

“National Significance”: The Evolution and Development of Acquisition Strategies in the Manuscript Division, National Archives of Canada

MYRON MOMRYK

RÉSUMÉ Les questions reliées à l’acquisition de documents privés ainsi qu’à leur « importance nationale » furent une préoccupation constante dans le secteur des archives multiculturelles et, plus généralement, dans le domaine des archives sociales et culturelles. Cet article décrit l’évolution des diverses tentatives de la Division des manuscrits des Archives nationales du Canada pour trouver des réponses à ces questions. Il examine aussi quelques-unes des pressions, venues tant que l’intérieur que de l’extérieur des Archives nationales, pour produire des solutions acceptables. En l’absence de solutions appropriées, l’accent peut quelquefois être mis sur le processus et les procédures. L’auteur de cet article a participé à ces efforts mais en fut également un observateur attentif et intéressé.

ABSTRACT Questions relating to acquisition of private records and “national significance” have been a constant preoccupation in the area of multicultural archives and, more generally, in the area of social and cultural archives. This article describes the evolution of the various attempts to provide answers to these questions in the Manuscript Division of the National Archives of Canada. It looks at some of the pressures to produce generally acceptable solutions from both within and outside the National Archives. In the absence of appropriate solutions, emphasis may shift to process and procedures. The author wrote this article as a participant in these efforts and, also, as an interested observer.

One of the main areas for the development of acquisition policies and procedures in private sector archives at the National Archives of Canada has been the Manuscript Division.¹ The development of acquisition policies and activities was closely interrelated with attempts to formulate the concept of “national significance.” The need to develop acquisition strategies and define the concept of national significance has been emphasized in almost all recent reports and studies at the National Archives. This paper will focus on the

¹ For an earlier discussion of the acquisition function within the Manuscript Division, see Judi Cumming, “Beyond Intrinsic Value Towards the Development of Acquisition Strategies in the Private Sector: The Experience of the Manuscript Division, National Archives of Canada,” *Archivaria* 38 (Fall, 1994), pp. 232–39.

attempts to develop the concept of national significance in relation to the acquisition of textual archival material in the former Manuscript Division, more particularly, the acquisition of archival material in the social and cultural area.

The 1960s are generally accepted as the years that saw the flowering of various concepts of Canadian identity. The work of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, the national celebrations surrounding the Canadian Centennial in 1967, and the establishment of new universities and new history departments were some of the events which encouraged a greater interest in Canadian history and culture. The growth of nationalist sentiment, federal government support for cultural projects, and the general feeling that Canada was no longer a "colony" fostered this sense of Canadian identity. The 1960s were the years of nationalist politics and the rise of social and political movements: feminism, multiculturalism, Aboriginal rights, Black Power, and others. These were also years of general challenges to authority. Regionalism was recognized as one of the significant building blocks of Canadian identity and Canadians tended to define themselves against "centres."

The 1960s were also a period of major transition for the National Archives of Canada. The growth of provincial archives and the increasing number of local and university archival institutions also obliged the Manuscript Division to review its relationship to local and regional records. It was at this time that the concept of national significance emerged to help distinguish the appropriate roles for national, provincial, and local archival institutions.

After years of generally passive acquisition, the Manuscript Division began an active programme to acquire archival records reflecting aspects of scientific, economic, cultural, and social life in Canada to document the major changes in Canadian society outside of politics. In the mid-1960s, the Manuscript Division undertook a survey of prominent individuals, families, and corporate entities as a basic step in developing a systematic programme for the acquisition of private papers.² This programme had other national goals. As Michael Swift wrote, "...The programme would force other archives in the country to examine their own programmes, to question the effectiveness of what they were doing and to begin thinking about and discussing proposals for the development of national programmes on a co-operative basis."³

The concept of total archives became a popular subject of discussion among archivists in Canada. This concept advocated the broadest possible preservation of all types of archival records from both private and public sources to

2 This was known as SNAP, Systematic National Acquisition Programme.

3 Michael D. Swift, "The Canadian Archival Scene in the 1970s: Current Developments and Trends," *Archivaria* 15 (Winter, 1982-83), p. 48.

document all aspects of Canadian history.⁴ The National Archives had acquired the records of the various federal government departments which presented an official perspective on Canadian government operations and activities and on Canadian history generally. On the other hand, the acquisition of records from private individuals and organizations provided a different historical perspective on the development of Canada, often in strong contrast to the federal government perspective and interpretation. This approach to develop a “balanced record” was the core of the total archives concept of archives acquisition.

New sections and programmes were created as the Manuscript Division grew and reorganized. Among the new sections were the Social and Cultural Archives Section, the Economic and Scientific Archives Section, and in 1972, the National Ethnic Archives Programme which later became the Multicultural Archives Section.

The announcement of the federal Multiculturalism Policy in October 1971 introduced new perspectives on the interpretation of national significance. There had been the earlier statement on the two official languages of Canada, but the Multiculturalism Policy stated that there was no one official “culture” and that all Canadian cultures were recognized as integral parts of the Canadian experience.

The federal government poured funds and resources into the Multicultural Archives Programme at the Public Archives of Canada because it was perceived that the private record holdings relating to the ethnocultural groups were under-represented. Drawing on previous acquisition practices such as the Systematic National Acquisition Programme (SNAP), lists of national ethnocultural organizations were created and letters were sent inviting them to consider the Public Archives as the repository for their historical records. This invitation produced a great variety of replies, many of which arrived years later.

The acquisition of archival material for the Multicultural Archives Section compelled the archivists to review and debate the definition of national significance. Eventually a consensus was reached within the section regarding a working definition of national significance. Archivists worked with specific ethnocultural groups and were generally familiar with their history and development in Canada. Research was conducted in the records of the Immigration Branch (RG76) to determine which ethnocultural organizations had a long history of contacts with the federal government. Archivists contacted national

4 For an explanation of this concept, see the article by Wilfred Smith, “Total Archives: The Canadian Experience,” *Archives et bibliothèques de Belgique* 57 (1986), pp. 323–46. A more recent discussion of the history of the concept of “total archives” in Canadian archives is presented in the articles by Laura Millar, “Discharging our Debt: The Evolution of the Total Archives Concept in English Canada,” *Archivaria* 46 (Fall 1998), pp. 103–146; “The Spirit of Total Archives: Seeking a Sustainable Archival System,” *Archivaria* 47 (Spring 1999), pp. 46–65.

organizations with a known record of activities at the national level and invited them to donate their archival records to the Public Archives. There were organizations and associations with a national headquarters whose branches and activities were located in two or more provinces. In some cases, national organizations whose branches were found mainly within one province were also considered because of the particular evolution of the history of that ethnocultural group. In other words, the term “national,” and therefore “national significance,” assumed a subjective character. This was in conformity with the informal approach of the Manuscript Division towards the identification of ethnocultural groups where the Manuscript Division would accept the specific group’s definition of themselves as national entities. As in the case with other Canadian national organizations, the archivists still had to undertake historical research to ensure that a potential donor organization had a record of national service to their community and therefore met some of the criteria to be considered as nationally significant.

