Seeing Records: Remediation in Canadian Archival Theory & Practice

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Land Acknowledgement

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Contents

Abstract v

List of Abbreviations vi

Introduction 1

Positionality 8

Chapter 1: Media Studies theory of Remediation and its applicability to Archival Theory. 11

Immediacy 12

Hypermediacy 21

Applying remediation to archival practice 28

The four central remediations of Canadian archival theory and practice 37

Chapter 2: Situating Remediation within the History of Canadian Archival Theory & Practice. 43

Early Canadian archival theory and practice 45

Theoretical applications of copying/remediation 53

Pre-microfilm copying processes 55

Microfilm 57

Digitization 61

Digital Format Migration 65

Chapter 3: Two Case Studies in Remediation in Canadian Archives. 70

The Brandon Residential School Files – RG10 71

Maple Leaves 88

Conclusion 102

Bibliography and Primary Source 105

Abstract

This thesis explores the applicability of the media studies' concept of hypermediacy in archival practices of reformatting – referred to here as remediation. Specifically, it provides a framework of practice which maintains the provenance of records, including the role of archival co-creators whose work impacts historical knowledge production in archives. The thesis grounds the practice of remediation in the history of archival practice in Canada, exploring the ingrained nature of this practice in Canadian archives and signals the need to re-conceptualize the practice in a way that maintains provenance acquired by records after they have arrived at an archive. The thesis analyzes two case studies of remediation through a framework of hypermediacy and demonstrates how thinking of remediation in terms of hypermediacy can inform a practice which maintains provenance and could additionally serve as a step in the right direction for institutional work on reconciliation.

List of Abbreviations

Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development……………………..…………… DIAND

International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions…………………………. IFLA

Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement…………………………………………. IRSSA

Library and Archives Canada…………………….……….……………………………… LAC

Literary and Historical Society of Quebec……………………………………………..… LHSQ

[U.S.] National Archives and Records Administration……………………………………. NARA

National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation……………………………..…………….. NCTR

Public Archives of Canada……………………………………..……………………….. PAC

Palo Alto Research Centre……..…………………………………………….……….. PARC

Rules for Archival Description…………..………..………………………………………. RAD

Record Group 10……...……………………………………………….…………………. RG10

Superintendent General of Indian Affairs…………………………………….………….. SGIA

Truth and Reconciliation Commission…………………….……..…………………... TRC

University of Manitoba Archives and Special Collections……………….……………… UMASC

Virtual Reality…………………………………………………………………………… VR

Introduction

In his foundational essay "Seeing Archives", Tom Nesmith posits that a significant feature of the postmodern view of communication is that "there is no way to avoid or neutralize entirely the limits of the mediating influences which, thus, inevitably shape our understanding."[1] There is no way to avoid mediated experience. No form of communication, which records invariably are, is unlimited in its ability to represent reality, as all communications are mediations. Any improvement in understanding through communication can only come from identifying and pursuing all of the possible mediating factors. In archival settings, the exploration of those mediating factors, as Nesmith points out, sheds light on the role of archivists as key mediators or constructors of the knowledge available and produced in archives.[2] In the years since its publication, archival literature has acknowledged the role archivists and archival institutions play as knowledge shapers[3], however some historical scholarship continues to view archives as neutral repositories which merely acquire and house vast quantities of records.[4] Archivists, in this view of the institution as a sort of natural resource with extractive potential, acquire a passive and incidental role as records recipient and keeper. However, archivists play an important role in shaping and creating the records and knowledge available in archival holdings and as such, the impact they have on records needs to be made visible to the users of archives.

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[1] Tom Nesmith, "Seeing Archives: Postmodernism and the Changing Intellectual Place of Archives," *American Archivist* 65, no. 1 (2002): 26.
[2] Nesmith, "Seeing archives," 26.
[3] For example: Emily Monks-Leeson, "Archives on the internet: representing contexts and provenance from Repository to website." *The American Archivist* 74, no. 1 (2011): 38-57 and Geoffrey Yeo, "Trust and context in cyberspace." *Archives and Records* 34, no. 2 (2013): 214-234.
[4] For example: Arlette Farge, *The Allure of the Archives,* New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013. See also: Carolyn Steedman, "After the Archive," *Comparative Critical Studies,* vol. 8, no. 2-3 (2011), 323. Steedman specifically states that "no archive is the place where historical knowledge is produced" here, continuing to view archives as neutral repositories for records and where meaning-making and knowledge production is done by historians, after the archive.

Several historians' work has specifically drawn attention to this very notion and highlights the role record keepers play in knowledge production in archives and the need for visibility of this impact on archival knowledge production and intervention, countering the more common narrative of archive as neutral.[5] As Helle Jensen points out in her discussion of the impacts of digital archiving, "without knowledge about the economic, political and technical aspects of digital archives, users are in the dark when it comes to questioning how digital archives act as co-producers of historical research."[6] Jensen's work also significantly highlights one of the most active sites of archival intervention, the migration of records from one medium to another, or *remediation*.

Archivists' work in processes of reformatting, which will be referred to here as remediation, must make visible the range of mediating factors that result in remediated records. Media studies provides a framework for discussing the work of archival remediation, chiefly through the concept of hypermediacy. While media studies literature tends to use "remediation" as a theoretical framework for analysing the way media is remediated, the word itself can be used to describe the practice of reformatting in archives. For this reason, I use "remediation" as a descriptive category for the practice of moving records from one medium to another, or in the creation of a new record through the process of reformatting.

Hypermediacy is a concept found within discussions of remediation in media studies. Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin's theory surrounding hypermediacy analyzes media which highlight the juxtaposition between older media and their remediations, valuing the contrast and

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[5] Alexandra Walsham, "The Social History of the Archive: Record-Keeping in Early Modern Europe," *Past and Present,* supplement 11 (2016), 9-48. See also: Filippo de Vivo, Andrea Guidi and Alessandro Silvestri, "Archival Transformations in Early Modern European History," *European History Quarterly,* vol. 46, no. 3 (2016), 421-434; and Helle Strandgaard Jensen, "Digital Archival Literacy for (All) Historians," *Media History,* vol. 27, no. 2 (2021), 251-265.
[6] Jensen, "Digital Archival Literacy," 252.

visibility of both media in the final product as a way to view the lineage of media which came before the media in question.[7] While the theory has been critiqued in the years since Bolter and Grusin first proposed it[8], using the concept of hypermediacy generally can allow archivists to maintain essential provenance information about archival remediations, making visible the range of archival interventions and their impacts on the records being remediated. By looking at and applying the media studies concept of hypermediacy, we can develop a conceptual framework for archival remediations which emphasizes and explores these important mediations. This framework values and maintains provenance and makes visible the role of the archivist as a shaper of archival knowledge to record-users.

While Nesmith's "Seeing Archives" provides a strong starting point for this project by identifying the role archivists play in archival knowledge production, he does not consider one of the most explicit sites of record creation by archivists – remediation. While in descriptive practices or in acquisition archivists may not themselves literally create new records as part of their co-creation of the archives, in practices of remediation they do. Through remediation, archivists start with one record, the original, and end with two, the original and the new, remediated record. The context of creation for the remediated record is wholly dependent upon the choices and circumstances of the archival intervention. The medium of remediation, which records are remediated and for what purpose are all determined by either the archivist or through the situated agency of the archivist within the archival institution. The remediated record is then also subject to the decisions in descriptive practice of the archivist once again. Yet, despite

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[7] Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, *Remediation: Understanding New Media,*

[8] Issues with Bolter and Grusin's theory of remediation are discussed in the first chapter of this thesis in relation to some critiques of their theory by John Bonnet, specifically looking at how their conceptualization of remediation includes too broad a scope and thus ignores the historical context of media's creation and the agency of both the viewers and creators in media production.

"authoring" the record in many ways, the archivist's intervention is not visible to the users of the remediated record. Nesmith discusses the necessity for this impact to be visible to record users, however he does not include a model for making this role visible. The visibility of archival interventions in his work seems to instead hinge on educating archival users to be questioning and not on requiring archives to be explicit to users about their impacts on records. Nonetheless, a model for remediation which makes explicit the archival interventions inherent in practices of remediation and which conveys that impact to users is essential, so that archives can explicitly identify their role as co-creators of the archival records that users access.

The core functions of archival work are appraisal and acquisition, preservation, arrangement and description, and access. In most cases of archival remediation, the cited reasons for remediation fall within the functions of preservation and access. The function of access is likely the most commonly cited goal of remediation. The use of records is the primary goal of most, if not all, archival institutions. All functions of the archive aim in some way towards access to the records. We acquire records so that they can be used, we preserve records to ensure future use and we arrange and describe records to improve their accessibility. Remediation is often done in order to provide greater access to records' content, by providing remediations of records in media which are more easily transferred or moved between institutions and individuals.

Preservation, as a function of archival work, is concerned with maintaining the physical and intellectual integrity of records to ensure those records remain intact and available for future use.[9] Most discussions of preservation within archival theory are concerned with the genuine origins and continuous preservation of the material qualities of records. Despite the concerns

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[9] Michele V. Cloonan, "Preserving Records of Enduring Value," *Currents of Archival Thinking,* 1st ed., ed. Terry Eastwood and Heather MacNeil (2010): 69-70.

with genuine origins and condition, records do change through the function of preservation. Records deteriorate, are treated, rehoused and reformatted through the process of maintaining their integrity and use. As such, there are many concerns with how preservation is done and what is changed by way of preserving the record. In many discussions regarding notions of original records versus copies, issues regarding remediation as a method of preservation arise. The migration of archival records, both digital and non-digital, has been a point of consideration in archival literature for many years. Remediation for purposes of preservation seeks to make records more widely available, minimize use of the original records, provide safety copies of records and move records to more stable media. Many concerns regarding copying or reformatting stem from perceptions of the original record, and the provenance of that original record. Debates raise questions of whether the provenance of the original record is accurately represented by its copy, and whether the right properties have been transferred to maintain authenticity. These discussions arise due to perceptions among archivists and archival researchers that remediating a record simply provides a new means of access to the content of the record, rather than creating a new record altogether. However, remediation always and inevitably creates a new record, with the archivist or archival institution as its co-creator.

The creation of records by archivists through processes of remediation has not been well addressed in the archival literature, where reformatting often is seen as a new way to view the original record, and not as creating a new record. This is where discussions of "significant properties" and issues of change arise.[10] In viewing these processes as tools for viewing the

[10] Geoffrey Yeo, "Nothing is the Same as Something Else," 87. I have taken the idea of significant properties from this article by Yeo, though he was not the creator of the concept. Among the earliest to discuss significant properties is: Hedstrom, Margaret, and Christopher A. Lee. "Significant properties of digital objects: definitions, applications, implications." In *Proceedings of the DLM-Forum*, vol. 200, pp. 218-27. 2002. Yeo and other's writing in the archival scholarship focus on what changes features when records migrate, however this very understanding

original record, rather than as creating a new record in a separate medium, we ignore those mediating factors which influence our understanding. This ignoring of the mediating factors is an ignoring of provenance.

The provenance of records does not end when they enter archives; rather, every step taken by archivists, archival staff and other users adds to the material's provenance and impacts the record's future use in any number of ways. As such, in order to maintain the provenance of archival holdings, we must seek to identify as many of the mediating factors of records as possible, including the role archivists and archival institutions play in record creation and the decisions, biases and understandings that go into that form of record creation. Provenance information is critical to record users in describing why the record was created, how and by whom. This is essential to any analysis of records as it highlights the systems of agency and power inherent in record creation, demonstrates the reasons for a records creation in relation to those systems and tells the user who created the record and what potential biases might be present in the representation of information. At present, little information surrounding the archival interventions of reformatting is available to users when they interact with archival records, and therefore information regarding further provenance information created by archivists is missing from their interpretation of the records. A framework which emphasizes and highlights this provenance of the records, after they arrive at an archive, is critical to the continued work of archives.

Chapter one of this thesis draws on media studies literature and explores the dual logics of remediation, immediacy and hypermediacy, and their applicability within archival theory and practice. By applying the media studies theory of remediation to archival practice, it

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suggests they view the remediated record as a continuation of the same original record in a new medium, rather than a newly created record.

demonstrates the possible framework which an understanding of hypermediacy can provide for archival remediations and how that framework highlights provenance, the role of archivists and the importance of making visible their situated agency. By discussing how that framework might be applied to the core remediations of archival practice, it makes clear how an understanding of hypermediacy could function in archival work.

Chapter two examines the history of remediation in Canadian archival theory and practice, demonstrating the ingrained nature of remediation through the older notion of "copying". The chapter explores the literature and practices surrounding some of the most key remediations in archival practice: scribal copying, microfilming, digitization and digital file format migration. By delving into the history and theory of these remediations, I establish that remediation is an intrinsic part of Canadian archival practice which is both critical and valuable to the work of archives. This illustrates the importance of reconceptualising our framework of remediation.

The final chapter provides a critical analysis of two case studies of remediation and the possibilities of an application of the concept of hypermediacy as a framework for viewing those remediations. The first case study focuses on the *Black Series* of the RG10 records from the Department of Indian Affairs, and more specifically the reorganized *School Files Series*. This series provides a particular opportunity to explore how remediation has occurred in the past at the series level, since this series in particular has undergone multiple remediations throughout the duration of its existence. In viewing the remediations of this series through the lens of hypermediacy, I explore how hypermediacy might be applied in an archival setting. The second case study looks at the records of the Dysart Collection at the University of Manitoba Archives and Special Collections which are being included in the Maple Leaves Project. This ongoing

project looks at intellectually absorbing the rare books and manuscripts of the Dysart collection into an archival database, along with the purchase records associated with these rare books. As the project guidelines were developed with some understanding of the concept of hypermediacy in place, the project provides an opportunity to explore how archival frameworks can incorporate hypermediacy into the planning for remediations.

Positionality:

In archival studies, Terry Cook, Tom Nesmith and others have called for a greater transparency of archivist positionalities and the potential impacts of personal position on archival work. The positionality of who is intervening and shaping archival records plays an important role in what understanding can be gained from those records. Since the emphasis of archivists as shapers of archival knowledge and creators of continued provenance is foundational to this thesis, it stands to reason that I should start by examining my own positionality and how it may shape my work.

I grew up here in Winnipeg, but also in rural Manitoba communities and in Salmon Arm, British Columbia. I have, like many records, migrated a number of times thus far in my life. My family moved often and for varying reasons such as job opportunity and family conflict. I have lived in several different homes and am no stranger to continual change and thus find myself drawn to notions of change in both archival work and life. I am further shaped by my mostly rural, Catholic upbringing and my subsequent leaving of the church. I had very limited access to the internet and technologies common amongst peers my age until about the age of sixteen and still contend with missing much social and generational knowledge from those years. After many years subject to and educated about the harms of the Catholic church, I left the faith. My experience as an ex-Catholic has certainly provided biases in my view of other harms perpetuated by the Catholic church, especially their role in the Residential School system in

Canada. Additionally, prior to moving to a more urban environment, I had almost never heard acknowledgements of the Indigenous lands upon which we lived.

