

There is a difference, however, between a commitment of one's resources and time to such an endeavour and a commitment of one's will or soul. From the archival attitudes and beliefs expressed at the Conference I feel that there was an overall unwillingness to be in the vanguard of thinking in the area of archival principles and administrative practices. In many cases the Conference produced a repetition of well known and accepted statements of archival principles and practices. In other areas there was no response to the issue under consideration.

The only justification for this performance is mentioned by one of the archivists: "we all have a good deal to learn". (page 250) I had hoped the Conference would have included a good deal of seminal thinking on the new challenges that statistics and machine readable records are presenting to archives. None was obvious. I can only hope that as a result of the Conference and the publication of its papers and proceedings that seminal thinking will be generated.

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ARCHIVES PROCEDURAL MANUAL. Darryl Pololl.  
St. Louis, Missouri, Washington University School  
of Medicine Library, 1974. Pp. v, 118  
\$(U.S.)5.00.

Having recently undertaken to write a 'manual' or 'guide' to archival procedures and practices for the Extension Office of the B.C. Provincial Museum, the reviewer welcomed the opportunity to review another archivist's efforts in this area of endeavour. When the Manual recently arrived, therefore, it was both a surprise and a disappointment.

In the "Preface", Dr. Brodman, Librarian and Professor of Medical History at Washington University, cautions that:

Although some of the directions and decisions refer to specific Washington University School of Medicine situations, most of them are of a general nature and ought to be useful to a larger group.

While it is true there are some excellent general 'rules' and theory in clear statements throughout the text, the bulk of the work is confined to Washington University Library School of Medicine archival procedures and

practices. At best, "the larger group" appealed to by this Manual would be those archivists who are charged with the care of similar collections in archives and special collections across the country. Indeed, a review of the contents quickly established that the Manual would not serve to meet the needs of those persons who by interest or default, in the small museum or historical society, become collectors of archival material. This, however, is not where this reviewer's disappointment ended.

For general distribution, thirty-five of the one hundred eighteen pages of text, devoted to microfilm targets is surely too much. Moreover, the various sample forms such as the "Archival Reference Request" forms (nos. 71, 72 and 81) while very interesting in their detail and completeness would be very difficult of use in practice in an institution with a medium-to-high user rate and small staff; the user would become frustrated or discouraged with the paperwork and the archivist, while keeping very complete statistics, would be faced with a large quantity of paperwork. Finally, the editor has succumbed to the malaise of so many writers of procedural manuals; at a loss for words, they resort to endless flow charts - in this case, twenty-one in the first sixty-eight pages.

As well as the disappointments, there are one or two pleasant surprises. For example, there are some useful and instructive job descriptions in Appendix II, though it is obvious from these that training levels for archivists and 'what to require of prospective incumbents' are problematic in the U.S. as well as in Canada. As well, throughout the Manual under the heading of "General Remarks" in each section, there is a succinct but quite useful statement summarizing basic principles and such basic procedures as, "Establishing Control Over an Acquired Collection", or "Physical Processing of an Acquired Collection".

In spite of its shortcomings, it is thus well worth buying and reading if only, as Dr. Brodman points out, "...that after a series of such manuals are prepared by many archival institutions, a general pattern might emerge to become a standard throughout the country." It is to be hoped that a number of Canadian institutions, as well as American ones, would rise to her challenge.

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