The founding of the Multicultural History Society of Ontario in 1976 and the development of archival institutions within some of the ethnocultural groups created some competition for archival material. This led to debates with these institutions regarding acquisition policies and definitions of national significance since some had also sought to develop “national institutions” and acquire archival material that was of national significance for their own ethnocultural groups.⁵

The Public Archives grew significantly in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The staff which numbered approximately 260 in 1968 increased during the next ten years to over 700 members.⁶ The number of archival institutions more than doubled in the period 1960–1978 from seventy to over 180.⁷ At the national level, the archival profession also gained recognition. In June 1975, the Association of Canadian Archivists (ACA) was founded and an umbrella organization, the Bureau of Canadian Archivists (BCA), was created to promote archival and professional matters before the federal government.

During these years, new archivists at the Public Archives attended the month-long archives course and received much of their early guidance regarding acquisition at this course.⁸ This course supplemented formal and informal

5 For an example of this criticism see the article by Robert F. Harney, “Ethnic Archival and Library Materials in Canada: Problems of Bibliographic Control and Preservation,” *Ethnic Forum* 2, no. 2 (Fall, 1982), pp. 3–31.

6 Michael D. Swift, “The Canadian Archival Scene in the 1970s: Current Developments and Trends,” *Archivaria*, 15 (Winter, 1982–83), p. 47.

7 Terry Eastwood, “Attempts at National Planning for the Archives in Canada, 1975–1985,” *The Public Historian* 8, no. 3 (Summer, 1986), p. 81.

8 For example, see the presentation by R.S. Gordon, “Appraisal of Historical Documents (Monetary Evaluation) 1972,” Canadian Historical Association, Archives Section, Papers Prepared for the 1974 Archives Course, Ottawa, 1974.

training received in the sections. Most training was on-the-job under the supervision of section chiefs and senior archivists. Other archivists had considerable experience as researchers at the National Archives and were familiar with archival practices and procedures before they were hired.

In 1975, a task force on acquisitions was established in order to define various acquisition terms and processes and to determine acquisition roles and responsibilities. In the absence of formal acquisition policies, archivists at the Public Archives had interpreted its mandate with some informality. While this casual approach to acquisition sometimes gave the archivists a wide range of flexibility which assisted in acquisition negotiations with donors, it tended to encourage undefined and open-ended acquisition activity. Acquisition objectives existed mainly within each custodial area or section and not at the branch or departmental levels. Basic questions such as the acquisition responsibility of the Public Archives as a national archival repository were rarely discussed. Fundamental terms such as national significance still lacked an adequate definition to facilitate the evaluation of acquisition activities, the collections, and the acquisition methods. One of the goals of this task force was to redefine an acquisition policy for the Public Archives through a close examination of the concept of national significance, and if necessary, contribute to the considerable modification of this concept.

Another goal was the definition of types of material of regional importance which were also nationally significant. The definition of acquisition objectives was a difficult and sometimes an impossible task, and as a result each custodial area within the Public Archives was left with the responsibility for defining their own objectives and goals. Since most of the sections were newly established, much of the discussions at that time revolved around the acquisition mandates of each custodial area, overlapping areas of acquisition, and attempts to define and limit these areas. The organizational structure of the Public Archives, which was based on a media approach to acquisition, encouraged each custodial area to follow an autonomous acquisition policy. Attempts to produce departmental objectives at that time proved to be unsuccessful.

Both the Ian E. Wilson Report in 1980 and the Culture and Communications Study Team Report to the Task Force on Program Review discussed the opportunities for more consultation and co-operation in the Public Archives' acquisition activity. A co-operative acquisition strategy would mean that an institution meets its acquisition mandate by co-operating with other institutions. However, concerns were expressed that co-operation could mean the delegation of acquisition responsibilities, the dispersal of collections, and even a fragmentation of individual collections.⁹

In 1982, the federal Cultural Policy Review Committee (Applebaum-Hébert

⁹ Public Archives of Canada, *Program Evaluation, Evaluation Assessment Report, Acquisitions Component, Final Report* (3 March 1987), p. 4.

Committee) noted the possible conflict between the traditional acquisition policies of the Public Archives under the concept “total archives” and the acquisition objectives of provincial, regional, and local archives for their collections.¹⁰ Two significant events took place in the summer of 1982 which attempted to confront some of the problems of the archival institutions in Canada. A “National Congress” on archives was held in Kingston in June to provide a forum for discussion and resolution of institutional problems. There was also a special meeting of the Dominion, Provincial, and Territorial Archivists to prepare recommendations on archival development.¹¹ In 1985, this group submitted a series of resolutions which recognized archives as “a fundamental resource for the development of a well-informed society and for the good conduct of public and private affairs.”¹²

Several external studies examined the Public Archives’ acquisition mandate and activity. In 1983, the Auditor General requested the Public Archives to clarify the meaning of “the systematic preservation of government and private records of Canadian national significance” as stated in the Public Archives mandate.¹³ A definition of national significance was needed since other Canadian archival institutions also acquired material of national significance. The audit noted that professional judgement was central to acquisitions but suggested that, because of changing researcher needs and scarce resources, some form of criteria was needed to direct this work. In 1984, the Historical Resources Branch undertook to define an acquisitions policy.

In August 1984, Robert S. Gordon of the Manuscript Division issued a document, *Definitions – Acquisition Terminology*, in which he offered a definition of national significance. He stated that national significance was “... a term used to define the contents and importance of records, and the status of creators of such records. The creators of records of ‘national significance,’ be they governmental authorities, corporate bodies or individuals must, through their activities, achievements and reputations, transcend the local or provincial boundaries and become nationally- or internationally-recognized entities. The records created must document the development of Canada in a field of activity, which may cover any area of human endeavour from the earliest period of history to the present day.”¹⁴ This definition was very much within the total

10 Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee, *Summary of Briefs and Hearings* (Ottawa, 1982), p. 57.

