

BOOK REVIEWS

State-Wide Historical Records Needs Survey and Assessment Project Final Report, 1982. By Robert E. Bailey. Springfield: Illinois Historical Records Advisory Board, 1982. 72 pp. Appendices.

Illinois was one of twenty-seven states to receive a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) to study historical records program needs during 1982. NHPRC guidelines called for assessments in four areas—state government records, local government records, historical records repositories, and functions of statewide importance. The Illinois report contains five chapters. The initial chapter summarizes the report and contains the recommendations. A separate chapter on each of the four designated areas follows. They include a number of usefully presented tables. Appendices at the end reproduce the questionnaire sent to repositories and compile information gained from the returns.

The chapter on state government records describes the state's statutory responsibilities since 1961, the state's records management service, and state archives accessions since the mid-1970s. The chapter on local government records also delves into statutory responsibilities enacted in 1961. It then reviews records management services and archival accessions for "downstate" counties (all counties except Cook County), especially those in standard metropolitan statistical areas. It also reviews the dismal situation in Cook County where (in a point repeated more than once) nearly half the state's population resides but where no activity has picked up under the 1961 laws.

The chapter on archives and manuscript depositories analyzes the results of a questionnaire sent to "large" and "small" repositories across the state. Focusing on priorities that the respondents established, the report calls for cooperative programs in the particular areas of conservation, purchases of supplies, and automation. The chapter on statewide functions discusses three concerns: the Illinois Regional Archives Depository (IRAD) network; conservation functions, particularly the Illinois Cooperative Conservation Program (ICCP) and how archival centers can interact with this facility based

at the Southern Illinois University library; and archival educational efforts in the state.

As might be expected, the Illinois Historical Records Advisory Board's report addresses points of both strength and weakness. With established records management programs for the state and the local level, except for Cook County, the board recommends more professional staff on a temporary basis, including immediate action in the Chicago area. It urges work with the smaller state agencies and more municipal records accessions from downstate cities. In its recommendations for historical records repositories, the board provides a fresh approach in its call for cooperative purchasing of supplies. On automation, the board may indeed downplay the extent to which archival centers in Illinois have implemented computer applications and established a dialogue related to this technological aid. The IRAD network serves an expanding program for local government records. The state has the base for excellence in conservation with the conservation facility at Southern Illinois University and private firms such as Wei T'o Associates. The state has a multitude of archival course offerings, but the report skirts any evaluative statement when it notes that nearly as many historians as archivists serve as instructors.

For the board, the main problem is, what to do about Cook County? It tries persuasion, noting that cities such as Cleveland, Dallas, Detroit, Milwaukee, and St. Louis have made strides in records management and archival preservation. The immediate action it recommends is truly needed. But does the board itself need to cultivate its archival constituency more effectively? For example, no questionnaire was sent to local government officials; might not officials in Cook County's suburbs or in Chicago have suggested solutions for this stumbling block? Nowhere does the report indicate any collective input from the state's association of local historical societies. Surely, this is a necessary ally. With the report now published, will the board demand a larger role for itself and then move to create alliances needed to see that its recommendations do bear fruit?

George W. Bain
Ohio Historical Society

The Management of Municipal Tape Recordings: Final Report. By Michael Kohl and Bert Hartinger. City of Milwaukee: Sound Recordings Archival Project, 1982. 34 pp. Appendices and bibliography.

Throughout the United States local officials are increasingly aware of the need to exercise control over the vast number of records, representing all media, produced by the governmental units they administer. In the City of Milwaukee this concern for improved records management led to the development of the Sound Recordings Archival Project, funded by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. *The Management of Municipal Tape Recordings Final Report* is a clearly stated, well organized summary of the Milwaukee project. It details the program's progress from an initial inventorying of the City's sound recordings of meetings of Milwaukee committees, boards, and commissions, to the presentation of recommendations for the management of these municipal tapes.

