

facilities is found in Vladimir A. Manykin's "Moscow: The Metropolitan Archive and Political Change." Noting the increase in resources received by the Moscow Archives during the recent period of drastic political and economic change, Manykin, concludes his paper by observing that "during social collapse archives come out of the wings of social life" (p. 204). However, the experience of Budapest, outlined in András J. Horváth's "Planning a New Home for the Budapest City Archives" is not yet as positive as Moscow's as outlined by Manykin.

The papers reflect what must have been a highly successful conference, one which analyzed the archival endeavour in a variety of different settings and under a varying illumination, allowing one to consider old problems in new ways. For example, Clifton Hood's paper, "The Fragmented Past: Archives in New York City, 1804–1996," argues that because archives which emerged a century or more ago were sponsored by private resources which are now in decline, they may now require a transition to public funding for their survival.

Conspicuous by its absence is the issue of electronic records. The challenges they pose were noted in one or two of the papers, but not addressed more fully in any of them. It may be that one or more presentations were made on this issue, but no papers were available for publication. Regrettably, the book does not contain texts of all presentations made at the conference, only those available at the publication deadline a year later. Most contributors added footnotes to their presentations, but other than that, the papers do not appear to have been significantly modified for publication. Many issues that emerge from these papers are relevant to jurisdictions other than the metropolis. For this reason, perhaps the greatest strength of the book is its breadth of scope, one of whose implications is to suggest that it may not only be possible, but useful to develop some sort of social theory of archives – one based on generally accepted principles of social relevance and administrative accountability.

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Research and the Manuscript Tradition. FRANK G. BURKE. Chicago: The Scarecrow Press Inc., 1997. x, 310 p. ISBN 0-8108-3348-4.

Private personal papers or corporate, including company, government, or other organizational records: what's the difference? They are all archives and they are all acquired by major Canadian archival institutions. Over the past forty years, the prevalence of the "total archives" concept in Canada has tended to minimize any differences which archivists might experience in the acquisition and control of private papers and corporate records. At the National Archives

of Canada there has been no systematic examination (aside from analysis of the fundamental legal issues affecting acquisition and access) of the peculiarities of private papers and the archival treatment that they should therefore appropriately be given.

Frank Burke's new book, *Research and the Manuscript Tradition*, was written for users of archives, and focuses on the private paper and manuscript component of the information world. Users generally begin their work with a knowledge of libraries, but with little understanding of the world of archives or manuscripts. Burke has brought the world of private papers to life, delineating their value to research, the manner in which institutions build their collections and acquire private records, the way in which such records are arranged, described, and preserved, and the constraints which the private origins of manuscripts place on their use. The book provides an in-depth analysis of these issues, which will be most accessible to and prized by university and professional researchers.

But the detailed, at times critical, analysis of curatorial practices for manuscripts which Burke provides in his work will also furnish ammunition for debate within manuscript repositories, and as well, between archivists responsible for private papers and archivists responsible for corporate records. Burke argues that fundamental differences mark these two types of documentation. The distinction that Burke draws between corporate and private archives is one which archivists take for granted. Corporate archives are those materials which have long-term value to the *corporation*, produced or received by corporate bodies in pursuit of their aims. Personal papers are created and accumulated by individuals for their significance to *individual persons*; they provide a view of society from the perspective of the individual. Both types of archives may contain the same media; where they differ is in the reason for their creation and in the rationale for keeping them. Burke contends that "differences between the two genres have been obscured in much of the archival literature," and that complications and confusion have thus arisen as archivists have "attempted to merge the two forms into single systems of arrangement, description, application of standards, and automated systems" (pp. 3, 9–13).

Corporate and private archives are born of two separate creative processes, with structural differences resulting within the records originating from the two types of creators. Corporate records are the creation of hierarchical organizations, while personal papers are the creation of individuals. Corporate records represent organizational functions and are often mandated by statute, regulation, or organizational procedures and manuals. Private records consist of "idiosyncratic materials representing [the] life experiences or creative outpourings" of individuals. Burke accepts that the archival principle of *respect des fonds* can be applied to both types of archives, but contends that "original order goes out the window" when dealing with private papers. A lack of original order can be seen at two levels. On the file level, those individuals who use

file folders for their papers frequently leave the folders unidentified or incorrectly labelled. On the series level, the archivist often finds that any order is circumstantial and reflects the space or furniture available to the creator, the configuration of their work area, and/or the number of moves made during their lifetime (pp. 144–45, 98, 157).

Burke therefore considers that the organization of personal papers is the responsibility of the archivist, who must make sense out of the bodies of records and structure them accordingly. Burke criticizes the too frequent use of a chronological organization for personal papers and raises concerns about the manufacturing of series by artificially bringing material together on the basis of form. He makes no rigid recommendations as to organizing techniques but draws on his experience to discuss such issues as the handling of correspondence and subject files. He points out that series exist in various sizes, but seems to believe that they can consist only of one media (pp. 99, 159, 160–61). In the end, Burke sees a knowledge of the people and issues documented in personal papers as providing the proper basis of their organization, an order which researchers should find natural and simple.

The arguments made in *Research and the Manuscript Tradition* will provoke considerable discussion within the Canadian archival community. Any archivist who has worked in a Canadian manuscript repository will recognize significant aspects of his or her experience and practice within this volume. Like many others, I have been faced not merely with badly labelled records, but also with stacks or piles of paper on desks, shelves, and floors. Nonetheless, Burke's comments on the organization of personal papers cannot be fully endorsed. Clearly he downplays the amount of organization which can be found in varying degrees across private fonds, and he shows little appreciation for the creation of series based on the activities of the individual. In addition, the appropriateness as well as utility of series which include more than one media can be seen in archival descriptions across Canada.

Nevertheless, Burke's book, the culmination of thirty-five years in the archival profession spent mostly working with private papers, reminds us that personal papers are a superb asset for research and for preserving knowledge of the past. *Research and the Manuscript Tradition* should also prompt a review of our arrangement and descriptive practices so as to ensure that these often chaotic records are arranged and described for researchers in a manner sympathetic to their original creation and use.

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