Both sides of my family are white, European immigrants who came to Canada in the 1950s-1960s. My grandparents moved around the country as children before settling in rural Manitoba. All of them learnt English and adapted to the flow of life in this country, to some extent abandoning the language and traditions of their home countries. While cultural loss is something I contend with, their privilege as white settlers and dedication to creating a good life here has made it so that I had relative ease in affording to make it this far in my studies. The privilege I am afforded by my white status means that both inside and outside of academia, I have been largely accepted and have had opportunities that other people have not. As this thesis in part works with the colonial records of Indigenous peoples and records of the harms of the Residential School system in Canada, I want to note that I do not have experience with these conditions as a white settler in this land. I have benefitted from the colonial institutions which made settlement on Indigenous lands a reality. As such, I have no personal experience with the hardships of this system and the struggles of its aftermath. I am therefore seeking to better understand and contend with those harms and the records of that system and how we can work in better ways going forward to de-colonize archives and record spaces for Indigenous users. To do such, I have been guided by principles like the Steering Committee on Canadian Archives' *Reconciliation Framework*.[11] Frameworks like this one, which acknowledge the harms done by the Canadian archival community to First Nations, Inuit and Metis, have broadened and guided the ways I have dealt with topics of reconciliation and colonial power in this thesis.

[11] The Steering Committee on Canadian Archives', *Reconciliation Framework: The Response to the Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Taskforce,* 2022. Accessed: https://archives2026.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/reconciliationframeworkreport_en.pdf

Most of the research and writing for this thesis was undertaken during the coronavirus pandemic, which was declared in March 2020. The Maple Leaves project had been a collaborative effort which was halted by the shutting down of most archival institutions at the beginning of the pandemic and which remained on hold for the duration. In addition, I had initially planned on being able to view the records of RG10 in person at Library and Archives Canada in Ottawa. However, the ongoing pandemic made travel nearly impossible and the focus of that case study needed to be shifted towards the remediated records. The choices I have made in altering the original scope of these case studies are due to the limited nature of in-person research over the past several years.

Chapter 1: Remediation in Media Studies and its Applicability to Archival Thinking

In his critical work on postmodernism and archival theory, Tom Nesmith highlights the necessity of the visibility of archival work. Archivists do not simply acquire and store records, we co-create and shape the knowledge of those records and in doing so play a vital role in the shaping of societal memory.[1] The users of archives often hope to look past the archival institutions and their practices towards something else in the past: the original records which hold, to them, seemingly greater value and interest. Archivists perpetuate a perceived invisibility of our work, specifically acquiring original records which are thought to have special ability to act as a looking glass onto the past. The information provided alongside those original records constructs a landscape where the work of the archivist might be viewed as a neutral means of communicating the records history to the users, rather than a record shaped by the knowledge and understanding of the archivists who describe them. However, archivists play a substantial role in shaping the historical record, especially in terms of remediation, and that shaping is impacted by the biases, understanding and ways of knowing of each individual archivist. As such, the visibility of archival work to records users is essential to understanding the full provenance of archival records, so that the entire context of a record's creation can be understood by those who view them.

The functions of preservation and access in archival theory both determine that the reformatting of records onto new media is a necessary and favorable practice that ensures

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[1] Tom Nesmith, "Seeing Archives: Postmodernism and the Changing Intellectual Place of Archives," *American Archivist* 65, no. 1 (2002): 26-28.

longevity of original records, access across distance and safeguards against total loss.[2] The discussion of this migration largely focuses on how one record might be captured in a new medium, rather than how we might contend with the creation of a new record, which is the hallmark of a remediation.[3] While current archival theory is well versed in discussion of why remediation is necessary and what qualities are gained and lost through that change, the majority of archival literature is largely still focused on significant properties and how to bring archival users closer to the original record, perpetuating an invisibility to archival work and obscuring the provenance of archival intervention. Media studies can offer a different viewpoint for the discussion of reformatting in archives, namely through its theory of remediation. This chapter explores the dual logics of remediation: transparent immediacy and hypermediacy, and what those look like under the umbrella of remediation. While media studies predominantly uses remediation as an analytical framework, I will use remediation as a descriptive category for the act of moving from one medium to another, especially as it applies to archives and archival practice. This chapter then examines how we can apply the media studies theory of remediation to archival theory, demonstrating a new way to conceive of the act of remediation in Canadian archival theory and practice.

Immediacy:

Some of the most foundational literature for the theories of remediation comes from David Bolter and Richard Grusin. Their 2000 book, *Remediation: Understanding New Media*, is an introduction to the analytical concept of remediation.[4] Remediation, for Bolter and Grusin,

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[2] Sir Hilary Jenkinson, *A Manual of Archive Administration: Including the Problems of War Archives and Archive Making* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1922), 117. See also: Preeti Kaur, “Microfilm in the Archives: Past Use, Present Sustainability and Future Transformation,” (M.A. Thesis, University of Manitoba, 2019), 20.

[3] Geoffrey Yeo, “Nothing is the Same as Something Else: Significant Properties and Notions of Identity and Originality,” *Archival Science* 10 (June 2010): 104-105.

[4] Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, *Remediation: Understanding New Medi*a (MIT Press, 2000),

works under two representational strategies: transparent immediacy and hypermediacy.[5] Beginning with transparent immediacy, Bolter and Grusin introduce the idea that most modern media are immersive media. This means that they are media that are meant to "disappear". The strategy of remediation through transparent immediacy attempts to make the medium invisible by erasing or concealing the process of remediation.[6] While using these media the viewer should forget that they are looking through a computer interface or microfilm reader and feel immersed in the medium being presented, whether that be a virtual reality simulation, film or even a digitized object. The goal with transparent immediacy is to create a sense of presence, inviting the viewer to feel as though they are truly experiencing the content the medium is presenting. For this to work however there would need to be continuous objects which fill the field of vision without rupture. Modern media is full of rupture, such as slow frame rates, bad graphics, dull lighting, system glitches and crashes and of course the edges of our screens. The same logic can be seen in non-immersive media such as digital graphics. The goal with these media has been to make movement with the desktop interface feel natural, giving users the ability to flip pages, drag and drop things and move around.[7] Bolter and Grusin posit that what is wanted here is an "interfaceless interface", where the medium "erases itself, so that the user is no longer aware of confronting a medium, but instead stands in an immediate relationship with the contents of that medium."[8]

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[5] Jay David Bolter, "Remediation and the Desire for Immediacy," *Convergence,* Vol. 6, No. 1 (2000): 62.
[6] Bolter, "Remediation and the Desire for Immediacy," 62.
[7] Meredith Bricken, "Virtual Worlds: No Interface to Design," Michael Benedikt, ed., *Cyberspace: First Steps,* Cambridge, (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1991): 3. See also: Bolter and Grusin, "Remediation," 22. – Both Briken and Bolter/Grusin discuss the development of digital interface with the goal of having movement within the interface feel as natural as possible. However, this discussion of what feels natural is based on the technologies preceding the development of the personal computer. Flipping pages on a screen only feels natural due to the much earlier medium of the book or the bound manuscript. A keyboard only follows naturally from the medium of the typewriter, etc.
[8] Bolter and Grusin, *Remediation*, 24.

Immediacy as the goal of mediation can be likened to the Albertian window in painting. In Leon Battista Alberti's *On Painting and On Sculpture,* he describes how he begins painting by creating a rectangle which he views as an open window through which the subject or object to be painted is visible to the viewer.[9] From here his goal is to create what would look most realistic from that vantage point, the goal being a sensation of presence. You would feel as if you were truly looking through a window to the scene being depicted, you are there. Immediacy in mediation, in almost every type, aims to move through that window, to represent the content in a way which removes the medium representing it. The progression from painting to photography was initially viewed as the perfect Albertian window according to Bolter and Grusin. "The photograph was transparent and followed the rules of linear perspective; it achieved transparency through automatic reproduction; and it apparently removed the artist as an agent who stood between the viewer and the reality of the image."[10] Yet despite the allegedly perfect capture of external reality, photography did not satisfy the need for immediacy. Between the viewer and external reality still stood this mediation: the photograph and its creator.

The search for immediacy in mediation has been a long sought after goal in many media fields, with many arguing that painting, photography, film, television and even computer graphics can never achieve unmediated presentation. The only medium that comes close to an unmediated presentation is modern virtual reality. Virtual reality is one of the first mediums of presentation that allow the viewer to move through the Albertian window to interact with the "reality" being presented. Yet even here the viewer is still reminded of the equipment and limitations that are present with this medium. Despite near perfect capture and high quality VR

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[9] Leon Battista Alberti and Rocco Sinisgalli, *Leon Battista Alberti: On Painting: A New Translation and Critical Edition,* 39.

[10] Bolter and Grusin, *Remediation*, 26.

technology, we cannot attain immediacy in mediation. Meredith Bricken explores this very notion and posits that "while we interact within a virtual world, we are simultaneously inhabiting the physical world. People are functionally attuned to the earth's gravity and to vertical position. Perceptual conflicts between the virtual and physical worlds cause physical discomfort and feelings of disorientation that can last well beyond the period of inclusion."[11] This inclusion refers to the movement beyond that window and into the presented information; to interact with the content beyond the interface in a natural and human way. To attain such a level of inclusion in mediation would require designing our modes of mediation through determination of the most natural and satisfying behaviours for users.[12] As an example of this type of design tool in an archival interface, this would be something like allowing the flipping of pages on a digital manuscript to feel natural and similar to flipping pages in reality. Or allowing the manuscript to completely fill the vision field within the interface, so that interacting with the manuscript is more seamless and closer to reality. Additionally, the window of the interface would be expandable to interact with the digital object on its own, yet allow transition back to the window or interface with the metadata just as an archival box and retrieval slip would hold the record and its metadata. Seamless transitions and natural interaction capabilities with the digital object would be the most important aspects of design in this model of remediation. However, is immediacy truly the desired outcome of remediation in archival practice? While immediacy is an initially attractive theory from an archival perspective, with the theoretical potential to allow the user of digitized records to interact with the record as though they had the physical, original record in front of them, the erasure of the medium of presentation hardly seems to fit with archival theories of provenance or authenticity and additionally obscures the role of archivists

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[11] Bricken, "Virtual Worlds: No Interface to Design," 2-3.
[12] Bricken, "Virtual Worlds: No Interface to Design," 3.

and archival institutions as creators of remediated records, and all the responsibility and power that role entails.

In his work on sound recordings as archival materials, David Cuthbert posits that seeking immediacy through the practice of remediation in an archival setting should not be the goal. Sound recordings as an archival medium were initially appealed to through their supposed ability to convey the immediacy of a particular moment, or to allow the user to hear the sound recording as if present in the recorded moment (i.e. a record that could act as a looking glass onto the past).[13] Thomas Edison, an inventor of the phonograph which allows recorded sound to become a possible archival record, similarly believed sound recording to be a perfect record capable of preserving and presenting perfectly the utterances of the past as if they were present.[14] In other words, capable of immediacy. It was a common feature of nineteenth century media to be initially lauded for their perceived ability to present records or experience with as little mediation as possible. Late nineteenth century technology and its inventors applauded the ability to remove as many barriers in media as possible. The fewer barriers between the individual and another, or between the individual and the artifact, the better the medium.[15] This erasure of medium in favour of immediacy to the content or information being presented had been lauded as the ultimate goal of remediation in a number of settings, and was used as justification for the value of certain media, such as sound recording.[16] However, Cuthbert argues that archivists should resist that association of sound recording with a more immediate or "immersive" record of the past, as it obscures both the provenance of records and the role of archivists in that provenance.

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[13] David Cuthbert, "The work of archives in the age of audio reproduction: archival theory and recorded sound," (M.A. Thesis, University of Manitoba, 2016), iiv.
[14] Cuthbert, "Archival theory and recorded sound,"1-3.
[15] Carolyn Marvin, *When Old Technologies Were New: Thinking About Electronic Communication in the Late Nineteenth Century,* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 194.
[16] Cuthbert, "Archival theory and recorded sound," iiv.

Not only does a drive for immediacy obscure the provenance information acquired by records after their arrival at an archive, it also maintains the invisibility of the role archivists and archival institutions play in shaping the knowledge available about records and the power and privilege of that position. As such, the invisibility of that role and the creation of records therein continues to perpetuate systemic colonial narratives and power structures without allowing for archivists and archival institutions to be held accountable for decisions, biases and descriptive language used in the creation of remediated records. How can record users analyze the whole context of a record's creation if part of that information is obscured or erased, or worse; presumed not to exist at all? Remediation must acknowledge itself in some way, lest the creation of the remediated record fail to be noticed and accounted for in users' interactions with records. Remediation is done with purpose, especially in archival practice, and there are always guiding principles, policies and biases that go into the creation of remediated records. These are part of the context of creation for remediated records and these aspects need to be acknowledged and made known to the users of these records so that the whole provenance of the record being used is visible.

If the goal of immediacy is to mediate records through erasure of the medium being used, then the provenance of the record being used by archival users is obscured, as it becomes invisible. However, is there ever an instance where a medium is truly erased? Even when we interact with an original record we are confronted by its medium. Whether that be ink on paper, sound recording or one of any other of the many media types present in archival settings, the medium of the record is always present in our interactions with it. To move beyond that Albertian window with archival records would be to ignore the circumstances and choices that have brought the record, in whatever medium, to be accessible to users both in a physical setting

and across the globe. This is one aspect that critics like John Bonnet point out in discussion of the flaws of Bolter and Grusin's theory. Bonnet notes that there is a lack of accounting for media's interaction with environment and the historical changes and circumstances that align for remediation to take place in the ways they do over time.[17] Media, as something born of specific times and places, must be understood within the unique contexts which allowed for their creation. Media like digital documents or sound recordings, David Levy suggests, must be understood in the social and historical contexts of their creation. That is, to understand modern media (or really all media) through the lineage of past media, which have sought over time to provide different varieties of access and support certain roles in human society.[18] In his exploration of documents, which he describes as tools meant to preserve and hold testament to human transactions and thought, Levy touches on this notion of the context of a medium and its importance:

> It's a curious thing about documents: you can't see them if you don't look at them; but you also can't see them if you look only at them, ignoring the surroundings in which they operate.[19]

In this, Levy is discussing how the medium of records or documents must be viewed in the context of their creation. Media do not spring into existence without a thought towards their purpose or without circumstances allowing their existence. For instance, it was not until the middle of the nineteenth century that the process for making paper from wood pulp became commercially feasible. With the invention of the steam engine as a power source, paper became available at a large and affordable scale. Prior to this, paper making was costly and could not be

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[17] John Bonnet, "Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, Remediation: Understanding New Media," *Journal of the Association for History and Computing,* vol. 5, no. 1 (May 2002).
[18] David M. Levy, *Scrolling Forward: Making Sense of Documents in the Digital Age,* (Arcade Publishing, 2011), 40.
[19] Levy, *Scrolling Forward,* 82.

done at a large scale, making paper documents expensive to produce.[20] The large expense associated with the creation of documents limited who had access to and could create records, changing the types of information being recorded.[21] This often meant that records creation from times before the relative abundance of paper would have been reserved for those who could afford it; usually white, powerful and male creators whose narratives and biases then become over represented in written records.[22] Cuthbert notes that the medium of records have been described in archival practice as "the physical material that serves as the carrier of information," but that medium is more than just a physical material.[23] Ala Rekrut notes that little archival analysis has explored the material nature of records, rather that dominant practices privilege the intellectual content of the record as if the medium were a mere container with no impact on the content recorded. However, this is not the case. "The sizes, shapes and weights of records structure the physical interactions between records and their users, and changes in their presentation or physical condition may provide evidence of use and stewardship."[24] This means that the material, or medium, of the record is one of the most essential and primary sources pertaining to a record's circumstances at creation. A definition of medium as purely physical allows for the separation of the content from the medium, as two separate things to be contended with, when really they need to be understood in conjunction. Just as how inventions associated with paper record production impacted the types of things being recorded, non-paper media are affected by the chain of creation that led to their inventions and the ways that any medium is

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[20] Levy, *Scrolling Forward,* 61-62.
[21] Elizabeth Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change,* (Cambridge University Press, 1980),
[22] Jarrett M. Drake, "RadTech meets RadArch: Towards A New Principle for Archives and Archival Description," *Archivy* (6 April 2016).
[23] Cuthbert, "Archives in the Age of Audio Reproduction," 6.
[24] Ala Rekrut, "Matters of Substance: Materiality and Meaning in Historical Records and their Digital Images," *Archives and Manuscripts* 42, no. 3 (2014), 238.

eventually adopted by society. As such, the chain of creation for non-paper media can impact what is recorded on those media as well. This is an element of remediation that Bolter and Grusin do not leave much space for in their analysis of media. Since in their view, the cultural and social environments themselves have become remediation, they do not properly account for historical change and the circumstances allowing for technologies to exist and enable the process of remediation.[25] This addition is critical to an analysis of remediation, especially in an archival setting, as historical change and circumstances of creation are vital provenance for records.