The Sound Recordings Archival Project hoped to accomplish two basic goals. The first objective was to develop a program for the efficient "creation, management, and preservation of tape recordings" designed to meet the needs of the City of Milwaukee. The report provides reliable evidence to suggest the project was successful in developing strategies for the creation, maintenance, and preservation of Milwaukee's tape recordings by means of inventory, appraisal, disposition, and program development. The project staff was able to locate and identify 10,500 reels and cassettes, comprising one hundred series of tapes, in the possession of twenty city departments. At the time of the project's completion, about eight thousand tapes and cassettes had been scheduled for disposition. Procedures were also developed for use by the City of Milwaukee to control tape recordings from creation to final disposition.

Determining appropriate appraisal criteria was an important element in the project's plan for the management of Milwaukee's sound recordings. The report suggests that when archivists and records managers appraise a series of tapes they should begin by examining the recordings for administrative, legal, and research values, and then assess the tapes' physical characteristics and the availability of other sources of information. Although these criteria appear appropriate for use in the appraisal of sound recordings, one must reflect on the report's comments regarding the implementation of sampling techniques in the appraisal process. The report states that when considering research potential the difficult question facing the records analyst is in determining "how much should be saved of the routine, often ordinary matters which comprise a substantial portion of taped committee proceedings." One answer, according to the report, is to preserve a sample of those tapes containing routine, repetitive deliberations, by retaining significant examples or "chunks" of information about the committee's activities. But the difficulty lies in the definition of the terms "ordinary"

or "routine" as applied to the responsibilities and actions of a given committee. For instance, one of the appendices to the project report presents suggested periods of retention for tape recordings in the Milwaukee City Clerk's office; and in the case of the recordings of the Advisory Council on Problems of the Elderly the accompanying notes on retention recommendations suggest that this committee is primarily involved with the "mundane" problems of the residents of city housing for the elderly and indicate that retaining tapes of the first and last meetings as well as a winter and summer meeting should be sufficient. One might contend, however, that the problems of elderly residents are far from "mundane" and a consideration of all their complaints, represented by the full complement of tapes, might be useful to those studying the quality of life for the elderly poor in an urban area. This may be an exaggerated argument but it does suggest the need for objective standards to guide archivists and local officials in this aspect of appraisal; and thus the report might have presented criteria designed to promote the careful and judicious use of sampling techniques.

The second goal of the Milwaukee tape project was to "develop generalized appraisal criteria, supply and equipment standards, and program elements which can be used as guidelines by local governments throughout the United States." Unfortunately the project staff may have overestimated the ability of most municipal governments to provide for their records in a systematic fashion. The report's suggestions regarding the transfer of tapes to city records centers or archival agencies are of little value to municipalities lacking facilities for the maintenance and preservation of city records. Thus the recommendations regarding standards for equipment, recording and indexing procedures, and storage conditions may prove the most useful, serving as guidelines for municipalities in the creation and preservation of future sound recordings.

In regard to format it was distressing to find that the sixty-nine page appendix was twice the length of the project report, and in several instances entire paragraphs from the text were found to be copied verbatim from the attached appendices. A set of footnotes could have provided a detailed summary of the supporting documents, thus eliminating the need to include them as additions to the text.

On balance, however, this is an effective report and its recommendations should be received with enthusiasm by any agency or institution charged with the creation, maintenance, or preservation of sound recordings.

Judith G. Cetina
The Cuyahoga County Archives

Guide to the American Library Association Archives. By Maynard Brichford. Chicago: American Library Association, 1979. 2 microfiche and 8p. pamphlet.

The *Guide to the American Library Association Archives* consists of two microfiche cards containing a record series listing and subject index to the 437 record series and 648 cubic feet of ALA records deposited in the University of Illinois Archives under a 1973 agreement between the ALA and the University of Illinois. The accompanying pamphlet provides information about the deposit of the records at Illinois, explains the PARADIGM system used to generate the series list and index, and provides citations to published studies of the ALA. The two microfiche cards replace 240 pages of computer printout in a form which can be readily and inexpensively disseminated. A quick check of the OCLC terminal revealed that the *Guide*, though published in a modest format, has been widely distributed and is available in many research libraries.