11 Michael D. Swift, “The Canadian Archival Scene in the 1970s,” p. 52.

12 Terry Eastwood, “Attempts at National Planning for the Archives in Canada,” p. 88.

13 *Report of the Auditor General of Canada for the Fiscal Year ending 31 March 1983*, p. 466.

14 Public Archives of Canada, *Definitions – Acquisition Terminology* (August, 1984). This term was further elaborated in an appendix. Robert S. Gordon was Director of the Manuscript Division for many years.

archives tradition of the Public Archives. However, it tended to place a stronger emphasis on the “national” or geographic aspect of the definition rather than on the “significance.”¹⁵

The Report of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada’s (SSHRC) Advisory Committee on Archives in 1984 stressed the need for a clear mandate and leadership role for the Public Archives.¹⁶ However, at that time other priorities relating to legislative, accommodation, and financial restraint problems were much more important and immediate issues for the Public Archives and discussions of acquisition problems, by necessity, were postponed.

A new development was the appointment in 1985 of Jean-Pierre Wallot as the Dominion (later National) Archivist. He was known to archivists through his involvement with the Canadian Historical Association and also as a researcher at the Public Archives. He brought new energy and determination to deal with the outstanding problems at the Public Archives.

In August 1985, the Nielsen Task Force on Program Review also noted that a comprehensive acquisition policy should be developed and applied in order that the value of new acquisitions be considered against their future maintenance costs. In other words, cost factors such as conservation, processing, and storage resources could be used to enhance selection and appraisal decisions. The report suggested that such a policy should be coordinated with other archival institutions. The task force reported that there were concerns within the archival community that the Public Archives had acquired records of regional interest without adequate consultations. The report recommended that the Public Archives “adopt a comprehensive acquisition policy and consult systematically with other archival institutions in Canada before acquiring private collections.”¹⁷ The report went on to recommend that, unless the records had a clear national significance, the Public Archives acquire copies rather than the original documents in those cases where a provincial or local repository consider them to be essential to their collection.¹⁸

On 18 February 1987, the Public Archives Program Evaluation Committee met to review the findings and recommendations of the evaluation assessment study.

15 See also Judi Cumming, “Beyond Intrinsic Value Towards the Development of Acquisition Strategies in the Private Sector: The Experience of the Manuscript Division,” *Archivaria* 38 (Fall, 1994), p. 234.

16 *Report of the Advisory Committee on Archives, September 1984* (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, Ottawa, 1985), p. 28.

17 Government of Canada, *Economic Growth: Culture and Communication; A Study Team Report to the Task Force on Program Review* (Ottawa, 1985), p. 75.

18 Public Archives, *Program Evaluation, Evaluation Assessment Report, Acquisitions Component, Final Report* (3 March 1987), pp. 1–2.

National Archives of Canada Act (1987)

New legislation was drafted for the Public Archives to give the Archives a modern mandate which included the ability to provide a leadership role in national planning on archival matters. When drafting the new legislation, the federal government consulted with the provinces; this provided an unprecedented opportunity to discuss archival matters at the national level. The new bill was given first reading in February 1986. The passage of the *National Archives of Canada Act* on 25 March 1987 was a significant milestone in the development of the Archives as a national institution. The Act greatly enhanced the acquisition mandate of the National Archives and recognized its leadership role within the Canadian archival community.

In March 1988, the National Archivist approved the document, *Acquisition Policy*, which was the first formal acquisition policy of the National Archives.¹⁹ The document stated the acquisition policy of the National Archives in the context of its legislated mandate and also took into consideration a number of recommendations and suggestions included in the various studies and reports issued in the previous years. The acquisition policy was to develop a broad and comprehensive collection by acquiring records of national significance in a planned and integrated manner, according to predetermined appraisal criteria. The legislative framework was the *National Archives of Canada Act (1987)* which stated that “the objects and functions of the National Archives of Canada are to conserve private and public records of national significance and facilitate access thereto....” The document also provided a statement on national significance:

Records of national significance are those which document the Canadian experience. They record the efforts and experiences of individuals, groups, institutions, corporate bodies, and other organizations which have become nationally or internationally recognized. They also document the physical environment in Canada, as well as events and trends (cultural, political, economic, social, demographic, scientific, and religious) having a broad, national scope. They also reveal, in a notable way, typically Canadian experiences. Records of national significance include those whose rarity or importance allows them to be considered as national treasures.²⁰

This statement was inclusive rather than exclusive and was in keeping with the traditional National Archives “total archives” policy.

The Act provided an opportunity and a requirement to define the acquisition mandate. There was pressure from higher management to produce acquisition

19 National Archives of Canada, *Acquisition Policy*, approved by the National Archivist, 8 March 1988. After 1987, the term “National Archives of Canada” is used.

20 Ibid., section 4.2., “National Significance.”

policy and procedures which could be easily and simply administered within the new mandate. One new approach for the acquisition of private records of national significance was to focus on the department's mandate to *conserve* records rather than to acquire records. This meant that the National Archives could fulfil its mandate without actually acquiring records. Although the Act stated that the National Archives had the responsibility to "conserve private and public records of national significance," the National Archives recognized that other archival repositories outside the federal government acquired private records of significance to the country as a whole. There were a few previous examples of some co-operative efforts with archival institutions across Canada to ensure the preservation of specific fonds. In addition, the mandate had to take into consideration that there were significant changes in the Canadian archival universe, such as the creation of a Canadian archives system and the establishment of a Canadian Council of Archives. The new legislation indicated that the Archives was to support archival activities that took these changes into consideration. The Act obliged the Archives to concentrate on issues relating to future acquisition programmes and activities. The emphasis was therefore more on the analysis of the Canadian archival community and the archival universe and less on past experiences and practices.