The circumstances and choices leading to a record's original creation, can again be applied when records are remediated. As remediation is an act of creation, there are of course also technological and other circumstances which allow the remediation to be done, as well as choices by individuals and institutions on which records get remediated and why. These circumstances and choices, if not visible to users, can become invisible if immediacy is the aim. To erase the medium of remediation, or to present the remediation as if it hasn't been given new media, is to erase the context of a records creation in remediation and therefore erase the circumstances, choices, biases and power structures at play in that creation. The medium of remediation can be a first indication of the additional layer of provenance available for such records. What were records remediated as, when and why? A first step towards gleaning such information and ensuring it can play a role in a record's interpretation can come from the very medium a record is remediated as. However, more work would be needed to ensure that vital provenance information about archival remediation is not lost or obscured when remediation occurs.

[25] Bonnet, "Review, Remediation: Understanding New Media".

Taking this into account, to strive for immediacy in such a way as to erase the medium through the process of remediation would be to ignore or obscure the provenance and nature of the record. Archival institutions are held to the responsibility of maintaining the authenticity and evidential value of records, "which requires consideration of their provenance, custodial history and interrelationships with other records."[26] As such, considerations of the material nature of records, or their media, are vital as that material aspect conveys critical information regarding provenance, custodial history and so on.[27] Additionally, since the medium impacts what is recorded, to render the medium invisible would be to ignore this aspect of the record in favor of moving closer only to the intellectual content as if the medium and remediation had no influence over what has been recorded at all.

Hypermediacy:

Hypermediacy on the other hand values the confrontation with the medium through which the content is being presented.[28] Not only that but it replicates the varied exposure to medium that is emblematic of the human experience. While immediacy strives to remove the marks of remediation and move through the Albertian window towards the "reality" of the content being remediated, hypermediacy highlights the differences between representation and reality; it highlights the rupture created by any mediation and highlights the creation of something new. The practice of hypermediacy is visibly present in the "windowed style" of internet pages and computer applications. Bolter and Grusin note that when the graphical user interface was invented at Xerox PARC employing a design of resizable, scrolling rectangles called "windows", they were essentially relying on that metaphor of the Albertian window.[29]

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[26] Rekrut, "Matters of Substance," 239.
[27] Rekrut, "Matters of Substance," 238-240.
[28] Bolter, "Remediation and the Desire for Immediacy," 62.
[29] Bolter and Grusin, *Remediation,* 31-32.

With contemporary interfaces, these "windows" overlap and multiply on the screen, each containing their own mediated content that competes for the user's attention. The interface, like many occurrences of hypermedia, does not have a single point of interaction.[30] In each window there is a vantage point, but the user is constantly brought into contact with the interface when moving between these windows. The confrontation with the medium of presentation, in this case the computer interface, multiplies the signs of mediation and brings awareness to the remediation of content into each window through interaction with the medium itself. By viewing the multiplication of media in the windows and navigating between them, the user is made aware of their using this new digital medium while simultaneously being made aware that the remediated content is in fact presented in this new medium and not its original medium. Hypermediacy makes us aware of the medium we are interacting with, even when it is simply a remediation of older media in a different format. This highlighting of the remediation is critical, as Nesmith notes that we can only gain improvement in understanding of archivists' work by exploring as many of the mediating factors as possible.[31]

In their work on remediation and hypermediacy, Ayelet Kohn gives insight into the different goals of immediacy and hypermediacy as they relate to remediation.

> The term 'remediation' refers to adaptations which involve a transformation into another medium. This kind of transformation, widely discussed in both Translation Studies and Media Studies, has also been referred to as 'inter-semiotic translation' and 'medial transposition'. While some adaptations strive to be 'transparent', that is, to eliminate the marks of the previous medium, or any medium, and pretend to have a direct access to reality, others highlight the interplay between different media, resulting in 'hypermediacy'[32]

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[30] Bolter and Grusin, *Remediation,* 33.
[31] Nesmith, "Seeing Archives," 26.
[32] Ayelet Kohn, "Remediation and Hypermediacy: Ezekiel's World as a case in point," *Visual Communication,* Vol. 19, No. 2 (London: England): 200.

Medial transposition and remediation can mean the same thing here: the transition of a record from one medium into a new medium. Adaptations which strive for transparency are aiming at immediacy. Those which highlight the contrast between old and new, or the opacity of the various mediums, push towards hypermediacy.[33] From an archival perspective, hypermediacy might look like a digitized reel of microfilm, which filmed a set of journals. The microfilm captures the original medium of ink and paper, and then once that reel is digitized the digital copy captures the usually black and white reel and shows the edges of the film tape or other characteristics of the microfilm. You can see the evidence and characteristics of all three media; this is hypermediacy.[34] According to Bolter and Grusin, "this form of aggressive remediation throws into relief both the source and the target media" and in their view "the work becomes a mosaic in which we are simultaneously aware of the individual pieces and their new, inappropriate setting."[35] This juxtaposition highlights the creation inherent in any act of remediation, allowing for a new medium which can highlight both the original and the new.

For Marshall McLuhan, in his foundational study *Understanding Media,* the medium dictates and shapes the types of human interaction and association that can happen within that medium.[36] Communication, the foundation underlying records of all media, requires the involvement of our senses in order to receive any message or information.[37] Oral/aural communication requires the ability to hear and speak, but also to see body language and so on. For McLuhan, there is a ratio of sensory use required for each different medium. The configuration and capacities of a medium dictate the possibilities of interaction with each

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[33] Kohn, "Remediation and Hypermediacy," 200. See also: Bolter and Grusin, *Remediation,* 21.
[34] Rekrut, "Matters of Substance," 238-242.
[35] Kohn, "Remediation and Hypermediacy," 200. See also: Bolter and Grusin, *Remediation,* 46.
[36] Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man,* London and New York: McGraw-Hill (1964), 11.
[37] Hugh A. Taylor, "The Media of Record: Archives in the Wake of McLuhan," *Georgia Archive 6,* no. 1 (1978): 66.

medium.[38] So while oral communication relies most heavily on hearing, textual communication relies most on sight amongst other senses for the information to be received by the user of the medium. "In this way, the media of record and communication, as extensions of the senses, create totally new human environments which are not passive wrappings, but active processes at war with previous environments."[39] Just as Meredith Bricken noted that despite virtual reality's closeness to immediacy, people are still functionally aware of gravity and their physical position; McLuhan highlights the same issue in other media.[40] Users are made aware of the juxtaposition of old media in the new because of that change in sensory perception where the sensory environment of the new medium is conflicted with the sensory environment of the old medium. This juxtaposition is hypermediacy's aim. Without that jarring sensation, however uncomfortable, users might not be made aware of the ways in which the message or information has been conveyed, the originally intended medium of reception or in fact the message of the medium itself. This is to say that the juxtaposition is what signals that the medium being viewed is not its original form and that a layer of provenance information might be gained from understanding that remediation and its actors.

This juxtaposition of old and new media and the visibility of the process of remediation is essential provenance information. The content of one medium is often another medium. Writing is a remediation of speech, just as print is a remediation of writing.[41] The modern computer is a continuation of this sequence in which one or more mediums are made into something new. Levy touches upon this very sentiment when he wrote in 1993, "the computer is the writing tool of the

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[38] Marvin, *When Old Technologies Were New,* 158.
[39] Taylor, "The Media of Record," 66. See also, McLuhan, *Understanding Media,* 64.
[40] Bricken, "No Interface to Design," 2. See also: Taylor, "The Media of Record," 66.
[41] Taylor, "The Media of a Record," 4. See also: McLuhan, *Understanding Media,* 24. – Hugh Taylor discusses McLuhan's point that the content of new mediums are the older ones which made it possible.

future."[42] The personal computer, as a writing tool (among many things), falls within the same lineage as quills, pens, the printing press, the typewriter and so on. The tools and technologies of new media are a continuation of the technologies and media already prevalent in human societies. E-mail, Levy points out, is a case in point for how old technologies create the foundation of new media:

> The first e-mail systems, created on time-sharing systems in the late 1960s, allowed users to send textual messages to one another. Although the technology itself was new to many users (the details of how you logged on, how you wrote and sent messages), the form itself wasn't hard to comprehend. The idea of composing a letter or a note to someone was hardly new to anyone. Neither was the business of specifying the address of one's addressee (even if the form, a user ID, was new). And the arrangement of fields at the top – to, from, subject – mirrored the conventions of the memo. [43]

The e-mail, as one new medium in a long line of now common media of communication, was a remediation of the letter or memo. New media develop out of the context of previously common media and adapt the tools and conventions of old media into their new formats. The medium in which information is retained and transmitted therefore shapes the message it conveys by way of its physical and intellectual characteristics and thus the development of any recording medium must be understood as embedded within its particular historical context.[44]

Hypermediacy, as a strategy of remediation, can emphasize this provenance of the medium itself through its visibility of the process of remediation. Hypermediacy aims to emphasize this juxtaposition between original and remediated representations and highlights both the new media and the originally intended media of the information. While immediacy aims at erasure of the process of remediation, it is important to recognize when the medium we are

[42] Levy, *Scrolling Forward,* 40.
[43] Levy, *Scrolling Forward,* 225.
[44] Hugh A. Taylor, "Opening address to the 'Documents that Move and Speak' Symposium," *Imagining Archives: Essays and Reflections,* eds. Terry Cook and Gordon Dodds (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2013), 185. See also: Levy, *Scrolling Forward,* 225-228.

viewing a record in is not it's original form. For example, Levy compares his childhood edition of Walt Whitman's "Leaves of Grass" to an online version of the same work.[45] He notes that while both have the same intention, the same role in transmitting Whitman's work in the form of "typographic letterforms on a flat surface", they are noticeably different in form and content. Levy considers the importance of how the writer of a document intends for their work to be viewed. Whitman, for example, intended his work to be viewed in the form of a bound book. The content of the poems and the form they are transcribed into work together to convey the feeling and information Whitman intends. The online version of the book is not physical in the sense the bound volume is. The laptop is solid but it is not the content being viewed, but only an essential tool through which to view the remediated digital record.[46] The physical medium people are actually interacting with is a digital object viewed through a computer in this instance, not a bound copy of the book.[47]

Bob Cotton discusses a similar example emphasizing the juxtaposition between the intended medium and that of the computer interface. While users are aiming to interact with the content of the original medium, what they are actually interacting with is the remediation of that content on a computer screen in a completely separate record.[48] Hypermediacy makes the user aware of both media through a sort of disembodiment or what McLuhan would describe as a contrast between the sensory environments of the two media.[49] This distinction is important since it demonstrates both the original medium and the new medium which the information has been remediated into; both media are important.

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[45] Levy, *Scrolling Forward,* 225.
[46] Levy, *Scrolling Forward,* 225.
[47] Bob Cotton, *Understanding Hypermedia* (London: Phiadon Press, 2003), 34.
[48] Cotton, *Understanding Hypermedia,* 34.
[49] McLuhan, *Understanding Media,* 64-67.

The identifiable connection between or acknowledgement of past remediations can be understood as a chain of remediation; a connecting line that runs through the material history of a record and demonstrates its custodial history and provenance. Each medium, and the identifiable chain of remediation visible in a framework of hypermediacy, provides provenance information for the content being presented. As discussed by Rekrut, the materiality of each medium conveys specific information regarding the records context, creation and custodial history, all of which is necessary to comprehend the provenance and authenticity of archival records.[50] The visibility of remediation is an essential signal to record users that a new creation of the record has occurred and that an additional layer of provenance must be explored. In Media Studies, this chain of remediation can be maintained in a few ways, most often through visual markers of previous media or the use of descriptive metadata about each act of remediation a record undergoes.

Hypermediacy is demonstrative of the relative abundance of media that is characteristic of human experience. Bolter and Grusin's discussion of the "windows" interface, which has multiple points of interaction and various windows which compete for the users attention, is not strictly limited to media following the invention of the digital.[51] Hypermediacy can be seen throughout history and in many facets of life. "As a historical counterpart to the desire for transparent immediacy, the fascination with media or mediation can be found in such diverse forms as medieval illuminated manuscripts, Renaissance altarpieces, Dutch painting, baroque cabinets, and modernist collage and photomontage."[52] By looking at even medieval spaces as spaces of hypermediacy, Bolter and Grusin explore how modern media replicates an atmosphere of multiple media that is common throughout human history. Medieval cathedrals provide an

[50] Rekrut, "Matters of Substance," 242-243.
[51] Bolter and Grusin, *Remediation,* 33-34.
[52] Bolter and Grusin, *Remediation,* 34-35.

interesting case. With their stained-glass window depictions of biblical and other scenes, statuary, paintings and inscriptions, cathedrals act as common sites of hypermediacy, drawing together multiple media into one space and highlighting their heterogeneity.[53] Art galleries and the nineteenth century cabinet of curiosities (the *Wunderkammer*) provide additional instances of hypermediacy and raise the question: how often do we interact with just one medium at a time? Levy points out that our interactions with media are often varied and simultaneous. Everywhere we go, and regardless of activity, we are surrounded by and prompted with media of all varieties: street signs, radio programs, advertisements, receipts, instructions, invitations, lists, lectures and so on. We are rarely presented with a single medium at a time.[54] Hypermediacy, with its emphasis on multiple media in simultaneous view, replicates the vast exposure to media which is characteristic of human experience and history.