Archivists will be interested in the guide as an example of the PARADIGM system developed at the University of Illinois for administrative and subject control of archival holdings. The record series list is in numerical order. Most researchers will make their initial approach to the ALA Archives through the subject index. Each subject term in the index is followed by the numbers of the relevant records series, sending the researcher to the record series list which includes the series title, span dates, record type (official records, personal papers or publication), volume in cubic feet, date received, date processed and number of pages of supplementary finding aids. There are no series descriptions but each entry in the record series list is followed by the subject terms assigned to that series. According to the explanation of the PARADIGM system given in the pamphlet, subject terms are generated from control cards for each series and supplementary finding aids at the University of Illinois Archives. The lack of series descriptions does not appear to be a serious problem. The list of assigned subject terms and other basic information given in the record series listing should provide most researchers with enough data about the series to make an informed judgment about its relevance to their research. However, the extension of the system to include the descriptive series information evidently available in-house on a control card would appear to be a logical and useful step.

The *Guide* works on subject access. Neither the printed guide nor the microfiche gives a scope note, administrative history, or any other overall description of the records. While an administrative history may be unnecessary given the material available in print on the ALA (bibliographical references are provided in the guide to

available works and important studies which are part of the ALA archives), there is no means of seeing the archives as a whole short of scanning the entire listing of record series. A list of major record groups would be helpful. The system responds best to specific questions.

Many published guides do not reflect the finding aid system in use at the institution that produced them. Often they are abstracts of information from finding aid systems which may be quite different in form and purpose. Researchers going to an institution often find that the published guide is selective or that they must translate the guide entries into the terms actually used by the in-house system. The Illinois guide has the great advantage of being a reproduction for public distribution of an in-house system. Researchers who use the guide should arrive at the University of Illinois Archives with a solid understanding of the nature and extent of the ALA Archives.

In the final analysis, this appears to be a successful guide. It answers the responsibility of the institution to disseminate information about its holdings to the potential users. The format is inexpensive, readily updateable and can be mailed cheaply. It is not separate from the internal finding aid system used at the University of Illinois Archives. Researchers should be able to plan their research strategy through the *Guide* and thus be able to make the most effective use of their time while visiting the archives.

Christopher Densmore
State University of New York at Buffalo

Archival Forms Manual. Compiled by the Society of American Archivists' Forms Manual Task Force. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1982. 145 pp. Illustrations and bibliography. Paper. \$7.00 members; \$10.00, non-members.

The objective of the task force in preparing this forms manual, according to Editor Patrick Quinn, was "to compile a new edition to be comprised of selected forms used in repositories representative of the entire archival spectrum." This edition supplements the Society's popular 1973 *Forms Manual*, and it is indeed representative; it does, as the old cliché goes, "cover the water front." Forms from university archives, church archives, state archives, corporate archives, and historical societies are included. Some obviously were done by professionals, while others are a bit crude. Only 8½x 11-inch forms were selected as they are more convenient to use and also for the sake of encouraging standardization.

Some 90 pages of forms are arranged in several routine categories: Appraisal and Disposition; Accessioning; Arrangement and Description; Use; and Specialized Forms. Each category is further divided into functional activities. For example, the Specialized Forms group contains forms relating to conservation, loan agreements, loans and charge-outs, "out" card forms, micro-reproduction, oral history, photoduplication, photographs, prospective donor information, solicitations, and statistics compilation.

Surely, any archivist who wants to design a new form to cover some phase of an archival operation can find an appropriate model in this collection. However, before attempting major forms design projects, the task force members offer certain practical suggestions such as: (1) "whenever possible attempt to obtain professional advice, particularly from forms designers or forms specialists within the records management profession;" (2) keep the forms simple—avoid complex or unwieldy ones; (3) avoid the temptation of creating too many; (4) seek your in-house lawyer's opinion before adopting new ones, especially if you are unsure of possible legal ramifications; and (5) keep in mind the fact that "hardcopy forms are being replaced increasingly by computerized controls." These suggestions are sound. Other valuable "gems of wisdom" are found in the introductions to the major sections. They define and describe basic archival functions, and they explain that forms are important tools to use in carrying out routine and special activities.