At the National Archives, the new Act generated a series of task forces, working groups, strategy committees, and study and focus groups relating to the acquisition function of the National Archives. These working groups were established at all levels from the department, branch, division, and section. Membership in these groups varied, volunteers were sought to draft policy statements, groups were formed and reformed. Almost every archivist in the Manuscript Division took part in this exercise. These activities were also motivated by the need for the National Archives to rationalize its acquisition practices due to a growing shortage of suitable archival storage space and decreased human resources as a result of downsizing. In the Manuscript Division, there was growing pressure from higher management to define the boundaries of its acquisition activity and establish a strategy outlining how the division would contribute to the preservation of textual records of national significance within those limits.²¹

In January 1988, the Program Evaluation and Research Policy Branch produced the report *Acquisition Evaluation Study, Final Report, Volume 1*.²² The report included a section on national significance and noted that, although the National Archives characterized its acquisition mandate by this criterion, there was a difficulty in defining this term to the satisfaction of the archival

21 For a discussion on developments in the Manuscript Division, see also Judi Cumming, "Beyond Intrinsic Value."

22 National Archives of Canada, Program Evaluation and Research Policy Branch, *Acquisition Evaluation Study, Final Report, Volume 1* (January 1988), pp. 19–20.

community. As an example, the report included a statement that, according to a study management group and a focus group, records of national significance had the following features: the records document the Canadian experience; record the efforts and experiences of the federal government; record the efforts and experiences of individuals, groups, corporate bodies, and other organizations which have become nationally or internationally recognized; and record the physical environment, events, and historic trends (cultural, political, economic social, scientific, and religious) which transcend provincial boundaries. The report noted that during interviews archivists were asked to provide their definitions of national significance and the replies ranged from a very specific focus on federal government records to very broad concepts which included almost anything. One of the recommendations of this report was that the National Archives develop a departmental acquisition strategy.

Several initiatives were undertaken, including the establishment of acquisition review committees in divisions with an acquisition mandate. In the Manuscript Division, the acquisition review function was given to the Manuscript Division Advisory Committee. This committee worked well sometimes, but at other times its work and recommendations were not seen as timely. Moreover, some archivists viewed the work of the advisory committee as diminishing their own role in acquisitions, particularly where an archivist was responsible for a specific acquisitions programme. The archivists in the division tended to protect their areas of responsibility from what they perceived was outside interference. Since membership on this committee changed on a regular basis, its role was criticized by other archivists for lack of continuity and lack of sufficient knowledge in specific custodial areas.

The advisory committee functioned within the Manuscript Division until the end of 1988 after a new director was appointed. A new Acquisition Review Committee was established in December 1988 to coordinate acquisition activities within the Manuscript Division. The committee advised the director on acquisitions matters including the decision-making process, the standardization of the whole acquisition process, and the evaluation of acquisition proposals of new and additional archival material. New procedures were prepared which emphasized that new acquisitions had to be "justified." The exceptions were the "ministerial" records, which were specified in the archives act of 1987, and archival material of twenty centimetres or less.

The Acquisition Strategy Task Force, which was established in May 1988 in the Historical Resources Branch, held a series of meetings in March 1989 to discuss strategic issues and approaches. The task force confirmed that national significance continued to be the major criterion in the acquisition of private records. During the meetings various approaches were suggested to determine what records of national significance should be collected by the National Archives. It was suggested that the term "national significance" should be used in the broader sense of the term and therefore may vary in its application

among the various divisions. There was a general agreement that not all nationally significant records could be acquired by the National Archives and that each division should develop broad categories or “levels” of national significance pertinent to their own areas, which at the same time transcend media and divisional lines.

In December 1989, the National Archives issued the report *National Archives of Canada Acquisition Strategy: A Development Plan, 1989–1993*. This acquisition strategy report provided information on the background and context, issues and framework, and the implementation of an acquisition strategy plan. In the appendices, the report listed the acquisition milestones, current acquisition activities, and concluded with an action plan.

The report stated that “... The Manuscript Division is responsible for the acquisition of nationally significant textual records created by individuals, organizations and corporations in the private sector.... The Manuscript Division has attempted to acquire a broad and representative archival collection that reflects the richness and diversity of Canadian life.”²³ Among the objectives of divisional acquisition activity, the report included “.... the documentation of modern economic, social and cultural life.” In pursuit of this goal, the division had acquired the records of representative Canadian businesses, of national labour organizations, of ethnocultural organizations and community leaders, of women’s, children’s, recreational, and social welfare organizations, and of inter-denominational religious groups. The division also attempted to document the complex relationships between various branches of the arts and Canadian society as a whole.²⁴ The report confirmed the existing acquisition mandate of the Manuscript Division in the various areas and programmes and the general concept of total archives.

Referring to the 1987 *National Archives of Canada Act*, the report stated that the custodial responsibility for nationally significant private records was shared between the National Archives and other institutions. It may be interpreted that the concept of total archives was extended to include other archival repositories across Canada. The report concluded that “...It is therefore important that the Manuscript Division determine which records of national significance it intends to acquire and that its archivists develop working relationships with colleagues active in similar fields across Canada.”²⁵ Also, the Archives ceased to acquire certain types of records which no longer met the acquisition criteria, such as genealogies and family histories, cemetery recordings, and parish registers. The National Archives had by then withdrawn from the acquisition of local and provincial records. National significance was

23 National Archives of Canada, *Acquisition Strategy: A Development Plan, 1989–1993* (December 1989), p. 82.

24 *Ibid.*, p. 83.

25 *Ibid.*, p. 84.

therefore defined in negative terms, that is, what the National Archives did *not* seek to acquire. The report also underlined that acquisition activities at the National Archives were limited by resource restraints relating to accommodation, finances, and personnel.

The report included the following recommendation: redefine national significance, based on strategic acquisition research and the identification of strategic acquisition targets. In the action plan, the Office of the Director General was expected to produce this definition by March 1993. Another recommendation stated that "...In co-operation with members of the Canadian archival system, develop methodologies for the resolution of acquisition conflicts and identify areas requiring shared responsibilities."²⁶

In the Manuscript Division, the Acquisition Review Committee was succeeded in March 1989 by the Acquisition Strategy Committee. This committee discussed several acquisition-related issues, and national significance was discussed at one meeting. The committee suggested a number of categories which might be included in this definition: national organizations and their executives; organizations active in more than one province; national umbrella organizations; technological and scientific developments; cultural activities at the national level. The committee confirmed some of the earlier approaches and identified records which were considered to be outside the limits of the acquisition policy: local and provincial government records, denominational records available in Canada, family genealogies or histories, autographs, private records of local, regional, or provincial significance, collections which were entirely in print. Questions continued to be raised about the relationship between national significance and regionalism in Canadian history.²⁷

The Acquisitions Strategy Committee was headed by a chairperson and included a representative from each section. This approach was seen as essentially a temporary step to establish acquisition policies and procedures for the Manuscript Division and to encourage division-wide standards regarding acquisition. The role of the committee and the acquisition procedures were to be evaluated after the development of a departmental acquisition strategy and division action plans. In accordance with its mandate, the committee produced acquisition policies and procedures. To facilitate its work and accumulate a database on acquisitions, the procedures included an acquisition proposal form which underwent a number of revisions as work progressed. The proposal form was based on a similar form used by the Archives nationales du

26 *Ibid.*, p. 102.