Applying Remediation to Archival Practice:

The media studies theory of remediation encompasses both analytic categories of immediacy and hypermediacy and allows for a spectrum of reformatting to occur that ranges between transparent immediacy and hypermediacy. Applications of hypermediacy are acts of remediation, in that they import earlier media into a digital or other space in order to critique or refashion them without obscuring the medium of presentation. The aim of remediation is to put the viewer or user of the medium in contact with the content in a way which emphasizes those linguistic, cultural, social and economic systems that created that medium.[55] From an archival perspective, those systems are the provenance of the remediated record and also include the systems that allow for the creation of the remediated record in addition to the original. While Bolter and

[53] Bolter and Grusin, *Remediation,* 34-35.
[54] Levy, *Scrolling Forward,* 53.
[55] Nesmith, "Seeing Archives," 24- 41.

Grusin's theory of remediation is not beyond critique, the concept of hypermediacy is still productive and can be used to formulate a framework of practice for archival remediation which maintains provenance.

In the previous two sections, I provided an overview of the two representational strategies of the theory of remediation as they are discussed in media studies literature. While Bolter and Grusin's theory significantly lacks accounting for media's interaction with environment and the historical circumstances that impact what remediation occurs[56], the concept of hypermediacy still serves as a useful framework for how remediation can occur in archival practice. Hypermediacy, in media studies, essentially constructs a visual chain of features which connect remediated records with the records/media they remediate. I've referred to this visual chain as a chain of remediation. This chain, in hypermediacy, visually represents the former medium within the new medium, and keeps intact visual features that construct a chain connecting the old and the new. This is the foundation of the concept of hypermediacy, the visual juxtaposition between the media which creates this chain of remediation.

In these remediations, the new medium is very opaque: a digital copy of a book which has the features of searchability and the ability to highlight and note within the text itself, using digital typing features, and so on. The new medium here presents itself as the medium of desired interaction.[57] Such a strategy risks technological determinism: it does not follow that a new medium is always a better medium for viewing a particular instance of content. A workable framework for remediation, especially in an archival setting where historical change and context are essential, should include features of the old medium in the new one, so that discontinuities between the two are minimized while not obscuring either the older medium or the new one.

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[56] Bonnet, "Review, Remediation: Understanding New Media".
[57] Bolter and Grusin, *Remediation,* 46.

Remediation does not eliminate the older medium; and in fact the new medium remains dependent on the older one in both acknowledged and unacknowledged ways. The goal of archival remediation should be to make visible those interventions of remediation, so that it is understood what the old medium was and how it functioned while also drawing attention to the new medium (or media if more than one remediation has occurred), how we interact with it and the context of its creation.[58]

So, what does remediation look like in an archival setting? Since remediation can encompass both transparent immediacy and hypermediacy, its principles and practices have the ability to mesh with the desired outcomes and goals of all those parties that regularly reformat their media. There is no universally "correct" or "best" way of remediating media, although certain uses of remediation may require different strategies than others. While immediacy may be most favorable for remediation taking place in a setting such as the commercial film industry, where the objective may be to give viewers a seamless experience, remediation in an archival setting must function under a different set of desired goals and outcomes. To imagine what archival remediation might look like it is important to establish an understanding of what archival theory aims for with remediation. The practice of remediation is ingrained in the history of Canadian archival theory and practice and has often been undertaken in the name of preservation – assisting with the objectives of preservation by introducing more stable media, reducing the handling of the often more fragile originals, and providing "security copies" for storage.[59] Remediation has also been undertaken with the desire to make archival records more rapidly available to a wider audience, and to multiple audience in different locations.[60] However, as

[58] Bolter and Grusin, *Remediation,* 46.
[59] Yeo, "Nothing is the Same as Something Else," 87.
[60] Yeo, "Nothing is the Same as Something Else," 87.

noted by Geoffrey Yeo, whatever the objective behind the remediation, there are guidelines for its practice which reaffirm a notion of significant properties – the idea that there are certain essential elements of the original records that must be guaranteed and maintained in the remediated records.[61] Those essential elements, or significant properties, are related to the context, origins and medium of the original record, though which specific elements are necessary to convey these aspects varies by medium and by cultural and social context.[62] This means that determining what properties of a record are essential to carry over in any remediation can provide a considerable challenge.

In their work on the significant properties of digital objects, Helen Hockx-Yu and Gareth Knight note that the designation of significant properties is often "based on the assessment criteria of the assignee."[63] This means that in deciding which components of the record are important to recreate the intended meaning or message, it is possible there might be contention between the intentions of the creator, the remediator and the viewer.[64] Each might identify different significant properties, even drastically so. Those elements might not always be a part of the original creation of the record either. This may not matter in all contexts, but archival users need to be able to "look back" to the time of the record's creation, the circumstances surrounding it and the features of the record resulting from that initial act of creation. However, while a record does represent an event, it also outlives that singular event and gains a life of its own as a physical object.

> Records often undergo many vicissitudes during their lives. They are used and misused, ordered and disordered, lost and found, bought and sold. They can be

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[61] Yeo, "Nothing is the Same as Something Else," 87.
[62] Ala Rekrut, "Reconnecting Mind and Matter: Materiality in Archival Theory and Practice." (M.A. Thesis, University of Manitoba, 2009), 22.
[63] Helen Hockx-Yu and Gareth Knight, "What to preserve? Significant properties of digital objects," Int J DigitCuration 3, no. 1 (2008): 144.
[64] Hockx-Yu and Knight, "What to preserve?," 144.

> added to one collection and then moved to another, or arranged in one way and then rearranged to meet changing needs or respond to changing whims. Inevitably we must consider the possibility of finding significance in features that result from later intervention as well as those bequeathed by the initial creator.[65]

The custodial history of a record and the features resulting from that history must also be considered when determining those significant properties which must be carried over in any remediation. Even the deterioration and damage to original records tells us of the lifetime of the object and conveys essential information regarding its custodial history and provenance.[66] Ultimately, there is no part of a record so miniscule that it's absence could be considered unimportant in the remediation of the record into a new medium. There is no way to be certain that some community, somewhere or at some other time, won't find the omission of an aspect of the record intolerable, no matter how trivial the detail may seem.[67] This is because, as Yeo's article title points out: "Nothing is the same as something else" and there is no way to ensure that remediation replicates the exact features of the original or even carries over the properties each group deems necessary to create a copy. Yeo builds on this notion from Norman Paskin, whose work on making and identifying copies ultimately comes to the conclusion that without a particular defined purpose, the very act of trying to determine whether one thing is the same as another actually shows that nothing is identical to another by virtue of their being separate.[68] The very act of remediation ensures that "nothing is the same as something else". In giving a record a new medium, we are not merely providing a new channel through which contact with the record can be granted to the user, we are creating a new record. The new medium will never be able to *be* the old medium, and there will always be some inevitable "loss" of features of the original.[69]

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[65] Yeo, "Nothing is the Same as Something Else," 95.
[66] Rekrut, "Matters of Substance," 242.
[67] Yeo, "Nothing is the Same as Something Else," 17.
[68] Norman Paskin, "On Making and Identifying a "Copy"" *D-Lib Magazine*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (January 2003).
[69] Bolter and Grusin, *Remediation,* 45. See also: Yeo, "Nothing is the Same as Something Else," 2-3.

The remediated record is a new record, and as such it will not be exact in its replication. [70]

Conceptualized under a framework of hypermediacy this issue can take on a different complexion. In framing copying as remediation, we acknowledge that any reformatting is in fact a new record. Any remediation, regardless of strategy, creates a new and separate physical record where, in the case of archival remediation, the content of the new media is the older or original record. When remediation occurs, we take one record and create another, giving us two records. If we retain both, we have not lost anything, only gained a new record which refashioned or remediated the other.[71] Remediation takes place under the objectives of preservation and access where the desired outcome is that new record. The important thing which must remain intact between the new and the old is the chain of remediation. This essential link between the record and its context (both in content and medium), and between the contexts of the other records of the same series or fonds, is its provenance.[72] To keep provenance intact, we must be able to recognize and understand both the original medium and the new and have access to that chain of remediation, so that the new record might retain the context of the old in addition to its new media context.

In terms of the various strategies of remediation, in an archival setting we can aim for a modified hypermediacy that encompasses some of the defined purposes of archival work alongside the original concept of what hypermediacy is. This is a remediation that highlights the refashioning of the old record in the new and has a clear representation of the new and old media, therefore rendering the chain of remediation knowable and maintaining the provenance of

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[70] Yeo, "Nothing is the Same as Something Else," 104.
[71] Bolter and Grusin, *Remediation,* 44-50; Luciana Duranti, "The Archival Bond," *Archives and Museum Informatics* 11 (1997): 218; Yeo, "Nothing is the Same as Something Else," 90.
[72] Duranti, "The Archival Bond," 218. Duranti does not discuss remediation in this passage, but her treatment of the Archival Bond is similar to the idea of a chain of remediation. An essential link which must be maintained in order to retain the record's provenance.

the (original and new) records.[73] In addition to the chain of remediation, descriptions and policies must also highlight the interventions of archivists in selecting which records are remediated, how they are remediated and why. This sort of remediation might be represented in myriad ways, however the essential feature should be a clear chain connecting the new record to its previous medium. As discussed previously, there is no way to determine the significant properties of a medium that would wholly satisfy the expectations and understanding of what each user deems significant. There is no way to determine with certainty, which elements of a medium must be maintained in the remediated record. So, if the hypermediacy of a remediation cannot be seen visually in those "significant properties" in archival theory, how can a chain of remediation be maintained?

Metadata descriptions can take the place of the visual chain of remediation that is required for hypermediacy. Instead of ensuring visual features that carry through any remediation to connect old media and new, a framework of hypermediacy can use descriptive metadata to convey the same chain of information. This would involve providing metadata about each remediation that occurs for the remediated records that users would interact with, including the date of remediation, the responsible archivist or group and a link or reference to policy that guided the project of remediation. This policy can be anything from an institution wide framework on digitization, to specific decision documents for the remediation project. This descriptive data would need to include information about any additional remediations to the record, in the case of those that have undergone more than one remediation. This data would provide a chain of remediation linking the remediated record back to its original, maintaining the provenance of both the original record and providing the provenance for the remediated record.

[73] Bolter and Grusin, *Remediation,* 46-47.

To fully convey how this might work, I will provide an example from one of the case studies that I discuss in the final chapter. The Dysart memorial collection, a rare book and manuscript collection at the University of Manitoba Archives and Special Collections (UMASC), contains sixty rare books, including thirteen incunabula, and nine manuscripts. The collection covers a large swath of time, however a large portion are primarily of the fifteenth and sixteenth century. These rare books and manuscripts include Catholic liturgical manuscripts, legal documents, ancient histories written in the medieval and early modern periods, literary works, histories and more.[74] A very limited digital exhibition of this collection has been made available, including only one plate from eight of the sixty-nine items. This represents one of the very few remediations that this collection has undergone. In its current presentation, the opening page of the digital exhibition gives a brief overview of the Dysart collection, the catalogue for the collection and on the limited scope of what has been digitized in this exhibit. The functionality of this exhibit then allows users to select from the eight items. Each item, when opened to its viewable page, displays the digitized item alongside a bit of metadata. The description provides the collection name, item number, title of the item and the description from the full collection catalogue. When viewing directly within the digital exhibition, the nature of the metadata is extremely limited by both archival and library standards. There is no information on where within the original the plate is located, no information on how to access the item, and no information on the remediation to the digital exhibit itself.[75] This lack of descriptive metadata means that the chain of remediation has not been maintained in this remediation. However, if the

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[74] University of Manitoba Libraries, "The Dysart Memorial Collection of Rare Books and Manuscripts" catalogue.

[75] University of Manitoba Libraries, "The Dysart Memorial Collection of Rare Books and Manuscripts: Virtual Exhibition". University of Manitoba Archives and Special Collections. Accessed: https://libguides.lib.umanitoba.ca/c.php?g=503468&p=3455074 You can select the eight items from this page and view the information available in each.

digital exhibition were to have been made with a framework of hypermediacy in mind, it would have included a few things that could have maintained the chain of remediation.

Since there are no visual features that can be determined as essential without neglecting others, the chain of remediation must be constructed using descriptive metadata. In the case of the digital exhibit discussed here, the limited nature of the exhibit is not a problem if the metadata can properly construct a chain of remediation through a framework of hypermediacy. In this remediation, the end result would need to maintain a connection between the old and new media, without obscuring the remediation and the impacts the remediators (archivists or librarians in this case) have had on the record presented to users. At the level of the opening page of the exhibit, we are already provided with the information that this is a sampling of the collection and the details of how much was actually included. This page also points users to the full catalogue for the collection, establishing a connection to the original records of the collection. At the individual item level however, some additions would be required to maintain the chain of remediation. Information on where within the original record the plate is located and the medium of the original plate that is depicted would be required to convey the provenance of the original record being remediated. The location or access code, or information on how the item could be accessed would also connect the remediated record with its original. The next step would be to include metadata about the new remediated record as well. The date the digitization occurred, digitized by what means, by whom and a link to any policy or document giving background on the exhibit creation or the remediation process would then provide the provenance information for this newly remediated record. This metadata would juxtapose the original record with the new digital record and maintain the chain of remediation and therefore the provenance of the items. This is important information to include, since without it the user

might assume to have the entire context of the record and miss out on important information about both the original and remediated record, as well as the impacts the remediation has upon the user's interaction with these records. This is just one example of what a framework of hypermediacy could look like in practice, however there a few primary forms of remediation in Canadian archives that should be explored further to expand on how hypermediacy can be applied to archival practice.

The Four Central Remediations of Canadian Archives:

In archival practice some forms of remediation are more common and widely practiced than others. There are four central forms of remediation, some of which remediate records within the same medium (eg. paper to paper) and those which give new medium to the records. The first of these central remediations, and the one which came first chronologically, is that of scribal work, or the remediation of paper records onto new paper, by hand. This remediation is the earliest of Canadian archival practice, being the core method of creating record copies which could be transferred to the new archives in Canada from originals in archives across Europe.[76] The main objective of those programs of "copying" in the nineteenth century was to give access to or make available those records deemed significant for the public and for a perceived notion of what Canadian history looked like at that time. However, during the initial scribal remediations of Canadian archival practice, little care was given to presenting any sort of metadata of the original or of the process of remediation alongside the new record. The new copy was seen as having the exact value as the original, without any of the additional context that should have come along with the creation of those new records.

[76] Ian E. Wilson, ""A Noble Dream": The Origins of the Public Archives of Canada," *Archivaria* 15 (Winter 1982): 16-17. See also: Laura Millar, "Discharging our Debt: The Evolution of the Total Archives Concept in English Canada," *Archivaria* 46 (1998): 106.

In this scribal remediation, it is clear that remediation creates a wholly new record and that the copy created represents its own physical object. With early scribal type remediations however, hypermediacy was not the model. Without the presented information about the original, or its metadata, the user cannot be certain of the record's full provenance or of the work of the archivist responsible for those early remediations. An important element for remediations of a scribal nature would be an indication that the remediation is a copy, inclusion of notation regarding the original and some note regarding the remediation itself. This might look like a transcription of an original journal which identifies itself as a transcription along with the date of transcription, and identifies the original source, its medium and original location, and points to meeting minutes or policy that called for that remediation. These included elements would provide information to users which would signal that the record they are using is a product of archival intervention and highlight the medium of both the new and old media.[77] This would keep the chain of remediation, and therefore provenance and custodial history, intact and provide visibility for the work done by archivists and archival institutions in their creation of those new remediated records.

