor* (Ottawa, 1992), pp. 13–37.
- 115 Tom Nesmith, "'Professional Education in the Most Expansive Sense': What Will the Archivist Need to Know in the 21st Century?" paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Association of Canadian Archivists, Regina, Saskatchewan, June 1995, p. 2.
- 116 Ibid., p. 5.
- 117 Hugh A. Taylor, "Information Ecology and the Archives of the 1980s," *Archivaria* 18 (Summer 1984), pp. 25–37.
- 118 Interview with Hugh Taylor, 24 September 1993, esp. transcript pp. 9–10.
- 119 For a valuable discussion of this issue, see Shirley Spragge, "The Abdication Crisis: Are Archivists Giving Up Their Cultural Responsibility?" *Archivaria* 40 (Fall 1995), pp. 173–81. For detailed discussion of other adherents to this perspective, see the author's thesis, especially Chapter 8.
- 120 R.A.J. McDonald, "Who Is Preserving Private Records?," *Archivaria* 38 (Fall 1994), pp. 155–57.
- 121 R.A.J. McDonald, "Acquiring and Preserving Private Records: Cultural Versus Administrative Perspectives," *Archivaria* 38 (Fall 1994), pp. 162–63. McDonald's letter prompted a debate about the role of acquisition in archives, in part leading to the formation of a grass-roots organization in British Columbia known as the British Columbia Archives Action Group, dedicated to seeking improved care of the private record.
- 122 Canada, National Archives of Canada, "The Future of Private Records Acquisition," Policy Branch, *NPT Discussion Paper: The Future of Private Records Acquisition in Canada* (November 1995), p. 1. The National, Provincial, and Territorial Archivists Conference changed its name from the Dominion, Provincial, and Territorial Archivists Committee with the renaming of the National Archives in 1987.
- 123 Ibid.
- 124 Ibid., p. 4.
- 125 National, Provincial, and Territorial Archives Conference, "NPT Draft Resolution on Private Sector Records," unpublished draft, 8 December 1995. Copy obtained privately.
- 126 Taylor, "The Archivist, the Letter, and the Spirit," particularly pp. 13–14.