27 In an attempt to define national significance, the archivists debated the evolution of Canadian history as identified by specific historical periods and geographical areas and what kinds of archival material could be considered as significant from the perspective of these various periods of Canadian history, and also from the perspectives of early colonial and post-colonial administrations of what is now Canada.

Québec. Archivists were requested to submit acquisition proposals and have them approved before archival material was donated to the National Archives. In addition to the usual information regarding proposed acquisitions, archivists were requested to include a justification for each particular acquisition. The committee provided opportunities to discuss and review on a regular basis issues relating to acquisition policy and procedures with the working-level archivists in the division.

An important section within the new *National Archives of Canada Act* was section 4(3) which states: "Subject to the terms and conditions under which records have been acquired or obtained, the Archivist may, in consultation with the Advisory Board referred to in section 9, destroy or dispose of any record under the control of the Archivist where retention of the record is no longer deemed necessary." This section authorized the National Archivist to deaccession archival records from the control and custody of the National Archives and their transfer to another archival repository or cultural institution. Requests to surrender archival holdings could now be made by other archival or cultural agencies. By 1991, policy and procedure papers were prepared to provide archivists with guidelines regarding requests to deaccession material. The procedures required that the deaccession proposals were submitted to the acquisition committee for review. A number of fonds which were of local and regional significance were immediately identified as material which may be deaccessioned. Through section 4(3) the definition of national significance could further be elaborated, but in negative terms, by the process of removing archival material not required at the National Archives.

At the level of the branch, a Private Sector Acquisitions Strategy Working Group was formed in July 1991 to recommend an acquisitions research strategy for private sector records. It included representatives from those divisions with acquisition programmes in the private sector. Some of the research issues raised by this working group dealt with national significance. What types of private fonds of national significance does the National Archives wish to acquire exclusively? What types of private fonds of national significance do other archives across the country wish to acquire exclusively? How can the National Archives and other institutions that collect in the private sector resolve issues of jurisdictional conflict and collaborate to use limited resources to preserve records of national significance?

The discussions with the working group obliged the members to review and revise their fundamental concepts relating to acquisition and the archival universe in general. Archival literature from various archival journals was researched, circulated, and studied. Archivists from the media custodial areas who dealt with item-level acquisitions now had to discuss acquisition issues with archivists who acquired fonds with several hundred metres of textual archival material. The discussions on acquisition strategy which should have progressed from the general to the particular often exploded the parameters

beyond the recognizable archival universe to include wide-ranging discussions on Canadian history, society, and culture. Some meetings took on the atmosphere of intense graduate seminars, and debates were punctuated with references to Marshall McLuhan, Michel Foucault, and others. Most of the archivists who took part in these discussions were also researchers in their own fields and tended to view the archival problems from several perspectives as archivists, historians, and general researchers. As students of history, they were also aware that any formulation of definitions and categories within an administrative environment was basically artificial and temporary. Proposals and recommendations were decided by consensus, but in several cases this was not possible.

During discussions within the branch, a general consensus emerged that a concept such as national significance defied an absolute definition. It was hoped that time, experience, and precedent would lead to a more precise statement. The best solution that could be suggested at that time was the development of a planned approach. It was suggested that the emphasis should be on the process rather than the product. However, pressure to produce a working definition continued from various sources outside the National Archives.

The Private Sector Acquisitions Strategy Working Group submitted a draft of a discussion report in November 1992 entitled *Private Sector Acquisition Strategy* to the Director General, Historical Resources Branch. The report suggested a number of approaches to the question of identifying archival material of national significance.²⁸ A series of underlying principles and definitions were identified in order to properly articulate an acquisition strategy for private records. The report discussed a number of issues including the continuum between public and private records, the interrelationships between the federal government and civil society in Canada and the larger question of "governance." All these factors were suggested for inclusion in any acquisition strategy and goals prepared by archivists. These recommendations were submitted to higher management but the reactions were mixed. Most senior administrators began their careers in the era of total archives and still subscribed to this concept. They hesitated at any attempt to update or modify this concept. Any plan to define national significance was perceived by some administrators as an effort to limit or redefine the concept of total archives. They were also concerned about the need to implement any new policy which might create potential administrative problems. This tension between the administrative requirements of a federal government department and the principles of a cultural institution (in this case, an archival institution) remains a perennial problem which is common to other cultural departments and agencies.

In the Manuscript Division, a series of policy and procedure papers were produced in 1991 by the Acquisition Committee outlining the acquisition pro-

²⁸ *Private Sector Acquisition Strategy* (Discussion Draft, October 1992).

cess. These papers have, with some modifications, remained in effect until the present day. The Acquisition Committee recognized that the Manuscript Division shared the responsibility of preserving private textual and electronic records of national significance with their creators and with other public and private archival institutions for all periods of Canadian history. The committee identified several types of nationally significant records as the targets of its acquisition programmes. In the social and cultural areas, these included individuals or organizations representing major cultural trends or artistic excellence; individuals or organizations involved in major social movements and activities; national ethnocultural organizations and community leaders; interdenominational records, clergy, and organizations involved in missionary work.

In the Multicultural Archives Program, an internal report entitled *Multicultural Archives Programme, Acquisition Strategy, Theory and Practice* was prepared in 1991–92 and discussed among the archivists. This report emphasized the need to begin any acquisition strategy with the study of the history of acquisition in the area of Canadian ethnocultural groups at the National Archives and the identification of the “boundaries” of the archival universe of the particular ethnocultural group. As part of the study of the history of the group in Canada, other factors were taken into consideration: the definition of the ethnocultural group, relations with the country of origin, and relations with the federal government. The historiography of ethnocultural groups was outlined in periods or themes. A plan to implement this acquisition strategy was also suggested. Archivists produced acquisition reports on specific ethnocultural groups²⁹ and these reports concluded by identifying specific acquisition targets among community leaders and national organizations. In the search for acquisition targets, archivists were reminded to identify possible donors from various segments or “fragments” of each community so that several interpretations and perspectives were available to researchers when researching and writing the history of particular groups. This was especially true for ethnocultural groups which were divided according to their political orientation. This was based on the perception that the experience of ethnocultural groups and the encompassing Canadian society produced many “histories” rather than one “History.”