The second major remediation is that of microfilm. Microfilm is a traditionally viewed remediation, as it is defined by its transition from one medium into a new one. It is not a transition in content within the same medium, as with transcription. Microfilm refashions the medium of a record into a totally new medium. Microfilm, as it has been used in Canadian archives, often represents an imperfect, hypermediated record. A good deal of discussion surrounding the nature of microfilm remediations highlight the potential losses when an original record is microfilmed. However, those discussions tend to view the microfilm as a new way to

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[77] Rekrut, "Matters of Substance," 238-239. Rekrut discusses transparency of archival interventions in the way remediated records are presented.

view the original records, rather than as a new record in its own right. With microfilm, the juxtaposition between the old medium and the new is easily identifiable. As described by Geoffrey Yeo, remediations that move older media into microfilm often come up against losses in their three-dimensional elements, watermarks, colours and so on.[78] It is usually obvious to the user that they are viewing a different version of a record and not the original. The changes made by microfilming are quite stark and create that juxtaposition which notifies the user that they are using a remediated record. However, without knowledge of microfilm as a medium, it is not clear what exactly has happened to the record. Microfilm remediations capture the original record as the content of a newly mediated record, however they are not always explicit in drawing attention to the original medium and what might constitute the complete record in that medium – as when microfilming crops margins (perhaps including marginalia) or neglects to include the verso (which may have been annotated).[79] In an ideal remediation, using a framework of hypermediacy, it would be clear not only that the medium of presentation is not the original medium; but also information, or metadata, about the original would be captured and presented with the newly mediated record. Additionally, descriptive databases providing microfilm copies could present a date for the microfilming and link to the policy or decisions that created the microfilm records. As an example, this might look like the box for the reel or reel itself containing the information about the location, date and item description of the original along with the new reel number, and a date for the microfilming provided on the reel. This would keep intact and make visible the chain of remediation by demonstrating that this new record is a

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[78] Yeo, "Nothing is the Same as Something Else," 105.

[79] Ryan Eyford, "Transferred, Preserved and Destroyed: The Dominion Lands Branch's Manitoba Files," *Archivaria 95*, (2023), 123-128. Eyford discusses how microfilming created poor-quality copies of records and the subsequent destruction of the original records.

remediation of the original, a separate object with its own custodial history and creation context.[80]

The third major remediation of Canadian archival theory and practice is digitization. Digitization is another traditionally viewed remediation. Like microfilm, digitization refashions older media into a new medium, creating a record whose content is the older media in this new format. Digitization, however, often adds an additional layer of complexity. Digitization is not always done from original to digital, many times it is a digitization of the microfilm of the original. This means that in a number of instances, digital remediations represent a remediation of a remediation. There is an additional link in the chain of remediation to maintain in these cases. Digital remediation, like microfilm, incur "losses". This is compounded when the digital remediation is one which refashions a microfilmed record, where hypermediacy is not present in the microfilming or in the provided metadata. This is the case when care for the origins and medium of the original were not taken into account during the microfilming process. The problem then, as stated by Elizabeth Anne Johnson, is that remediations create facsimiles of their originals or of other remediations where important factors – namely what has been done with the record and why, its custodial history and provenance – are missing from the newly remediated record.[81] That loss is what we might avoid by thinking about remediations in terms of hypermediacy. The inclusion of metadata regarding the remediation, the location and date of the original and any previous remediation and information about the previous media can all be included in a digital remediation to demonstrate hypermediacy. The chain of remediation(s) should be apparent to the user of the remediated record so that the whole context of a record's

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[80] Kaur, "Microfilm in the Archives," 26. Kaur discusses how microfilm takes the original in one medium and creates a new record in another medium and the potential issues of loss.

[81] Elizabeth-Anne Johnson, "Toward a Collaborative Online Framework for Archival Representation," (M.A. Thesis, University of Manitoba, 2017), 26.

creation, including archival remediation, is visible and available to be questioned in users' interactions with records.

The fourth and final major remediation in Canadian archival practice is digital format migration. This remediation can be viewed similarly to the first remediation, that of scribal copying. Digital format migration remediates within the same medium: the digital. It is done for reasons of access, to make records created in older, obsolete formats available through current digital systems, and for reasons of preservation, to reduce ongoing costs by bringing multiple obsolete formats into a smaller number of current formats. Discussions of digital preservation assert that although format migration inevitably brings about some changes to the record, it is an acceptable solution to the challenges of technological obsolescence, provided it retains what are known as significant properties.[82] However, as previously noted, there is no way to determine what those properties are with any certainty. Hypermediacy provides a different way of thinking about this sort of remediation. As any remediation creates a new record, we can acknowledge that as a new object it cannot be the old record in any substantial way. Once again, it is important to maintain a visible chain of remediation. In the case of format migration, and similar to scribal remediations, the juxtaposition of old and new can be more difficult for the user to identify, since they are experiencing the remediated record in the same medium as it was originally created, albeit in a different instantiation. For both scribal remediations and remediations through digital format migrations, then, sufficient metadata is essential. Noting the previous file format or the original format in the metadata of the remediated record is critical to maintaining the chain of remediation. Without making the chain of remediation apparent, a user could mistakenly believe

[82] Yeo, "Nothing is the Same as Something Else," 87.

that they are accessing the record in its original format, and be unaware of any losses or changes that occurred when the record was remediated.

Conclusion:

In this chapter I introduced the dual logics of remediation, namely transparent immediacy and hypermediacy. I described how they remediate records in different ways. Immediacy aims at an erasure of the visible markers of remediation, hoping to bring the user closer to the originally intended medium of presentation or towards the original. Hypermediacy values a juxtaposition of old and new media, where the representation of old and new are present and the chain of remediation is apparent to the user. Both of these strategies are remediation, however both should not be considered equal within archival theory and practice. Immediacy's goal of erasing its remediation obscures the original medium of presentation as well as the provenance information provided by that original medium, and within the very remediation itself. In erasing the chain of remediation, transparency hides the work done by archivists and archival institutions to remediate records. Hypermediacy values the representation of various media in its presentation, by juxtaposing features of the old and new media and makes visible the work done in remediation. Hypermediacy can maintain provenance information, custodial history and records connections while also demonstrating the interventions of archivists through that visibility of old and new media. In an archival setting, hypermediacy as the aim of remediation can look like a number of things in various media; however an important element in any act of remediation is to maintain the chain of remediation and make visible the role of archivists and archival institutions. This is often expressed through metadata captured or created during remediation. Hypermediacy, in short, allows the user to see records in both their original and remediated forms, and within their whole context of creation.

Chapter 2: Situating Remediation within the Canadian Archival Tradition

Remediation is undertaken for a number of reasons in archival settings, including preservation of original records and for reasons of greater access; disseminating information through copies or ensuring survival of the records through creating copies. The movement from one medium to another in order to preserve the integrity, accessibility and existence of the record is what characterizes remediation in archival practice. The notion of copying is central to the work of remediation. The notion of copying is also where Canadian archival practice began.

There has been frequent discussion around the nature of remediation, such as its benefits or challenges and how it fits into archival practice. Perhaps the reason for such deliberation is that remediation is such a critical aspect of preservation and access as archival functions. This can be seen in the microfilming, digitization and reformatting policies of so many archival institutions and throughout the history of Canadian archival practice and thinking. In Canadian archival practice, remediation has played a critical role in how the profession has defined its work.

Canadian archives are the focus for this study for a few reasons. In the previous chapter I established that a framework for remediation which conveys the whole provenance of a record is essential to ongoing archival practice. This is a framework which does not obscure the provenance of a record which is acquired after it arrives at an archive. The powerful role archivists and archival institutions play in shaping how users view, interact with and interpret records must be visible as provenance information to archival users if archival authenticity and reliability is to be maintained. Similar provenance information about remediation, and other archival interventions, is also essential to situating the context of a record's creation within

institutional policies and mandates, and in relation to archivists' individual biases and ways of knowing, all of which impact archival records' creation.

As the Canadian nation contends with its harmful colonial past and the systems of colonial power still at play in many institutions, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada has put out a few Calls to Action that greatly impact archival work and must be considered. Two of these, numbers 69 and 70, call on Library and Archives Canada and other Canadian archives to adopt and implement the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)* and the *United Nations Joinet-Orentlicher Principles* as they relate to the right of Indigenous people to know the truth of what happened, including human rights violations, in the Residential School system. This Call to Action also demands that LAC ensure records relating to these harms are available to the public. Another Call to Action, number 77, calls on provincial, territorial and other archives to work in collaboration with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation in identifying and providing access to relevant records and programming geared towards reconciliation.[1]

These and other Calls to Action aimed at archives have provided for much discussion regarding de-colonizing archives and archival practice, and holding archival institutions accountable for their record description, creation and access. They are a call for archival change in how we do our work, and how our work relates to Indigenous communities and users. Provenance is essential to understanding records of all types, but is especially important to records documenting harms and oppression. It is critical for archival users to be able to determine how a record was created, why and what circumstances allowed for it to be created.[2]

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[1] Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action* (2015), pp. 8-9.
[2] Michelle Caswell, "Hannah Arendt's world: Bureaucracy, documentation, and banal evil," Archivaria (2010), 13-17.

This applies to remediated records as well. To understand the full scope of the systems of colonial power that impact what knowledge can be known, information about the role archival institutions (as institutions which perpetuate and prop up colonial power) play in shaping that knowledge must be visible as part of the record's history. As such, the calls for change in Canadian archival practice make Canada an excellent site for looking at how remediation as an intrinsic part of archival work can be reframed to aid in decolonizing archival practice.

This chapter will examine the history of Canadian archival practice and theory in its treatment and understanding of reformatting as remediation. Beginning with the early history of Canadian archival theory and practice, where the main mode of remediation was a shift within the same medium: paper to paper. Following an in-depth treatment of this initial mode of remediation within the paper medium, I will address microfilming, digitization and the file format migrations of the modern born-digital environment. By exploring the notion of remediation/reformatting in Canada's early archival history, as well as numerous continued examples of reformatting, or remediation, in the more recent past of Canadian archival practice I will establish that remediation has been and continues to be an intrinsic part of Canadian archival practice and thinking, and why it is important that the practice be placed within a framework that ensures the whole provenance of records is maintained in those remediations.

Early Canadian Archival Practice and Theory:

Archival practice in Canada can be traced to the government of Nova Scotia and the formation of a few historical societies, such as the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec (LHSQ), who developed part of the intellectual basis for archiving in Canada and fostered the foundation of the Public Archives of Canada.[3] Founded in 1824 with the patronage of the

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[3] Ian E. Wilson, ""A Noble Dream": The Origins of the Public Archives of Canada," *Archivaria* 15 (Winter 1982): 16-17.

Governor of British North America, Lord Dalhousie, this society's sole purpose was the historical research, recovery and publication of documents pertaining to Canadian history, from their colonial perspective. In 1832 the society began its first active programme of research and publication by sending members to Paris, London and New York to locate and transcribe any documents of value to Canadian history.[4] This included the collecting or copying of records from a diverse assortment of sources, such as personal papers of former governors general of Canada and the collections of missionaries and explorers.[5]

This search for the nation's history elsewhere developed out of concern that the knowledge base that made up Canada's history was not present as records within Canada itself. This practice completely disregarded the long Indigenous history before the arrival of Europeans. In an 1870 paper, Henry Miles of the LHSQ discusses the fear that knowledge of the country's history might be lost if the records were not obtained from elsewhere.[6] This activity by the LHSQ located Canadian archives firmly within the history of other nation's exploitation, establishing a colonial view of the geographical space that would become Canada. This practice claimed that Canadian "history" began with the arrival of European explorers and missionaries. Continued programs of foreign record copying, up to and after confederation, further entrenched this notion that the history of "Canada" was elsewhere. In this, copying acted as an overt tool of colonial power.

An interest in making colonial records available and safe-guarding them against accidental destruction led the LHSQ to petition the governor general and the House of Commons shortly after confederation.[7] Two years later a paper by LHSQ member Dr. W. J. Anderson described

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[4] Wilson, "A Noble Dream," 17.

[5] Laura Millar, "Discharging our Debt: The Evolution of the Total Archives Concept in English Canada," *Archivaria* 46 (1998): 106.

[6] Henry H. Miles, "Paper III- On Canadian Archives," as read before the Society, December 14, 1870. *Transactions of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec, sessions of 1870-71* (Quebec, 1871), 53.

[7] Wilson, "A Noble Dream," 18.

what had been done about the situation of archives in Canada to that date. Anderson details the programs of copying which had so far taken place and describes the unsatisfactory nature of their accomplishments, mainly due to a lack of funding from the government. Anderson makes note of the earlier paper by Miles and uses it to propose an even greater program of copying records from Europe and the United States.[8]

These papers by Miles and Anderson are typical of *The Transactions of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec* where the notion of scribal copying as the primary mode of creating a records base to form Canadian archives is common. A majority of the letters sent between the various archives and the LHSQ reference copies being made and sent, and the need for further copies to be made. The perceived value of copying is alluded to in a letter from Francis Parkman when he states:

> The materials of your singularly interesting annals are scattered through various archives and libraries in Europe and on this continent. They are often in confusion-what is valuable and what is worthless being mixed pell-mell; and hand-writing is often half legible. These papers, or a judicious selection from them, copied in a legible hand, bound in chronological order, and preserved in a place of deposit, where they could be consulted by the student, under proper restrictions, would throw a flood of new light on Canadian history.[9]

In this letter it is clear that part of the perceived value of copying is the improvement of the original record, in its readability and preservation. Throughout the Society's original publications and reports, the notion of copying is one of the strongest aspects relating to the formation of Canadian archives and preserving "Canadian history". One of the primary reasons for this is the understanding that multiple copies of a record can preserve it from decay, inferior record keeping

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[8] Dr. W. J. Anderson, "Paper V- The Archives of Canada", *Transactions of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec, sessions of 1872-73*. Quebec: Printed by Middleton and Dawson at the "Gazette" General Printing Establishment, (1873), 125-127.

[9] F. Parkman, "The Public Archives of Canada: Mr. Parkman's Letter," *Transactions of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec, Report of the Council for the Year ending December 31, 1871.* (Quebec: 1873), 6.

technologies (such as poor-quality ink or parchment types), accidental destruction or other forms of deterioration and loss.[10] Another reason for copying is in its power to authenticate and prop up colonial power by locating the history of Canada in colonial records; and preserving those records as Canada's only legitimate history. Many of the earliest members of the LHSQ, including Lord Dalhousie, were colonial administrators or powerful lawyers, political figures and businessmen who had a vested interest in the maintenance of colonial authority. By identifying and creating records of "Canadian history" which predominantly featured colonial narratives, they could perpetuate the continued authority of colonial power which they all benefited from.

Copying colonial records remained an important activity after the creation of the first national archives of Canada, administratively located as the Archives Branch within the Department of Agriculture. In his 1889 annual report, Douglas Brynmer, the administrator in charge of the Archives Branch, notions of copying can be found in almost every paragraph. Brynmer writes about what he believes are some of the most essential records of Canadian history, describing how copies are being made to accurately represent and preserve history, and calling for further programmes of copying from archives in Paris.[11] He recounts his visit to the British National Archives in London, where he made arrangements for two entire collections to be copied, leaving no record out.[12] The report also publishes some of the records obtained from that year, while highlighting some older reports and the importance of ongoing acquisition.