After each section's introduction, there is a brief list of references for additional reading. And, of course, at the end of the manual one finds a three-and-a-half-page annotated bibliography. The writings listed are reasonably up-to-date; most of them were printed after the Society's 1973 edition.

This manual should prove useful to both new and experienced archivists.

Ralph Havener
University of Missouri

Archivists and Machine-Readable Records. Edited by Carolyn L. Geda, Erik W. Austin, and Francis X. Blouin, Jr. Proceedings of the Conference on Archival Management of Machine-Readable Records, February 7-10, 1979, Ann Arbor, Michigan. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1980. 248 pp. Paperback.

Symposia and conference proceedings as publications sometimes deserve a worse reputation than festschrifts; not this one, devoted as

it is to machine-readable (M-R) records in archives. The topic is significant, critical even, for the archival profession as it engages the electronic revolution wrought by post-World War II technology. Moreover, if predictions in papers presented at this conference are reliable, archivists now contemplating the problem posed by M-R records are just seeing the proverbial tip of the iceberg which threatens to overwhelm them. While the "Paper Mountain" is not yet conquered, we are forced to explore the sea of electronic information which seems even larger than any mass hitherto surveyed. Our course is still uncharted. The speakers in this conference hardly provide a map; they barely provide direction, but they do attest that exploration has begun. There is a growing body of experience, if not knowledge, to which one may turn; the papers provide insight not available elsewhere in this inadequate literature, and thus make a viable contribution by describing our start, like cautious explorers, to conquer a new, unheralded mass of data in the hope that posterity inherit the best, genuine information, rather than this generation's electronic garbage; and that we learn to preserve it without debasing it to garbage with our limited knowledge and largely untried processes, but best intentions.

As the editors explain in their acknowledgement, the conference owed its origin to Professors Jerome Clubb of the University of Michigan, the director of the InterUniversity Consortium for Political and Society Research; and Robert M. Warner, then director of the Bentley Historical Library. When funding was secured from the National Endowment for the Humanities, their idea was realized. The stated purpose of the conference was "improving definition of the archival problems presented by machine-readable records; sharing practical experience and information already gained by archivists and others working with machine-readable records; assessing the nature, problems, and opportunities of computer technology; identifying, on a preliminary basis, the training needs and opportunities of archivists; and, . . . bringing collectively developed information to the attention of a wider audience." The latter goal, of course, justified the publication of the proceedings. The others, all of considerable magnitude, were met with varying degrees of success. The problems encountered are so numerous that concise definition or enumeration was difficult, perhaps impossible, given our current inexperience. The educational problem was the most poorly delineated, perhaps because it required the most distant forecasting.

The conference itself had eight sessions, exploring the topics of: 1) research opportunities; 2) archival programs for M-R records; 3) management and dissemination of M-R data for social research; 4) computer technology developments; 5) confidentiality and privacy; 6) implication of M-R records for archival practices; 7) archival training; and 8) future action. The published proceedings collapsed

these sessions into five chapters and a summary, without providing synopses of the discussions as such but instead chapter introductions and résumés. Not all of the conference is recorded or fully summarized.

The first four papers include interesting case studies based on machine-readable records, emphasizing our trends in quantitative historical research. They were more concerned with the topics researched than with archival research methods, except for Meyer Fishbein's brief exploration of the issues involved in appraisal as speculation about potential research value. The study by M.A. Vinovskis, incidentally, should have aroused the ire of archivists; it measured the quality of history departments by its placements of its Ph.D. recipients into professional roles in prestigious academic departments. Archival placements provided no credit for an *alma mater!* The second set, five papers, were descriptions of ongoing archival programs for M-R records at the Public Archives of Canada, NARS, the Public Record Office, and the New York State Archives. All raised similar questions about access and preservation; the latter are better answered in the recent Wisconsin study by F. Gerald Ham *et alia*. As W. L. Rofes from IBM correctly pointed out, the conference title is a misnomer, since focus was on magnetic media and not the whole range of machine-readable formats. The third section treats management problems in disseminating data in and from M-R archives, underscoring how traditional activities like reference service are dramatically changed by the new media.