In the area of social issues, archivists contacted national organizations whose activities and records provided opposing and alternate interpretations at the national level on abortion, gun control, smoking, and other contemporary and controversial issues. In addition, acquisition strategy reports were prepared

29 For example, see edited versions by Dr. Arthur Grenke, “Archival Collections on Hungarian Canadians at the National Archives of Canada,” *Hungarian Studies Review* XVII, no. 1 (Spring 1990); “The Archival Record of German-Language Groups in Canada: A Survey,” *Archivaria* 35 (Spring 1993).

on *Amérindiens du Canada* (1992), *Private Sector Acquisition: Social Sector* (1992) and also an *Acquisition Strategy for Canadian Women's Movement Archives* (1999), which have shaped acquisitions in these areas.³⁰ The goal was to encourage each section and area of acquisition to prepare and update reports linking the general acquisition goals of the National Archives and of the Manuscript Division to their specific area of acquisition. The acquisition process would proceed from general to particular guidelines.³¹ The guidelines would be followed by selection criteria. With the application of strategic and tactical guidelines, acquisition and selection criteria, and administrative requirements which acted as filters or screens in this process, the nationally significant material would be identified and targeted for acquisition.

During discussions with archivists in the Montreal region in March 1993, it was suggested that the process to define an acquisition strategy and material of national significance could be accomplished through consensus, that is, by working with archivists across Canada. However, some archivists from regional and local archives replied that they were waiting for the National Archives to arrive at a definition and then they would define their own policies accordingly. This task therefore remained with the National Archives.³²

In October 1993, the Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board issued the document, *Discussion Paper and Draft Guidelines Concerning Outstanding Significance and National Importance*. This document made an important contribution to the general discussion on the definition of national significance and to furthering a consensus among federal government departments and agencies about some of the basic components of this definition. Although the focus of the discussion was on cultural "objects," these guidelines were generally applicable to archival documents. The following guidelines were developed during the meetings on national significance³³: regional, provincial, or national factors; pertinence; significance of the maker; significance of the object; documentary or research value; authenticity; aesthetic qualities; condition; rarity; "Canadian content"; association with other objects (collections vs. assemblages); medium; fair market as a determinant of national significance.³⁴

30 Michelle Guitard, *Amérindiens du Canada* (1992) and Christine Barrass, *Acquisition Strategy for Canadian Women's Movement Archives* (1999). These and other acquisition reports are internal working documents.

31 As an example of this approach, see the article by James Lambert and Louis Coté, "Les outils de travail en archivistique: la politique d'acquisition : pourquoi, comment, critères et exemples," *Archives* 23, no. 3 (Winter 1992).

32 Notes for a Panel Discussion on Acquisition Strategy and National Significance at the National Archives of Canada; Acquisition, Séminaire organisé par le Groupe d'archivistes de la région de Montréal (GARM), 11 et 12 mars 1993, Université Concordia, Montréal.

33 Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board, *Discussion Paper and Draft Guidelines Concerning Outstanding Significance and National Importance* (October 1993).

In September 1994, the National Archives prepared a document, *National Archives of Canada, Acquisition Strategy Framework, Private Sector*.³⁵ This document confirmed the “Themes of national significance,” included an appraisal methodology, and also confirmed the definition of national significance found in the report, *Acquisition Policy* (1988). The document provided a framework as a means of identifying records creators which might commonly be expected to produce records of national significance. At this stage in the acquisition process, an attempt was made to identify the records creators and the records creation process rather than the records themselves and the information which the documents may contain. However, it was the value of the records themselves which ultimately determined whether or not they were to be acquired.³⁶

The framework listed themes of national significance which should be documented by the National Archives. It was suggested that all potential acquisitions should relate to one or more of these themes. The relative priority for acquisition should be determined by the degree of relevance or quality of the potential acquisition in relation to these themes. A series of questions were included to assist the archivists to determine the national significance of archival material. This framework was integrated into acquisition procedures and archivists were requested to consult the framework when completing the acquisition proposal form (see Appendix A).

With the publication of the report, *National Archives of Canada, Acquisition Strategy Framework, Private Sector*, the role of the Acquisition Committee in the Manuscript Division also changed by September 1994. The work of the Acquisition Committee was reviewed and the advantages and disadvantages of maintaining the committee were discussed. By then, archivists were generally familiar with the policy and procedures for acquiring archival material and viewed the committee more as an impediment than as an aid in acquiring material. The committee was disbanded and some of the procedures were changed. The acquisition proposal form was retained and the archivists dealt directly with their section chiefs and the director when required. The Manuscript Division was reorganized and the various multicultural, religion, social,

34 See Parks Canada, *Directory of Designations of National Historic Significance Commemorating Canada's History, March 2000*. Parks Canada also produced some policy documents which attempted to determine national significance. See the document, *Parks Canada Guiding Principles and Operational Policies*, particularly 2.0: Determining National Historic Significance, available at: <http://parkscanada.pch.gc.ca/library/PC_Guiding_Principles/Park_88_e.htm>. The archivists regularly examined the lists of recipients of the Order of Canada and other national awards to identify Canadians of national significance.

35 National Archives of Canada, *National Archives of Canada, Acquisition Strategy Framework, Private Sector* (27 September 1994).

36 In 1995, the Canadian Council of Archives published a report, *Building a National Acquisition Strategy: Guidelines for Acquisition Planning* to encourage a common approach or process in preparing acquisition plans and procedures among member institutions.

and culture-related programme were fully integrated into the Social and Cultural Archives Section.