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[10] Miles, "On Canadian Archives, 1870," 55-58.
[11] Douglas Brynmer, *Report on Canadian Archives, 1889*. (Ottawa: Printed by Brown Chamberlin, 1890), vi-viii.
[12] Brynmer, *Report on Canadian Archives, 1889,* xi. On this page Brynmer also briefly discusses appraisal, though not phrased as such, in a way which ties him to later archival thinkers like Hilary Jenkinson. Brynmer notes that while in London preparing the collections for copying it was suggested that he instead make a careful selection of records to be copied in order to reduce cost. However, he states "that no man could tell what documents might or might not be safely omitted, even the most trifling being a link in the chain of evidence, as every investigator knows."

One of the most notable aspects of Brymner's annual reports is the almost negligible size of the actual archivist's report. In the 1889 report, Brymner's own account is merely nine pages long, paling in comparison to the following three hundred and thirty-seven pages of published records and collection catalogues.[13] This primary inclusion of published records seems to have been a growing trend in the reports, where in 1883, twenty-three pages out of two hundred and forty-seven were dedicated to the reports of Brynmer and Joseph Marmette.[14] This might in fact be due once again to this notion of copying as a superior method of preservation. If making a scribal copy of an original record was good, then creating many typeset, printed and published copies was even better. This multiplication of copies through publication was viewed both as a way of sharing the records of "Canadian" history while also ensuring the creation of so many copies that the information in the record would never be lost. This overshadowing of the archivist's own report also demonstrates the perceived importance of the copied records and the mode of thought which placed emphasis on these gathered histories. It also demonstrates an apparent lack of concern for the kinds of values that European archivists, including the leading English archival thinker of the time, Hilary Jenkinson, placed on original records, including authenticity, reliability, interrelatedness and many other concerns.[15] Nonetheless, these programs of mass copying formed the basis of early Canadian archives.

In the 1850's Nova Scotia began its own program of preserving historical records. Joseph Howe, a Nova Scotia politician and journalist, was a strong advocate for the preservation and access of historical records. In 1857 Howe brought a resolution before the Nova Scotia House of

[13] Brynmer, *Report on Canadian Archives, 1889*, iii-vi.
[14] Douglas Brynmer, *Report on Canadian Archives, 1883*. Ottawa: Printed by Maclean, Roger & Co., Wellington Street, 1884.
[15] Margaret Procter, "Life Before Jenkinson – The Development of British Archival Theory and Thought at the Turn of the Twentieth Century," in *Archives: The Journal of the British Records Association* 33, no. 119 (2008), 136-157.

Assembly, asking that the "ancient records and documents illustrative of the history and progress of Society in this province… be examined, preserved and arranged."[16] As Laura Millar notes in her article, "Discharging our Debt: The Evolution of the Total Archives Concept in English Canada" these "ancient records" were not to be found in the recently and sparsely made records of new Canadian and Nova Scotia government, but in the already established collections of records from England, France and the United States.[17] The same year Howe proposed the preservation of Nova Scotia archives, Thomas Beamish Akins was appointed Commissioner of Records. Akins chose not to focus on the preservation or care of colonial or later nineteenth century records of government, believing that "real" history, a colonial history, would be found in British and French records.[18] Akins promoted the hand copying of thousands upon thousands of British and French Colonial Office records, fur trade records, missionary files and any other records that seemed relevant to the colonial Canadian experience.[19] This practice, as earlier at the LHSQ and later at the Archives Branch, cements remediation (through programs of copying) as an essential tool of the colonial archival tradition, one which aids in establishing what is and is not Canadian history, from the perspective of colonial power.

By 1883 copying colonial records from abroad had become a conventional part of Canadian archival practice.[20] However, archivists of the Archives Branch of the Department of Agriculture, and of the several key historical societies, had yet to see their petitions for a combined public records office approved – an office in which copied colonial records would sit next to the records of the new Canadian government. Even in their petitions to the government

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[16] Millar, "Discharging our Debt," 107-109.
[17] Millar, "Discharging our Debt," 108.
[18] Millar, "Discharging our Debt," 108.
[19] Millar, "Discharging our Debt," 108. See also: Nova Scotia Archives, Commissioner of the Public Records collection, 1702-1917, https://archives.novascotia.ca/lists/NSA-RG1.html .
[20] Wilson, "A Noble Dream," 21-22.

for a common place for Canadian records we can see how ingrained copying had become, where the society

> Respectfully prays that the Dominion Government of this day will complete the measure of progress of 1870 by providing the necessary legislation to create a Public Record Office under a responsible head at Ottawa, and take the necessary steps to have copied and gathered there the archives of Canada, scattered in Canada, as well as in other lands.[21]

While the main goal of this petition was for a public records office to house the records of Canadian government, the language of copying persists. This suggests that copying had become commonplace as a tradition in Canadian archival practice. In 1903 the positions of Dominion Archivist and Keeper of the Records were officially recognized, still within the Department of Agriculture.[22] In 1904 Arthur Doughty was named Dominion Archivist and Keeper of the Public Records and set to work on systematizing and expanding ongoing processes of copying, while also seeking to acquire records through other means, by soliciting donations and the transfer of official government records to the archives.[23] This is noteworthy as an early instance in Canadian archiving where records acquisition went beyond copying other nation's records. Nonetheless, Doughty continued to put the most effort into the creation of copies, rather than these other modes of acquisition.

It is worth emphasizing here that by locating Canadian history in European archives, there is an insinuation that Canada had no history already present. This erasure of Indigenous history and ways of knowing from the foundation upon which Canadian archives were formed is highly problematic. Nineteenth century frameworks, which still in some way govern the work of

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[21] J. M. LeMoine, "The Archives of Canada," *Transactions of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec, sessions of 1879-80.* Quebec: Printed at the "Morning Chronicle" Office, 1880. 6.
[22] Wilson, "A Noble Dream," 24.
[23] Wilson, "A Noble Dream," 25.

archives, applied principles of historical and legal positivism.[24] For archives, "this privileged administrative records documenting the legislative will of the state."[25] This has had social and archival consequences, namely that appraisal has not always reflected the diverse nature of society in its valuation of records as archival. The archival records of Indigenous peoples are instead created by colonial administration. "This colonial administrative documentation of the Indigenous experience of settler society was a kind of "writing out" or erasing of the cultures and traditions of First Nations communities."[26] That "writing out" however was not new, as the very frameworks that formed Canadian archives privileged the colonial records of European and later Canadian colonial institutions. The early programs of copying which built Canadian archives perpetuated legal fictions like *terra nullius* (or nobody's land) and contributed to the legal and political systems of Indigenous peoples being overwritten by European and then Canadian governments.[27] The early programs of scribal copying were tools of colonial power, working to establish a Canadian history located in the archives of colonial empires and governments and not within the geographical space that would become Canada. Subsequent programs of remediation that build upon this foundation of copying in Canadian archival tradition, run the risk of continuing as explicit tools of colonial power without the acknowledgement that remediation itself can perpetuate those systems of power and oppression.

The passing of the *Public Archives Act* in 1912 solidified the practices of archives in the decades preceding. The act passed the management and control of the Public Archives from the Minister of Agriculture to the Secretary of State, making the archive a separate section of

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[24] Raymond Frogner, "Lord, Save Us from the Et Cetera of the Notary: Archival Appraisal, Local Custom and Colonial Law," *Archivaria 79* (Spring 2015): 125.
[25] Frogner, "Lord, Save Us from the Et Cetera of the Notary," 125.
[26] Frogner, "Lord Save Us from the Et Cetera of the Notary," 128.
[27] Greg Bak, "Counterweight: Helen Samuels, Archival Decolonization, and Social License," *American Archivist* 84, no. 2 (2021): 424.

government.[28] The act of 1912 also provides the first clear definition of “archives”. This definition emphasizes historical significance over institutional or administrative requirements. With a strong emphasis on historical significance and the notion of copying that emphasis entailed, little care was taken with the medium, form or origins of the original record.[29] “The idea that copying would ensure the preservation of the information, and that the information was equally as valuable as the original record, was a pivotal tenet of archival practice.”[30] This meant that, as early Canadian archivists copied these records, they did it without the modern archival ideas of provenance, context and origin. To these early archivists the copied records held the same historical significance as the original, based in the content of the record and not the context.[31] This means that the copied records were very much remediations created by archivists without acknowledgment of that being the case. Millar states to this point, “Thus was born the foundation for a distinctly Canadian view of archives, a view that perceived the acquisition of both originals and copies of both public and private records as a legitimate and primary archival function for the Public Archives.”[32]

Theoretical applications of remediation in Canadian archives:

On this foundation of copying the traditions of Canadian archival practice grew, where that same tenet can still be found today, though perhaps in a less literal way. While early Canadian archivists were remediating onto the same medium (paper/parchment and ink), modern programs of the sort of reformatting found in copying can be found in the remediations of microfilming, digitization and digital format migration. Even in the more theoretical ideas of

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[28] Jay Atherton, “The Origins of the Public Archives Record Centre, 1897-1956,” *Archivaria* 8 (Summer 1979): 44.
[29] Millar, “Discharging our Debt,” 110.
[30] Millar, “Discharging our Debt,” 110.
[31] Millar, “Discharging our Debt,” 109-111.
[32] Millar, “Discharging our Debt,” 111.

archival studies classics, like the work of Hilary Jenkinson, the notion of the copy is ingrained in the practice of archiving. In his *Manual of Archive Administration* Jenkinson, on frequent occasions, discusses the nature of the copy and the pros and cons of copying. On the one hand he notes the importance for preservation of having copies of records made, but on the other there is also then the mass accumulation of records seen after the First World War due to copies being made prolifically.[33] The manual also introduces the idea of archiving the original rather than a copy. On this point Jenkinson states that if two or more copies of a record exist, the first or the original should always be chosen for preservation.[34] This places special emphasis on the qualities of an original record, such as its provenance. While early archivists had copied without much care for such qualities of the original as its context or provenance, Jenkinson emphasizes the importance of such qualities when acquiring and maintaining archival records.[35]

The idea of the "original" is key in our perception of copying and remediation. Ala Rekrut, Head of Preservation Services for the Archives of Manitoba, notes the ability of original material records to evoke the past, or to act as "time machines" to elements of the past as an idea which resonates with public perceptions of historical records.[36] While Rekrut appreciates the usefulness of copies or facsimiles for many uses, she also notes the need for ongoing access to original material records for research.[37] In her work, as well as in others, there are qualities or perceptions attached to the medium and materiality of the original records that, once migrated,

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[33] Sir Hilary Jenkinson, *A Manual of Archive Administration: Including the Problems of War Archives and Archive Making*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1922), 117.
[34] Jenkinson, *Manual of Archive Administration*, 170-171.
[35] Jenkinson, *Manual of Archive Administration*, 220.
[36] Ala Rekrut, "Reconnecting Mind and Matter: Materiality in Archival Theory and Practice." (M.A Thesis, University of Manitoba, 2009), 3.
[37] Rekrut, "Reconnecting Mind and Matter," 15.

alters the user's perception of the record itself.[38] While Rekrut notes that context, origins and medium of the original record are important to maintaining and preserving records, Terry Cook notes that the original order of records collections is also important to those functions.[39] The idea of preserving the original filing and record-keeping systems of the record creators comes out of the 1898 Dutch *Manual*, which states that, "by so respecting the arrangement of original record-keeping systems, the all-important archival activity of elucidating the administrative context in which the records are originally created could be much facilitated."[40]

Copying can also be found in discussion of more modern programs of remediation, in managing digital archives. Cook notes that as software and file formats become obsolete, their content must be recopied in order to preserve the record. Writing in 1997, Cook stated:

> With electronic records, the physical medium becomes almost totally irrelevant, as the records themselves will be migrated forward long before the physical storage medium deteriorates. What will be important is reconfiguring the actual functionality and thus provenance or evidence-bearing context of the "original" record, and it is on that problem that archivists must increasingly focus their attention.[41]

In this statement we can see how copying, remediation and the idea of the "original" come together in archival theories of provenance, and we can begin to see the division between the copy and the "original". This division is what makes continuing programmes of reformatting, such as microfilming and digitization, so important to the discussion of remediation.

Pre-microfilm copy processes:

Throughout the nineteenth century, several machines were invented to copy documents on a large scale, providing an alternative to the printing press. These machines were the first real

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[38] Rekrut, "Reconnecting Mind and Matter," 22. See also, Hugh A. Taylor, "The Media of a Record: Archives in the Wake of McLuhan," *Georgia Archive* 6, no. 1 (1978): 1-10.
[39] Terry Cook, "What is Past is Prologue: A History of Archival Ideas Since 1898, and the Future Paradigm Shift," *Archivaria* 43 (Spring 1997): 21.
[40] Cook, "What is Past is Prologue," 21.
[41] Cook, "What is Past is Prologue," 45.

replacements for manuscript copying.[42] Two of these early devices were Wedgewood's Manifold Writer and Watt's copy press, both of which acquired a commercial market and were adopted by professionals and government alike. Both machines created mirror images of documents that could be read from the reverse side. Despite some inconsistencies in quality and limitations on the quantity of duplicates that could be created, these machines were advances on scribal copying and could create facsimiles that "accurately and authentically reproduced the original".[43] In the early 1870s further new copying devices were introduced to the market which claimed to be able to create copies in larger quantities. Stencil duplicators, logotypes and typewriters were developed and introduced during this period and slowly found their places in record creating, copying and management. With the invention of photography in 1839, these early inventions were part of a move towards systematic and reliable photocopying processes.[44] Barbara Craig, in her work on the implementation of these early copying mechanisms in the British Civil Service, notes that by 1889 copying machines had created a clearly visible impact on records creation and management, resulting in files that contained records of various sizes, shapes and characteristics. Records were being created at a rapid pace and concerns began to emerge for these new records' fragility, volume, and the information they contained. This concern, Craig states, fostered "a new awareness of the necessity to identify what was needed for the future to ensure that it would survive, and of equal importance, to ensure that regular weeding and destruction took place so that offices were not swamped by records."[45]

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[42] Barbara L. Craig, "The Introduction of Copying Devices into the British Civil Service, 1877-1889," Association of Canadian Archivists, *The Archival Imagination: Essays in Honour of Hugh A. Taylor* (1992): 111.
[43] Craig, "The Introduction of Copying Devices," 111.
[44] Richard J. Cox, "Technology's Promise, the Copying of Records and the Archivist's Challenge: A Case Study in Documentation Rhetoric," Ed. Terry Cook, *Controlling the Past: Documenting Society and Institutions – Essays in Honour of Helen Willa Samuels* (2011): 135.
[45] Craig, "The Introduction of Copying Devices," 125.