The fourth chapter is the most technical and hence non-archival in perspective; more than the others, this section demonstrates the archivist's need for computer literacy and at least a minimal grasp of changing technologies in order to cope aggressively with the future. Chapter 5 on confidentiality and privacy, clearly two distinct issues, might have been paired better with chapter 3 on data management. These issues are not discussed as usual, in freedom-of-information terms; the result is an imbalanced perspective reflecting traditional attention to good and safe housekeeping, private rather than public concerns, and managerial caution, without a positive approach to information dissemination, creative reference, and commitment to public service. The summary papers by Clubb, Warner, and Blouin provide the archival profession with a mandate for change equally as comprehensive and challenging as that asked of librarians a decade ago. Unfortunately, too few parallels were seen between archivists facing the mass of M-R records and their numerous library counterparts in confronting the problem of mass in bibliographic control. Although the scope of the conference was interdisciplinary to include historians as theoretical counterweight to the computer technocrats, it was still rather parochial in dimension because of its failure to enlist perspectives from museum regis-

trars and curators and librarians and to gain insights from the new breed of information scientists who are slowly transcending traditional barriers, real and unreal, between the various information professions.

Like most conference proceedings, the quality of papers varied from speaker to speaker. One must tolerate a wide variance in style as well as language usage. The social scientists' generalized use of "archives" as an infinitive camouflages a spectrum of vague thinking about distinct archival processes and methods. The lack of precise thinking and discriminating use of archival terminology contrasts sharply with technical precision in several of the presentations. The reader must nevertheless adapt to a non-archival descriptive-bound vocabulary, not always well defined in or out of context, such as "emulation," "compaction," "regeneration," etc.—specialists jargon conceived to cut verbage but which requires some editorial translation in the process of communicating across departmental, disciplinary, and professional lines. Worse still is the reader's subjugation to split infinitives and unedited phrases as "printed out on paper". The lack of systematic, careful editing is also apparent in the absence of a standard citation format; inattention to uniform punctuation; and the frequent use of abbreviations without periods; irrational alteration between classical forms of *op. cit.*, *ibid.*, etc., and short-title reference in footnotes; the unsystematic enclosure of some but not all date clauses in parentheses; the provision of page references for specified monographic citations but not always for serials; and other style problems. The whole manuscript needed a consensus among the three editors for systematic editing, or the severe hand of a single editor before going to press. Nor did the Society of American Archivists' publishing of the volume enhance its presentation. The production is an understandably inexpensive photo-reproduction of a typescript, superimposing a mismatched bold-face San Serif display type for headings smaller than the text's elite Romans. Head and end margins vary and pages are overcrowded. The cover design is poor with its off-centered printing on faded blue. The book could have been made eminently more useful with a master bibliography, uniform short-title references in the paper's notes, and provision for an index.

Despite such drawbacks, this conference's publication is a welcome contribution to archival literature and the editors and organizers deserve due credit for a service too often dismissed as a thankless task. Taken with other such gatherings, this volume takes the current generation of archivists a little further into the realm of electronic communications and information storage and retrieval.

Lawrence J. McCrank
Indiana State University

A Guide to the Perry Belle Bennett Hough Collection in the Lancaster County Library. Compiled by Ron Chepesiuk. Lancaster County, South Carolina: Lancaster County Historical Commission, 1981. 96 pp. Appendices and index. Paper.

The publication of this substantial, expensive-looking guide is an encouraging sign that local libraries and historical agencies are becoming more concerned about preserving and making available the historical records of their own communities. It is rare that a local historical group is able to find the interest and resources to publish a guide to a research collection, and so the Lancaster County Historical Commission is to be commended for its good intentions in sponsoring this work. Unfortunately, good intentions are not an adequate substitute for good execution.