On 11 December 1995, the National Archives issued the report, *National Archives of Canada, Private Sector Acquisition: Orientation 1995–2000* which was based on the *National Archives Acquisition Strategy Framework – Private Sector (1994)*.³⁷ The report stated that “... The records of key organizations and individuals who had a long-term and nationally significant impact on Canada’s development must remain our focus.”³⁸ Furthermore, “... records of creators which are national in significance but regional in scope will generally not be acquired by the National Archives. Only in exceptional cases will the national significance of the records to Canada clearly outweigh their regional scope. Most records regional in scope but national in significance will be redirected to other repositories.”³⁹ The report included the statement from Part III of the *Estimates 1995–96* that “...The NA ... will withdraw completely from future collecting of nationally significant private records in such fields as architecture, business and religious archives, and MPs and Senators’ papers in the expectation that other archives will acquire such fonds. Other private acquisition programmes in such areas as graphic and multicultural records will be reduced substantially....”⁴⁰ This policy was developed in response to a tightening of financial controls and the large backlog of private and public records. As a result, the acquisition work of certain archivists in the Manuscript Division was reorganized, in some cases reduced.⁴¹ This is an example of how an acquisition policy could be temporarily affected by what may be described as primarily administrative concerns.

Despite these changes due to federal government financial and administrative policies, the National Archives maintained its traditional “vision” or “noble dream.” In the document *Strategic Approaches of the National Archives of Canada, 1996–1999*, National Archivist Jean-Pierre Wallot outlined his vision of archives:

...Archives are evidence, testimonies and sources of information which document the life of societies, make agencies and government transparent and accountable to their constituents and thereby serve democracy, and substantiate collective and individual rights. They become the ‘garden’, overflowing with the hopes, achievements and dif-

37 The Visual and Sound Archives Division issued the document, *Acquisition Orientation/Document sur l’orientation des acquisitions* in October 1998 which outlined the division’s acquisition orientation and contributed to the departmental acquisition strategy.

38 National Archives of Canada, *Private Sector Acquisition: Orientation 1995–2000*, p. 3.

39 Ibid., p. 3.

40 National Archives of Canada, *1995–96 Estimates*, “Part III Expenditure Plan,” p. 23.

41 However, the search for partners for joint archival acquisition projects has had mixed results. These partnership initiatives are often the result of periods of financial restraint at the National Archives which always seem to correspond with similar financial conditions in other archival institutions across Canada.

ferences that foster our contemporaries' vision of the world and their plans for the future. This is particularly true in Canada, a country outstanding for its quality of life, but also for its diversity, for the different time frames of its development and of its regions, for the "limited identities" that have emerged from its history, and for its difficult traditions of tolerance, compromise and openness to the future. Canada is a country outstanding also for its relatively frequent and sometimes far-reaching self-questioning.⁴²

The search for a working definition of national significance also remained as part of the vision. From time to time, pressure from senior management and from outside the National Archives revived the need to provide an adequate definition of national significance. More recently, the "English Report" recommended that "... The National Archives should review its acquisition policy in light of the need to provide a focus for archival records of national significance. A national policy should be the result of a partnership between the National Archives and the Canadian Council of Archives."⁴³

On 31 March 2000, the National Archives issued the report, *Private Sector Acquisition: Orientation 2000–2005*. This report revised and updated the guidelines for acquisition which were earlier listed in the report, *Private Sector Acquisition: Orientation 1995–2000*. Some of the acquisition programmes were revived. Regarding records of national and regional significance, the report stated that "... Records of creators which are both of national and regional significance must be carefully considered. Generally such records will not be acquired by the National Archives except in the case of records which are geographically based, that is, in those cases when the national significance of the records to Canada clearly outweigh their regional scope. Most records regional in scope but national in significance will continue to be directed to other repositories."⁴⁴ Archivists were referred to the report *Acquisition Strategy Framework – Private Sector* for a test for use when records national in significance but regional in scope are considered for acquisition. An exception was included which stated that "... there may be instances in which the National Archives believes that it must act to protect historically significant records important to Canada. In these exceptional circumstances,

42 National Archives of Canada, *Strategic Approaches of the National Archives of Canada, 1996–1999* (Forward from the National Archivist, Dr. Jean-Pierre Wallot).

43 In March 1998, John English was commissioned by the Minister of Canadian Heritage to report on the role of the National Library of Canada and the National Archives of Canada. His report was released in July 1999. See Canadian Heritage, *The Role of the National Archives of Canada and the National Library of Canada, Report submitted to the Honourable Sheila Copps by Dr. John English (1999)*, Recommendations: p. 3. This report is popularly known as the "English Report."

44 National Archives of Canada, *Private Sector Acquisition: Orientation 2000–2005* (31 March 2000), p. 2.

the National Archives will take steps to acquire records in an area in which it is not actively collecting or for which the resources to arrange, describe and conserve these records are not readily available."⁴⁵

In June 2000, a new period in acquisition policies and procedures was introduced when the Canadian Archives Branch underwent a fundamental reorganization. The traditional division structure was eliminated and the designation Manuscript Division disappeared. The constituent sections remained and the section chiefs now reported to the director general of the Canadian Archives Branch. The media and textual archives sections became part of the same administrative unit.

Also, the introduction and implementation of the *Rules for Archival Description (RAD)* and the Mikan system for accession, control, and retrieval at the National Archives has obliged the various textual and media components to work more closely as teams and approach the acquisition function in much the same manner. The *RAD* and Mikan systems also oblige archivists to cooperate in the development, sharing, and use of the same concepts and definitions in regards to the acquisition of archival material. As similar new systems are adopted and developed by archival institutions across Canada, a new archival "language" can be created promoting a common approach to national archival problems, terminology, and concepts.

Conclusion

In recent years, the National Archives' acquisition objectives evolved alongside changes in its administrative and cultural mission and objectives. These changes have been influenced by decisions from parliament and cabinet, prime ministerial and ministerial directives, Orders-in-Council, as well as Treasury Board decisions, directives, and policies. The acquisition policies and procedures were based on precedent, tradition, and each National Archivist made his impact on policies and practices, often enlarging upon or refining existing mandates. By and large, the National Archives followed a broad acquisition policy which was more inclusive than exclusive, and in the 1960s and 1970s, this approach was described as the "total archives" concept.