The landscape of records copying was again changed by the middle of the twentieth century with the introduction of the first electric photocopiers. In 1960, Haloid Xerox produced the first commercially successful photocopier, building off the designs of earlier photocopiers introduced in the two decades prior. The photocopier greatly changed records management, allowing vast quantities of copies to be produced in relatively little time and effort. Richard Cox, in his article on records technologies, notes that prior to the invention of the personal computer, the photocopier was one of the most important office technologies, changing how records professionals thought about and contended with copying as a process.[46] The proliferation of copies was not so quickly embraced by archivists and archives. Concerns for the dilution of archival holdings' value through copying made acceptance of such technologies slow. Many discussions of originals and copies stem from this proliferation of photocopies. Cox suggests that with the abundance of copies and concerns for archival value, appraisal became more important as it identifies records of critical and enduring value and reduces the bulk of records that future users will need to contend with.[47]

Microfilm:

The nineteenth century development of photographic processes made the creation of copies much easier. While transcribing and publishing were the earliest methods of disseminating historical and archival records, photographic technologies eliminated the possibility of human error that went with manual transcription, ultimately reducing some of the interpretation required by the transcriber.[48] Microfilming was created to capture and store small-

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[46] Cox, "Technology's promise," 136-137.
[47] Cox, "Technology's promise," 144-145.
[48] Rekrut, "Reconnecting Mind and Matter," 114.

scale images of records by reformatting the original document within the new technology.[49] That reformatting of the original medium into a new one is a remediation. The abundance of records created by both the First and Second World Wars spurred some archives to undertake large-scale microfilming projects to manage the volume of archival government records. In some cases microfilming was done without retention of the original record, as with the Federal Department of the Interior homestead files, which were microfilmed and subsequently destroyed by the Public Archives of Canada.[50] There were a number of reasons for these large projects, beyond the management of such incredible volumes of records. Microfilm is easily reproducible, and therefore is easy to sell or loan to research facilities. This ability to simply and cheaply copy microfilm eventually allowed it to easily be transferred to digital image. However, archvial microfilm projects did not capture colour and sometimes lost small details of original records.[51] These large-scale projects to microfilm records have many similarities to early programmes of scribal copying. Just like the early programmes which occasionally copied without care for origin, context or provenance, some microfilming projects of the mid-twentieth century neglected the same features. When microfilming was prelude to destroying the originals, there was an irreversible loss of materiality and the removal of first-hand experience with original records. Preeti Kaur notes in her thesis, “microfilm copies are just that: they are copies.”[52] There have been many discussions on the nature of microfilm copies and whether they sufficiently

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[49] Preeti Kaur, “Microfilm in the Archives: Past Use, Present Sustainability and Future Transformation.” (M.A Thesis, University of Manitoba, 2019), 25.
[50] Rekrut, “Reconnecting Mind and Matter,” 114-115. See also, Archives of Manitoba, *Federal Department of the Interior homestead files,* 1870-1930 (GR2060) – series description notes the microfilming and destruction of these original land settlement files by Library and Archives Canada prior to their microfilm transfer to various provincial archives. See also, Ryan Eyford, “Transferred, Preserved and Destroyed: The Dominion Lands Branch’s Manitoba Files,” *Archivaria 95* (2023).
[51] Rekrut, “Reconnecting Mind and Matter,” 115.
[52] Kaur, “Microfilm in the Archives,” 6.

represent the materiality of paper records, but in the end they can never capture all aspects of the original.

In his discussion of notions of the "original" record and the relationship between an original and its copies, Geoffrey Yeo discusses some of the setbacks of representing three dimensional records in two-dimensional imaging techniques like microfilm. Microfilm, while free from the inevitable human error of hand transcribing scribal copies of records, renders watermarks invisible, distorts colour or leaves it out entirely and makes determining the use of different writing instruments less distinct.[53] Two-dimensional imaging techniques like microfilm are also unable to sufficiently reproduce three dimensional aspects of records such as seals, threads, paper clips and bindings. In discussing these aspects of microfilm remediation, Yeo notes that while there have been attempts to define the significant properties of records which would ensure their sufficient preservation in new media, the agreement on what those significant properties are differs drastically between communities.[54] This means that it is impossible to determine which details of the original should be captured through reformatting and which can fall away without endangering the utility of the record. Yeo makes reference to Paskin, as he notes that nothing is the same as something else: in every process of reformatting or conversion there will inevitably be loss of some sort. He states,

> Ultimately, there is no detail so small that its absence can be considered wholly inconsequential; however trivial a feature may seem, we can never be certain that no community will consider it significant or deplore its omission when copies are made.[55]

[53] Geoffrey Yeo, "Nothing is the Same as Something Else: Significant Properties and Notions of Identity and Originality," *Archival Science* 10 (June 2010): 105. See also: Rekrut, Reconnecting Mind and Matter," 115; and Kaur, "Microfilm in the Archives," 25-26.
[54] Yeo, "Nothing is the Same as Something Else," 104-105.
[55] Yeo, "Nothing is the Same as Something Else," 105.

Because we cannot determine what details can be lost without consequence, processes like microfilming are more properly understood to result in newly created records and not merely as a new means of access to the original records. Moreover, Yeo's discussion of significant properties in relation to community values highlights the fact that notions of significance vary widely between different groups or communities, based on cultural and social contexts, and therefore determining any sort of significant property is dependent upon the group doing the remediation. Yeo concludes that identifying significant properties is inevitably as subjective, in exactly the same way, as any act of archival appraisal.

Despite losses in microfilming, throughout the twentieth century it was a popular way of preserving access to the content of records. It was not just libraries and archives that implemented microfilming projects either. Banks, department stores, newspapers and insurance companies in Canada began using microfilm to maintain and reproduce their records.[56] Microfilm provided a valuable and promising method of preservation and extended accessibility, and thus played a large role in both archival functions. This might be due to the nature of preservation as an archival function. According to Michele Cloonan, archivists are concerned with the "genuine origin and continuous preservation of the records."[57] Despite this concern with genuine origin and condition, all records change through preservation. Records deteriorate, are treated, rehoused and reformatted through the process of maintaining their integrity and use. Consequentially there are many concerns with how preservation is done and what is changed by way of preserving the record. There have been many discussions in archival literature over topics such as the "original" record and issues of remediation as a commonly used preservation method.

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[56] Kaur, "Microfilm in the Archives," 9-10.

[57] Michele V. Cloonan, "Preserving Records of Enduring Value," Eds. Terry Eastwood and Heather MacNeil, *Currents of Archival Thinking (*2010)*:* 69.

As stated by Cloonan, “any change to the record will inevitably influence the way in which we read…that record.”[58] However, remediation is often the best solution to issues of physical and digital deterioration in order to maintain the use and integrity of the record.

Over the twentieth century, the creation of best practices for microfilming further suggests the prominence of the practice among archives, detailing how microfilming should be done to provide the best possible representation of the original record.[59] The creation of remediated records on microfilm has been perceived to be a reliable form of preservation and has informed archival practice as well as records management in Canada.

Digitization:

Digitization is another form of remediation which has become common in Canadian archival practice. As a remediation it can be defined as “the process of transforming analogue material into binary electronic (digital) form, especially for storage and use in a computer.”[60] It can include the digital imaging of paper records, microfilm and other non-digital materials, and as such can be seen as developing out of the framework of previous remediations. Archives in Canada are increasingly digitizing their collections with the goals of accessibility and preservation in mind.[61] The world we live in has become digital and many archives began their own transition into this digital age through digitization projects. The movement to the digital has been a societal movement, rather than one of just the record keeping community. Similar to microfilm, digitization provides a valuable solution to some of the challenges associated with preservation and accessibility, as well as obsolescence of older formats like microfilm and tape.

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[58] Cloonan, “Preserving Records of Enduring Value,” 70. Cloonan refers to the 2005 work by Ala Rekrut on material literacy in discussion of how changes to records alters user interpretation. See Ala Rekrut, “Material Literacy: Reading Records as Material Culture,” *Archivaria 60* (Fall 2005): 11-37.
[59] Kaur, “Microfilm in the Archives,” 20.
[60] Society of American Archivists, “Digitization,” https://dictionary.archivists.org/entry/digitize.html
[61] Zack Lischer-Katz, “Studying the materiality of media archives in the age of digitization: Forensics, infrastructures and ecologies,” *First Monday* 22, No.1 - 2 (January 2017).

It is perceived to be an acceptable form of remediation so long as the significant properties of the records are maintained.[62] However, as in our discussion of microfilm, significant properties are difficult to determine as they may vary between users or communities. Some have argued that even if differences are introduced during migration, that they will be inconsequential so long as migration is carried out in a way that no significant losses occur and the features necessary for digital objects to remain accessible and meaningful remain intact.[63] Similarly, literature on digitization states that good imaging projects require the identification of meaningful or key characteristics of the records which must be maintained through migration to ensure utility of the record.[64] Since we cannot determine what these characteristics are with any sort of certainty, there remains the possibility that any changes made during remediation could result in a less than optimal digital object.

With digitization of paper records, it is, like microfilming, also a process that flattens a three dimensional object into two dimensions. Loss of three-dimensional aspects of the record as well as other aspects of the record's materiality are considerations which make the digital copy contested. However, with progress in digital technologies and far superior imaging equipment than what was available when digitization first became popular, perceptions of losses through digitization have become less prominent than they once were. Moreover digitization possesses a great number of benefits, namely in the realms of preservation of the original record and accessibility to the record content. There have been a number of massive Canadian digitization

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[62] Yeo, "Nothing is the Same as Something Else," 87.

[63] Yeo, "Nothing is the Same as Something Else," 87-88. See also: Helen Hockx-Yu and Gareth Knight, "What to preserve? Significant properties of digital objects," Int J DigitCuration 3, no. 1 (2008): 142.

[64] Stephen Chapman and Anne R. Kenney, "Digital Conversion of Research Library Materials: A Case for Full Informational Capture," D-Lib Magazine 2, no. 10 (1996). Available at http://www.dlib.org/dlib/october96/cornell/10chapman.html ; see also, Yeo, "Nothing is the Same as something Else," 87-88.

projects, such as Heritage (Canadiana.org*)*. This online database represents a huge collection of digitized Canadian records, which through remediation, have been made available to the public through the internet.[65] Due to the widespread nature of archival digitization projects in Canada, standards and best practices are needed to ensure that digitization produces accessible and quality records. The presence of so many of standards for digitization suggests a few things.

The number of best practice models, from Library and Archives Canada (LAC), or from universities such as York University, demonstrate that digitization is a common practice in Canadian archives today. The need for models of practice at various institutions suggest that digitization is a widespread practice requiring archives to contend with how they will digitize, rather than if. LAC's digitization policy identifies what aspects are considered while assessing content for digitization. LAC considers four criteria: public interest, government support, uniqueness and preservation (fragility).[66] The goals of their project are outlined in their opening statement:

> The digitization of collections held by Library and Archives Canada (LAC) is a vital means of advancing research, promoting discovery, and ensuring broad access to Canada's documentary heritage. Our goal is to digitize as much of the collection as possible and to ensure that the materials are described and searchable online. Our digitization approach supports sustainable digitization operations that leverage transparent, high-value partnerships in order to complement consistent, well resourced, and strategic internal operations.[67]

In this statement we can see that the main draw of digitization is accessibility. While accessibility and the preservation of records are essential functions of Canadian archives, these

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[65] York University Libraries, *Planning and Selecting for Digitization.* Toronto: York University Pressbooks, 2016.
[66] Library and Archive Canada, "Digitization at Library and Archive Canada," https://web.archive.org/web/20220405071105/https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/about-us/about-collection/Pages/digitization-lac.aspx - LAC updated their website during the writing of this thesis and removed the previously linked webpage. I have provided the wayback machine link to the page which I viewed in March 2022.
[67] Library and Archive Canada, "Digitization at Library and Archive Canada," https://web.archive.org/web/20220405071105/https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/about-us/about-collection/Pages/digitization-lac.aspx

digital versions do not provide the same experience as working with the original. As we have already seen, nothing can be exactly the same as something else and all remediations create new records, just as the earliest programmes of scribal copying did. Yet despite obvious changes and possible differences in experience associated with digitization, it remains the most popular form of remediation in Canadian archives today.

As with microfilming however, there have been and continue to be programs of digitization which value the newly remediated record as equal to the original and destroy the originals. This scan and destroy mentality is still active in records management today, and was recently espoused as a solution by the government of the UK to their abundance of original will documents. Their open consultation on the storage and retention of original wills dating back to 1858 proposed that all wills would be digitized and subsequently destroyed, keeping only the digitized records in a move to reduce the cost of storing and maintaining the documents.[68] This legislation also, problematically, proposed preserving original wills only of "famous people" such as Charles Darwin and William Shakespeare. This contemporary example is emblematic of scan and destroy policies. Not only do digitized records come with their own preservation requirements, which can be expensive and maintenance heavy, deciding which individual wills are significant enough to keep in non-digitized form only further entrenches how certain (often white, powerful and male) individuals are made more visible in the records. This example also demonstrates how remediation can continue to be a tool of colonial and elite power and authority and emphasizes the importance of challenging such practices or implementing checks and balances which hold archival institutions and governments accountable for such decisions.

[68] Ministry of Justice, *Storage and Retention of original will documents,* published 15 December 2023.

Ensuring decisions like these are visible in the finished product of remediation is essential to ensuring those parties responsible for such change and occasional destruction are identifiable.

Digital format migration:

Digital records have their own unique challenges. Unlike non-digital or paper media which do not rely on specialized equipment for continued use and access, digital media require the machinery, tools and knowledge of their creation in order to remain accessible and readable. The problem with this technological dependence is that digital technologies are rapidly evolving. "The contents of most digital media evaporate long before words written on high quality paper, and they become unusably obsolete much sooner, as they are superseded by new media or incompatible formats."[69] The past few decades alone have seen many types of digital storage come and go – magnetic tapes, optical CDs and so on. Two of the largest challenges to preserving digital records are technological obsolescence and data loss. Many digital objects are readable only by the software that created them, and as that software is replaced with newer software, the format of some digital objects become obsolete, rendering their contents unreadable and the record inaccessible.[70] One of the most commonly utilised solutions to this problem of continuous digital change is to "copy" records into non-obsolete formats to ensure accessibility to the record's content.[71]

Digital documents rely not only on the software that created them, but on the associated hardware and understanding of how those systems work. Without the programs and hardware to decipher digital documents, they become meaningless and unusable.[72] However, as software and

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[69] Jeff Rothenberg, "Ensuring the Longevity of Digital Information," *International Journal of Legal Information* 26 (1998): 3.
[70] Rothenberg, "Ensuring the Longevity of Digital Information," 9-11.
[71] Rothenberg, "Ensuring the Longevity of Digital Information," 12. See also, Mike Kastellec, "Practical Limits to the Scope of Digital Preservation," *Information Technologies and Libraries* 31, no. 2 (2012): 64-65.
[72] Rothenberg, "Ensuring the Longevity of Digital Information," 11-12.

hardware become obsolete, one solution is to remediate digital objects into newer digital formats. This process has been called "format migration" and is a form of remediation similar to that of scribal copying.[73] As with scribal copying, which remediates the content of records from paper to paper, format migration remediates record content from one digital format to another. This act of converting one file format to another, say in converting a digital photo from a TIFF file to a JPG file for access, always involves the creation of new binary data, a new digital object. So, the remediation may save the human readable content of the digital object but lose the underlying structure and information of the object, or its bitstream. Rothenberg compares the remediation of digital file formats to remediations of paper records onto paper:

> Preserving digital documents is analogous to preserving ancient written texts. Just as with digital documents, it is sometimes necessary to refresh ancient text by transcribing it, since the medium on which it is recorded has a limited lifetime – though parchment or stone tablets last noticeably longer than magnetic disks. An ancient text can be preserved in one of two ways: either by copying it in its original language or by translating it into whatever language is current at the time of transcription.[74]

Rothenberg uses the notion of translation to touch on an element of remediating digital objects here. Take for example that conversion of a digital photo from one format to another. Taking an obsolete image file in a format which is only readable on an old operating system and converting it to a new file format which is readable on contemporary systems involves the complete rewriting of the contents of the image to a new bitstream which will be fundamentally different from the original bitstream due to its being encoded differently – analogous to translation in human language.