The central problem with this work is that the Perry Belle Bennett Hough Collection is an inappropriate subject for a published guide. In spite of the statement in the Introduction that "the collection in the years ahead will be a prime research source for . . . South Carolina history, particularly the history of Lancaster County," the material which Mrs. Hough collected is generally not what historians have in mind when they are doing local history research. The guide describes a collection which consists mostly of newspaper clippings, museum brochures, copies of documents from the National Archives and other institutions, and Mrs. Hough's own correspondence relating to her genealogical research and her activities on behalf of local historical projects. This collection is undoubtedly useful for answering local history and genealogical inquiries at the Lancaster County Library where it is housed, but it is difficult to see how any original historical research could be done using these materials. If one of the principal reasons for publishing the guide was to alert the historical community to the existence of the Hough Collection, then the effort was probably misdirected, for the collection is unlikely to attract much interest.

In Lancaster County, on the other hand, the guide probably helped to increase interest in local history, but in doing so it may have actually damaged the long-term interests of historians in that area. It is far too commonly believed that historians are interested only in old clippings and brochures on historical subjects, rather than a family's papers or business records. The attention given to Mrs. Hough's collection will only confirm this belief, and thus increase the possibility that records of permanent historical value will be lost.

On its own terms, the guide has several commendable features. The organization of the collection has been intelligently handled, with most of the material grouped according to local, state, or

national interest, and arranged alphabetically by subject. The descriptions of the material in the subject files are remarkable for their detail, and reveal the enormous effort devoted to the preparation of this guide.

But there are also problems. The most distracting problem is the presence of a considerable amount of material which serves no obvious purpose. For example, the guide contains a large number of photographs, but for most of them, there is no indication as to why they are significant for either the collection or Lancaster County. More perplexing is the inclusion of lengthy biographical sketches of President Andrew Jackson and pioneer gynecologist J. Marion Sims. Both of these sketches are longer than the one of Mrs. Hough, and yet the collection contains none of their papers, but only Mrs. Hough's files on their family trees, historical monuments, and other memorabilia. The mistake of including these sketches might have been overlooked if they had been intelligently written, but with sentences like "The War of 1812 was a big opportunity of Jackson's life," the biographies read like a poorly done version of the Golden Book Encyclopedia.

Finally, there is an index which is seriously deficient in providing subject access to the collection. In spite of instructions at the beginning of most sections directing the researcher to use the index to find related subject material in other sections of the guide, there has in fact been very little effort to bring material together under broader terms. As examples, the terms "Agriculture," "Medicine," and "Education" each have only one listing in the index, although a perusal of the guide reveals a considerable amount of material that could logically fall under these categories.

Local public libraries and historical agencies do have an important role to play in preserving the records of their communities' past. But if this work is to have permanent value, it is necessary that they begin with a clear idea of what local history is. The amount of time and resources normally available for local history projects is so limited that it is sad to see them spent on well-intentioned, but misdirected projects like this one.

Eric L. Pumroy
Indiana Historical Society

Manual for Accessioning, Arrangement, and Description of Manuscripts and Archives. By the University of Washington Libraries, University Archives and Manuscripts Division. 2nd Edition. Seattle: University of Washington Libraries, "Communications in Librar-

ianship" series, 1982. 98 pp. Appendix and illustrations. Paper, unbound. \$10.00.

Archival processing manuals produced by and for individual repositories often provide other archivists with useful tips on how common theoretical principles might be applied practically. Seldom, however, do such in-house works provoke substantial reflection on theory itself. The University of Washington manual is a definite exception to this and, as such, merits careful reading by archivists.