Since the introduction of the *National Archives of Canada Act* in 1987, the acquisition mandate has emphasized issues relating to future programmes and activities. The emphasis has been, therefore, less on previous traditional practices and more on a better understanding of the Canadian archival universe. The National Archives made a determined attempt to define a national acquisitions policy. Since 1987, archivists have concentrated their efforts more on creating the necessary structures and strategies to advance the planning of acquisition activity, which was a necessary precondition to the establishment

45 Ibid., p. 4.

of national selection criteria. And this included a continuing search for an adequate definition of national significance that was generally acceptable to the Canadian archival community. By 1991, it was generally agreed within the National Archives that an absolute definition of national significance was not feasible at that time. The concept was perceived as evolving over time depending on the “national” or geographic composition of Canada and also on the political evolution of Canada.⁴⁶

At present, the archivists at the National Archives cannot refer to their sponsor, the Government of Canada, the *National Archives of Canada Act*, or even the Canadian Constitution in the search for a generally acceptable definition of national significance. Canadian history is not the result of revolutions, civil wars, or major conflicts which radically directed or redirected social, economic, and political life according to the winners’ instructions. There are no government-approved definitions of national significance which could be applied to all spheres of social and cultural life, including acquisition of archival material. If we examine the larger implications of this approach, Canadian citizens are able to support different interest groups and political movements and debate, support or dissent from “national” concepts such as national significance because there is a reluctance to provide an official definition. The fact that there is no entrenched idea of national “goals” and national significance is what enables citizens to develop and maintain, in the private sector, particular communities and ethnocultural associations representing particular cultural and historical traditions. It may even be suggested that it is the lack of entrenched definitions of national significance that assists to preserve the political freedoms of the public sphere and the social freedoms of the private sphere.⁴⁷ In summary, what is of national significance is choice itself, that is, freedom of choice. Freedom of choice is only possible when there are minimal restrictions on access by citizens (researchers) to knowledge, information, and public institutions.

This perspective on the development of an informed citizenry was first outlined in the petition for an archival institution by the Quebec Literary and Historical Society in 1871. Canada was a new political entity in 1867 and the waves of nationalism and liberalism which swept Western Europe in the 1840s and 1850s certainly had an influence in shaping the emerging federal Canadian institutions. It was a period when new social and political ideas challenged tra-

46 For example, the recent establishment of Nunavut as a territorial government along with the Nunavut Archives requires a re-configuration of the Canadian archival universe. Other future political and administrative changes may also require a re-evaluation of what is “national” and therefore of national significance.

47 This reference is based on a liberal interpretation of the Canadian “good life” as outlined in the book by Janet Ajzenstat and Peter J. Smith, eds., *Canada’s Origins, Liberal, Tory or Republican?* (Ottawa, 1995), p. 273.

ditional institutions and established authorities.⁴⁸ According to historians of Canadian archives, what is now the National Archives of Canada was established in 1872 as a result of a strong cultural lobby organized by the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec.⁴⁹ A petition from Henry Miles, a member of the society in 1871 only four years after Confederation, touched on a continuing Canadian theme:

That, considering the divers [*sic*] origins, nationalities, religious creeds, and classes of persons represented in Canadian Society, the conflicting nature of the evidence proffered by authors in presenting the most important points and phases of our past local history, as well as the greater need which a rapidly progressive people have to base the lessons derivable from their history upon facts duly authenticated in place of mere hearsay or statements only partially correct ... the Petitioners desire to express their conviction that the best interests of Society in this country would be consulted by establishing a system, with respect to Canadian Archives, correspondent with those above adverted to in relation to Great Britain, France and the United States.⁵⁰

By providing access to archival material for the study of the collective past, Canadians were encouraged "... to base the lessons derivable from their history upon facts duly authenticated." The role of the Archives was perceived as contributing to the building of an educated electorate, a common historical consciousness, and, therefore, as an important nation-building institution.

The "noble dream" of this petition is as valid today as it was in 1871.

48 Ibid. More recently, the debate is continued in the article by Ian McKay, "The Liberal Order Framework: A Prospectus for a Reconnaissance of Canadian History," *Canadian Historical Review* 81, no. 4 (December 2000).

49 Danielle Lacasse and Antonio Lechasseur, "The National Archives of Canada 1872–1997," *The Canadian Historical Association, Historical Booklet No. 58* (Ottawa, 1997); also Ian E. Wilson, "Shortt and Doughty: The Cultural Role of the Public Archives of Canada 1904 to 1935" (M.A. Thesis, Queen's University, 1973) and also, "A Noble Dream: The Origins of the Public Archives of Canada," *Archivaria* 15 (Winter 1982–83).

50 Quoted on page 20 in the report, Consultative Group on Canadian Archives, *Canadian Archives, Report to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada* (Ottawa, 1980); See also National Archives of Canada, RG2, Series 3, vol. 5, Privy Council Dormants, 28 February 1872.

Appendix A

Acquisition Strategy Framework: Summary

The following themes and questions are based on the document, *Acquisition Strategy Framework, Private Sector* (27 September 1994), and archivists are encouraged to consult the entire document when preparing an Acquisition Proposal. When applicable, the following themes and questions are intended to assist the archivist in the identification and selection of archival material that is of national significance as possible acquisitions.

The following broad themes are the focus of collecting activity by the National Archives:

1. The natural-physical, social, cultural, political, economic, and scientific development of Canada as a country;
2. The evolution of a sense of Canadian national identity (including French-English relations; Canadian-American relations; native-newcomer relations; multiculturalism and interaction with cultures of origin; relations with mother countries);
3. Issues, events, and experiences typical or representative of life in Canada (rituals/rites of passage, everyday life shared by Canadians and enduring over time, in all fields of life from art and culture to the maintenance and promotion of societal values and issues of gender);
4. Canadian society as it is represented and defined in all its integral parts (regionality);
5. National and international images of Canada, its land, and its people;
6. The interaction between the Canadian federal government and the people;
7. The development and maintenance of national standards (such as human rights, health care, justice);
8. The sphere of national public life, including politics;
9. The Canadian contribution to world development and international affairs;
10. National treasures.

The following questions help identify fonds or records which should be acquired and set relative priorities:

1. Is the creator, fonds or collection, theme or subject of national significance?
2. What was the impact of the records creator on the social environment and on the political, social, economic, technological, intellectual, or cultural aspects of that environment?
3. What effect does the scope of activity of the records creator or the records

have on the impact and the national significance of the records creator or the records?

4. What is the context of records creation and use?
5. Is the contemporary or the historical perspective appropriate for the acquisition effort at hand?
6. What is the relationship of the records of the creator to the actual or projected National Archives public record holdings?
7. What is the precedent for National Archives collecting in the subject area, theme, or topic under examination?
8. In which repository should these records be preserved?
9. In what media form or forms is the record best acquired in order to ensure its preservation and use?