

been beneficial, as both brands of elitism hinder our ability to protect and preserve electronic records as evidence. Speaking of different approaches, I might add that I was disappointed that Cox did not mention the different philosophical approaches taken by the various MAS programmes.

Whether or not twenty-first-century archivists and records managers will save civilization is a debatable topic and not for resolution here. Richard Cox's *Closing an Era* makes the case that archivists and records managers must be more aware of their surroundings and society, more strident in their belief in themselves, and more flexible and adaptable in this e-world. Will his viewpoints prove correct? Perhaps. Is this the definitive work on twentieth-century archives? Absolutely not.

Closing an Era is important as it presents the views, opinions, and insights of an archival educator on a broad range of topics. He practices what he preaches. He has taken a look inside the records-based professions and gives us, as active participants, cause for thought and time to be reflective. To anchorites, that is, people who have withdrawn from society to work in archives, this book is definitely not to your liking.

I look forward to Cox's second book, which will address the issues facing us in this millennium. Until then, I say, without reservation, that Cox's book should be required reading in our academic programmes, so that the debate which he so dearly urges us to have can continue (or perhaps begin).

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Managing Government Records and Information. BRUCE W. DEAR-STYNE. Prairie Village, Kansas: ARMA International, 1999. 250 p. ISBN 0-933887-83-3.

Government records management professionals continue to be challenged by the accelerated pace of change and emerging technologies. The advent of digital technologies, "e-government," "reinventing government," "open government," information policies and public access issues, just to name a few, have had a dramatic impact on the required strategies and expertise that the records manager must employ to deliver a level of service that is relevant to the current corporate environment. While most records management professionals have accepted that change is occurring, many are still grappling with the logistics of operating programmes within this landscape. Change is a central theme throughout *Managing Government Records and Information*, and readers are reminded that being flexible, dynamic, and responsive to changing needs is paramount to the success of a programme. The book's main purpose is to deliver strategies and principles which can be utilized to develop and sustain

records management programmes within environments of constant change. Emphasis is not placed on providing detailed technical solutions to the new issues, but rather on presenting a framework for the development of strategies to manage solutions. This publication is refreshing, comprehensive, and a must-have for professionals working in the field.

Bruce Dearstyne promotes the application of systematic management concepts, such as customer focus, strategic planning, and the integration of digital technologies to records management programmes. The nine chapters provide thumbnail sketches of current issues having an impact on records management, including a quick overview of the challenges that the issue (such as e-mail or electronic records) brings to records management. In each case, the author suggests approaches and points to consider in order to manage the issue properly, the strategies presented being sufficiently broad for application in any government jurisdiction. In this respect, the publication is a “hands on” practical guide for records managers. Each chapter concludes with a management checklist providing an overview of key points conveyed in the chapter, as well as footnotes. From a reader’s perspective, this reference to sources is very convenient. The sources cited are current, relevant, and drawn from all disciplines of the information management spectrum including records management, information management, archives, information policy, and information technology. Anyone wishing to delve further into any of the issues discussed in the book will benefit from further research into the sources cited.

Although the second chapter of this book provides some introductory records management concepts such as the definition of a record, the life cycle concept, and record-keeping systems, the intention is not to replace standard “introduction to records management” texts. However, I would argue that individuals being introduced to records management should refer to this work because the concepts presented add a third dimension to managing records, which is often missing from the standard works. Dearstyne breathes life into some of the more traditional approaches with concepts such as the positioning of government records management programmes within the broader framework of government operations.

The role of the records manager is becoming more complex and the traditional skill set must be enhanced and complemented with management, leadership, and marketing skills. These new skills are required to sell the programme, make it relevant, and position it in a strategic location within the organization. Although information continues to receive a high profile based on the technology employed to create, access, and share it, the necessary link between the existence of this information and the requirement and resources to manage it is emerging as the critical role of records managers. Expanding the professional’s expertise or knowledge beyond traditional expectations is necessary to take this leap. For those individuals hoping to stay hidden in a room of files somewhere down the hall, forget it! And for those organizations

and government departments that hope to relegate the management of their information to a storage facility concept “when they’re finished with it,” forget that notion, too. Open government, public access, and legislative requirements are demanding that government be able to access and provide evidence of all transactions quickly. Developing a service to facilitate meeting these requirements is the job of the records manager. Elevating the perception of records management so that it can be linked to the delivery of business operations and programmes is challenging, but imperative. Unless the value of the records manager’s service is recognized, the ability to obtain resources and develop the programme will be limited.

Enhanced abilities to network with staff from other professional jurisdictions have become critical to employing the new strategies and approaches. The advent of technology and the electronic delivery of service means that records management and information technology professionals must create and foster new relationships for conducting their business. Records managers must understand which business processes are being delivered electronically, with whom, when, and how to help determine where records are being created and captured. The records manager needs to play a greater role in this process to be able to provide advice to meet legal, regulatory, and operational requirements. The ability to deliver a service in this capacity is limited without knowledge of the organization’s electronic systems and records. Information policy analysts, access to information/privacy professionals, and key operational staff and management – in addition to information technology staff – become partners and closer colleagues in the joint effort to meet information requirements effectively. Records managers are evolving as lobbyists and advocates for breaking down traditional barriers between sectors of the information management world. A more comprehensive approach which includes bringing the expertise from all members of the information management professional family to the same table is critical to the effective management of government records and information.