Though authorship credit is formally assigned to the entire University Archives and Manuscripts Division staff, the principal creator is Richard C. Berner, head of the Division and for years one of the profession's leading theoreticians on arrangement and description. Berner acknowledges in the introduction that the manual was produced as a direct result of preparations for his most recent work, *Archival Theory and Practice in the United States: A Historical Analysis* (University of Washington Press, 1983) which focuses almost exclusively on the evolution of processing methods. Both publications clearly project theoretical biases the author has held since the 1960s, particularly: 1) that there are no fundamental differences in bibliographical characteristics between archival record groups and manuscript collections, thus the same basic processing techniques can be applied to each; and 2) that the primary finding aid for an individual accession or collection should be the inventory, thus a card catalog should serve only as an index to an institution's inventories.

The University of Washington system described in the manual emphasizes provenance arrangement and the establishment of "progressively refined controls" based on record levels (record group, subgroup, series, file unit, and item). Considerable attention is paid to ensuring the final arrangement of a collection or record accession reflects the apparent source of file creation for all items contained. The key descriptive tool, the inventory, is designed to mirror this staff-imposed arrangement and is prefaced by a brief scope and content "guide" section. Three cumulative card indexes—proper name, subject, and chronological—contain entries derived from the inventories directly and include only the collection/accession title and identification number for each entry. Although their cumulative indexes are not fully integrated, the archives and manuscripts subdivisions perform essentially the same arrangement and description procedures.

The manual is comprised of two parts: "theory" and "practice." Berner and his co-authors do a thorough job of linking these two segments; the practical procedures are firmly rooted in the concep-

tual framework described in part one. Thirty-nine illustrations and a sample inventory appendix clarify the text effectively. The writing style reflects, to an unfortunate degree, the primary author's advanced understanding; several statements assume fairly sophisticated archival knowledge on the part of the reader. The addition of a glossary, or occasional reference to the SAA version, might have made it more beneficial for beginners and those without solid professional training.

Probably the most surprising and potentially controversial element of the Washington system centers around the arrangement procedures employed. In establishing controls according to the record level hierarchy previously referred to, the staff is encouraged to disturb the original order of collections that have one. For example, records arriving at the archives in alphabetically-arranged folders are analyzed to determine if subgroups and series exist, according to the system's definitions, and, if so, they are reordered within the subgroups and series identified. Arrangement by record levels seems a practical and useful approach for chaotic clumps of records or papers, but in cases where an understandable original order exists, it is unnecessary. Smaller repositories than the University of Washington's would have considerable difficulty finding the extra processing time required to change an already workable order. Certainly such practice also must create occasional retrieval problems for a vital user group—the offices of origin.

Though it is becoming more common, I personally disagree with the strategy of having the card catalog function only as a cumulative index to inventories. The manual faults systems that use both cards and inventories as primary descriptive devices, labeling them "bi-furcated." This may indeed be a problem in some institutions, but it need not be. A system which uses descriptive cards may also be integrative, like the Washington system, by leading researchers to inventories should they desire more information. A significant disadvantage to Berner's approach is that it *forces* one to go from the card entry, because of scarce information, to one or more inventories. This creates an unnecessary step for the several researchers whose needs are not especially complex or extensive.

Overall, the manual is well worth reading. The style, organization, and supplemental material serve as useful comparative characteristics for those preparing to produce their own manual. And, the carefully-conceived theoretical issues and corresponding practical applications cause the reader, if not to agree with or fully emulate the process described, to rethink and rejustify his or her own procedures.

Joel Wurl
University of Toledo

CONTRIBUTORS

Donald L. Fixico is assistant professor of history at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. An earlier version of his article was presented at the Midwest Archives Conference, November 19, 1982, in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Joan Rabins is responsible for finding aids at the Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University, where she also coordinates processing and accessioning. In addition, she participates in the graduate education program of the Archives as a lecturer and as supervisor of student projects.

Gloria Thompson is a contract officer at the Minnesota Historical Society. When she wrote the article, she was a field representative for the Society's Division of Archives and Manuscripts. She presented earlier versions of the article at the Midwest Archives Conference meeting in Milwaukee in October 1980 and at the Society of American Archivists' annual meeting in Boston in October 1982.

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