Programmes, concepts, strategies, and approaches must be continually revitalized if records management programmes hope to meet the expectations of their clients. The message to manage information issues strategically is consistently delivered in each chapter of this book. Its strength lies in the presentation and application of these principles to all issues that have an impact on the management of records, such as records management software, electronic document imaging technology, the management of inactive records and metadata, to name just a few. The ability to apply the principles successfully is increased, Dearstyne argues, if the records management programme is tied to the business of government. For those of us working in the field, this issue is critical to our survival and success. Unless the management of information is married to the successful delivery of programmes and services, the programme will fail. The book conveys a sense of urgency which encourages

records managers to develop strategies now, rather than waiting for the issues to be “solved.” Given the constant changes that we are experiencing, the “waiting for the dust to settle” approach is not a strategy that will garner results or confidence.

The author devotes one chapter of this book to the subject of government archival records. While the introduction to the concepts is a sweeping one, it will introduce records managers with little or no background in archives to the concepts which connect these two disciplines. The author refers to records managers and archivists as “professional cousins” in the information resource management family. An understanding of each other’s role in the arena of managing government information is essential, and programmes need to be developed with mechanisms for cooperation. While the author makes some references to archival operations being linked to the continued operation of government, I felt that he missed giving the message that government archival programmes do not support the continuing operations of a government department. In some jurisdictions, such support may exist; however, for many of us in Canada developing records management programmes, the operational record is the responsibility of the government department, and reliance should not be placed on a government archives programme to maintain or retain such operational records. The mandate of the archival institution is very different from the government department, and appraisal criteria are not developed to serve the ongoing requirements of government departments. This confusion over the term “archival” is a common one within government institutions and the records management community. I often hear government staff referring to records as “archival,” when, in fact, the records simply have lengthy retention periods based on long-term operational requirements. Dearstyne argues for cooperation and mutual support between the two disciplines; if related mechanisms are in place, they will facilitate a forum for dialogue resulting in clearer expectations and understandings of the roles performed by each discipline.

This book also includes nine appendices, a glossary, a list of suggested readings, and an index. The appendices, in particular, are interesting and practical; they are selected pages from models, standards, or guidelines from different jurisdictions relating to the management of information. Examples of these appendices include: the New York State Governor’s Task Force on Information Resource Management, *Legal Acceptance of Electronically Stored Documents Policy*; the National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators’ (NAGARA) *Statement of Preferred Qualifications for Directors of Large-Scale Government Records and Archival Programs*; Delaware Public Archives’s *Model Guidelines for Electronic Records*; and the New York State Archives and Records Administration’s *System Recordkeeping Evaluation Worksheet*. The National Archives of Canada and Treasury Board of Canada’s *Guide to the Review of the Management of Government*

Information Holdings is the first appendix. The author refers to this example as a comprehensive statement covering the principles of information and records management. The appendixes are “live” examples which may provide readers with inspiration and food for thought for developing similar standards for their own jurisdictions. Once again, the practicality of this work is evident through the appendixes.

In conclusion, Dearstyne’s book is recommended reading for records managers and others in the information management field. The strategies employed to manage government records and information have to be relevant and integrated with the business of government if the needs of the client are to be met. Records management professionals today must step up to the plate and take a swing at this newer and faster pitch if they hope to remain part of the team. This book provides strategies and methodologies which will definitely assist you in getting up to the plate!

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Here be Dragons! Navigating the Hazards Found in Canadian Family Research. ALTHEA DOUGLAS. Toronto: The Ontario Genealogical Society, 1996. 74 p. ISBN 0-7779-0196-X.

Here be Dragons, Too! More Navigational Hazards for the Canadian Family Researcher. ALTHEA DOUGLAS. Toronto: The Ontario Genealogical Society, 2000. 88 p. ISBN 0-7779-0224-9.

Guide to Family History Research in the Archival Repositories of The United Church of Canada. COMMITTEE ON ARCHIVES AND HISTORY, THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA. Toronto: The Ontario Genealogical Society, 1996. 84 p. ISBN 0-7779-0200-1.

Genealogy in Ontario: Searching the Records, 3d ed. BRENDA DOUGALL MERRIMAN. Toronto: The Ontario Genealogical Society, 1996. 278 p. ISBN 0-7779-0197-8.

Genealogical and family history research is one of the most popular pastimes in North America, if not in the entire English-speaking world, and no one is more aware of this phenomenon than archivists and librarians. As more and more people embrace their past and search for some personal connection to those who preceded them, the impact on archives and archivists is very real – increased use of facilities and collections, demands for easier access to information, and calls for more technology and on-line services. Research interests are changing, too. In the past ten to fifteen years, there has been a decided shift from genealogy “pure and simple” to a much broader, fully documented family history. Not many years ago, a researcher was happy to confirm that Uncle