There are two principal strategies in digital preservation. The first attempts to "translate" digital documents into standardized, system-independent forms (ie format migration) while the

[73] Rothenberg, "Ensuring the Longevity of Digital Information," #.
[74] Rothenberg, "Ensuring the longevity of digital information," 13.

other attempts to extend the longevity of systems so that documents might remain readable in their original software (ie system preservation or emulation). The former of these two strategies is a form of remediation. The option of extending the lifetime of the technology system and foregoing "translation" is not a remediation, though it is capable of producing proper immediacy. For example, an emulator may recreate the functionalities of an older system so that a record can be represented in its original format, allowing a user to render the original record. Emulation appears to solve many of the issues of digital preservation, including maintaining the interactivity of the original digital object in its intended form. Nonetheless, it is not presently implemented by many archival bodies due to reasons of cost and issues of digital infrastructure.[75] On the other hand, continued "translations" of documents into new formats (ie format migration) could be viewed as an expression of either immediacy or hypermediacy. Rothenberg notes that in "translating" or remediating documents we can retain a path back to the original by keeping descriptions of each "translation" the digital document undergoes, through metadata, demonstrating hypermediacy.[76] Metadata can be used to construct a chain of remediation for the digital object and in this way would represent an instance of hypermediacy. However, format migrations also have the capacity to obscure their remediation and aim towards immediacy when metadata about the remediation and former media are not captured, or are not made available to users.

Mike Kastellec points out that preservation of digital objects has inherent limitations. Remediation, as a form of digital preservation, is a labour-intensive process which requires the

[75] Jordan Roy, "Preserving Interactivity: Towards Next Generation Digital Preservation Philosophy and Systems," (M.A. Thesis, University of Manitoba, 2019), 53.
[76] Rothenberg, "Ensuring the Longevity of Digital Information," 8, 19-20. Rothenberg uses discussion of "annotations" regarding the format migrations and systems required to read digital objects. These annotations have been taken here as similar to metadata.

work of trained staff, a resource that is limited and expensive.[77] In addition, remediation through format migration on the scale required for digital preservation creates numerous copies of a vast quantity of records when both originals and remediations are kept. This creates issues for storage and the associated costs. The expense associated with storing and maintaining such a proliferation of digital records is immense, and often creates a redundancy of information. Most institutions don't have the digital storage capacities or budgets to maintain every instance of a format migrated record, nor would they want to. Not all of the copies are kept. The issue when previous copies are discarded is that, without metadata or a chain of remediation to link remediated digital records to their originals, hypermediacy and thus essential provenance information is lost. However, hypermediacy can be attained even through the keeping of only a few instances of a remediated digital object through the addition of descriptive metadata. Despite any perceived limitations, remediation is a common necessity for digital preservation. When faced with the issues of technological obsolescence and data loss, remediation is one of the only viable options available to maintain the preservation of and access to these records.

Conclusion:

In this chapter I have examined the history of Canadian archival practice and theory, particularly focusing on the notion of reformatting as remediation. In the early history of Canadian archival practice the main mode of remediation was a shift within the same medium: paper to paper. Programs of scribal copying informed the earliest practices in Canadian archives and are the basis upon which succeeding practices were built. I then examined microfilming and its predecessors. Microfilm is easily reproducible, resulting in copies that can be sold or loaned to research facilities. It can also easily be transferred to digital image. These features, despite

[77] Kastellec, "Practical Limits to the Scope of Digital Preservation," 64.

associated perceptions of loss, made microfilm a common mode of remediation throughout the twentieth century. Digitization, and the digital format migrations of the modern born-digital environment, represent an even more widespread implementation of remediation as an intrinsic practice in Canadian archival theory, a rapidly growing form of remediation favoured for its improvements in access and use. Based on this account of remediation throughout Canada's archival history, it is apparent that remediation has been, and continues to be, an intrinsic part of Canadian archival practice and thinking since its inception.

Chapter 3: Two Case Studies in Remediation

The choices made by archivists and within archival institutions when reformatting media have long lasting and important impacts on the way those records can be understood in the future. The previous two chapters discussed how remediation is often used in facilitating preservation and access in Canadian archives. Having established remediation as an ingrained part of Canadian archival theory and practice, and having noted that remediating records through hypermediacy tends to provide favourable outcomes such as maintenance of provenance information and highlighting the decisions made by archivists, we must now explore how remediations have been done on a collection or series level in the past and what future remediation might look like should they be guided by a conceptual framework of hypermediacy.

This chapter provides a critical analysis of two case studies in remediation and the possibilities of hypermediacy. The Black Series of the RG10 records of the Department of Indian Affairs, and more specifically the School Files Series from within the Black Series, provides an opportunity to explore how remediation has occurred in the past at the series level, since this series in particular has undergone multiple remediations throughout the duration of its existence, for a number of reasons. Since the School Files Series is quite large, varied and can be accessed through a number of archival institutions, I have focused on those records pertaining to the Brandon Residential School from within the series as a case study of how these records have been remediated in the past and what effects those changes have had on the accessible records. The second case study is focused on the Maple Leaves Project, which is offering new ways of accessing the records, manuscripts and rare books of the Dysart Collection at the University of Manitoba Archives and Special Collections. This collection has undergone some remediation in the past, through selective digitization, and was recently selected for a project to integrate

representations of the Dysart Collection of manuscripts and rare books into the University of Manitoba Archives and Special Collections archival database, combining new digitizations of those items along with the purchase records and other information that document the collection.

These case studies provide a chance to look at how remediation occurs in practice and across various Canadian archival institutions. The Maple Leaves Project also offers insight into how hypermediacy can guide the work of remediation. Both case studies invite questions about colonial power in Canada, the first through a look at the records of the Indian Residential School system and the second through exploring the way Canadian institutions of higher education maintained and upheld a colonial narrative through collection of manuscripts and rare books. Many of the values that led to both residential schools and rare European book collections in Canada are the same. By analysing these cases in terms of their respective remediations and through a lens of hypermediacy, the impacts of past remediations become apparent. The importance of reframing remediation through hypermediacy will also be explored as a means of advancing steps towards reconciliation.

Brandon School Files:

The School Files Series of records has a complex administrative history which must first be acknowledged before we can analyse the records within it. The early administration of records relating to Indigenous peoples in Canada were "irregularly kept" and without a system of organization.[1] In 1830, control of matters relating to Indigenous peoples was transferred by Britain to the governors in Upper and Lower Canada from the military, and a letter book system was introduced to organize outgoing correspondence. This system however, did not meet the needs of the department. The Bagot Commission reviewed the operations of the Indian

[1] Sean Darcy, "The Evolution of the Department of Indian Affairs' Central Registry Record-Keeping Systems, 1872-1984," *Archivaria* 58 (Fall 2004): 162.

Department in Canada from 1842-1844 to determine critical reforms that would reduce expense while also improving living conditions for Indigenous peoples.[2] Following the Commission, it was recommended that a clerk be hired by the office of the Chief Superintendent to record all of the department correspondence in letter books that included alphabetical indices.[3] This system was not a central registry but a collection of dockets and letter books that kept incoming and outgoing correspondence separately.[4] In 1872, a straight numeric filing system was introduced to maintain and organize the incoming and outgoing correspondence of the Department of Indian Affairs – the first central registry filing system in the Department. The system, limited to the incoming and outgoing correspondence between district headquarters, later became known as the "red and black series" due to the colour of the leather letter books used to distinguish between Eastern and Western Canadian correspondence.[5] Around the same time, a similar system was adopted by other government departments, such as the Department of the Interior.[6] In the straight numeric filing system, when a piece of correspondence was given a numeric registration number and recorded in the registers, they were placed into a folder or docket of the same number with a synopsis, subject and sender information and then indexed alphabetically by author or occasionally by subject. Later correspondence of the same subject would be given new numbers and occasionally included in the folder of the original correspondence on that subject. From the indexes, the complete entry in the registers could be found, which would then point to the docket

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[2] Darcy, "The Evolution of the Department of Indian Affairs," 167. See also: Bill Russel, "Indian Department Headquarters Records, 1844-1861: A Case Study in Recordkeeping and Archival Custody," *Archivaria* 75 (Spring 2013): 189-191.
[3] Darcy, "The Evolution of the Department of Indian Affairs," 163. See also: Russel, "Indian Department Headquarters Records," 192.
[4] Terry Cook, "Paper Trails: A Study in Northern Records and Northern Administration, 1898-1958," Ed. Kenneth Coates and William Morrison, *For Purposes of Dominion: Essays in Honour of Morris Zaslow,* Captus University Publications (1989), 15.
[5] Darcy, "The Evolution of the Department of Indian Affairs," 164.
[6] Cook, "Paper Trails," 15-16. See also: Terry Cook, "Legacy in Limbo: An Introduction to the Records of the Department of the Interior," *Archivaria 25* (2007): 76-78.

containing the necessary correspondence, making them incredibly valuable tools for the findability of records within this system.[7] All of these records have since become integrated into Record Group 10 (RG10), the arrangement and description designation given by the Public Archives of Canada for the records of the Department of Indian Affairs, its predecessors, and any successor entities.

Over time, the filing and retrieval needs of the department became more complicated and cumbersome until, in 1923, the straight numeric subject-based system was eliminated and replaced with a "subject-based duplex numeric central registry".[8] This new system was divided into five filing categories: "First series", "thousand series", "school file series", "land sale series" and the "engineering and construction files".[9] Under this new subject-based system, all records pertaining to the administration of the Indian Day Schools and Residential Schools from the earlier Red and Black series' were moved into the new "School Files Series".[10]

In 1907, the first records' transfer from the Department of Indian Affairs to the Archives Branch of the Department of Agriculture (later the Public Archives, now known as Library and Archives Canada (LAC)) took place. This was followed six years later by another large transfer of records "spurred by the findings of the Royal Commission to Inquire into the State of Records of the Public Departments of the Dominion of Canada."[11] Until 1951, the official arrangement of those transferred records was not completely solidified. The arrangement framework was established with the printing of LAC's *Preliminary Inventory – Record Group 10 – Indian Affairs,* the first in a series of publications in which "the institution presented its holdings

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[7] Terry Cook, "Paper Trails," 15.
[8] Darcy, "The Evolution of the Department of Indian Affairs," 166.
[9] Darcy, "The Evolution of the Department of Indian Affairs," 166.
[10] Darcy, "The Evolution of the Department of Indian Affairs," 167.
[11] Russel, "Indian Department Headquarters Records," 212.

arranged and described according to the "Record Group" and "Manuscript Group" schema."[12] Due to the lack of structure in the records' original order, an arrangement which combined chronological order with subject was imposed upon the records. Bill Russell, in his study of the records of the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs (SGIA), notes that "nothing suggests that the order in which they [records] are found today reflects that in which they were organized in SGIA's office" [13] prior to transfer. Russell's study of SGIA records is significant in this discussion as the history of both the SGIA records and the DIA records are quite similar and overlapped in their timeline of record management.

LAC microfilmed the records of the Red and Black series, and the School Files records from the later subject-based classification system, starting in 1974, following the political decision earlier that decade to address Indigenous claims regarding the harms of Residential Schools and to create a space where those claims could be considered. As part of that same undertaking, large quantities of records were added to RG10 at LAC, transferred from the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND).[14] In 1969, the microfilming of records from the Department of Indian Affairs began at LAC, prior to the massive influx of acquisitions they would receive in the following years.[15] The microfilming of the SGIA and other Indian Affairs records was meant to contribute to the accessibility of records for Indigenous claims. The disseminations of those microfilms followed, by selling copies to libraries, archives and research institutions across the country.[16] Years later, in their *2008-2009*

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[12] Russel, "Indian Department Headquarters Records," 215.
[13] Russel, "Indian Department Headquarters Records," 216.
[14] Russel, "Indian Department Headquarters Records," 217-218.
[15] Public Archives of Canada, *Annual Report of the Public Archives of Canada, 1980-1981,* published by Minister of Supply and Services Canada (1982), 58.
[16] Public Archives of Canada, *Annual Report 1980-81,* 58. See also: David Enns, "Providing access to archival information: Interlending and document supply at the National Archives of Canada," *Interlending & Document Supply* 21, no. 3 (1993): 3-6.

Report on Plans and Priorities, LAC outlined the need to adjust to the digital environment by "promoting broad digital access to its collections and services and by seeking new ways of delivering content and services through partnerships and collaborative agreements."[17] To do so, LAC began an internal mass digitization program in 2008, with the goal of digitizing one million images in its first year. The focus of the program was increased accessibility to those records deemed significant for client access.[18] The microfilm reels containing the School Files Series were digitized by LAC after 2008 following the start of that mass program.

Due to obligations entered into in the 2006 Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement (IRSSA), the Canadian federal government transferred digital copies of the records to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC, established 2008) who, in turn, left the records to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR), which opened at the University of Manitoba in 2015 following the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The context of this development in particular is long.

For more than a century, the Canadian Government, alongside various churches, worked to create and operate Indian Residential Schools for Indigenous children. These schools not only removed the children from all aspects of their culture, family and language, but were responsible for many horrible abuses against them.[19] In 2006, the Canadian government and various religious organizations were forced to sign a settlement following the raising of various federal lawsuits by Survivor groups and negotiations in the several years prior.

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[17] Library and Archives Canada - Digital Information Steering Committee, "Digital Initiatives at LAC: LAC Digitization Strategy, 2009-2014." Accessed November 19, 2022, https://circa.cs.ualberta.ca/AnnokiUploadAuth.php/3/3f/LAC_Digitization_Strategy.pdf

[18] Library and Archives Canada, "2008-2009 Report on Plans and Priorities," accessed November 19, 2022, https://www.tbs-sct.canada.ca/rpp/2008-2009/inst/bal/bal-eng.pdf

[19] Truth and Reconciliation Commission, *The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, vol. 6 – Reconciliation* (2015),# *;* Lisa P. Nathan, Elizabeth Shaffer and Maggie Castor, "Stewarding Collections of Trauma: Plurality, Responsibility and Questions of Action," *Archivaria* 80 (Fall 2015), 101-102.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established as a result of the IRSSA and was given the purpose of investigating elements of Canada's residential school history.[20] For five years the TRC travelled across the country to "bear witness to Survivors' stories, gather statements, write reports, and engage with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians to foster processes of truth telling and reconciliation."[21] The Settlement Agreement charged the TRC with compiling an historical record of the Indian Residential School system from records created and kept by the churches and federal government.[22] The TRC mandate further called for the establishment of a new national research centre to hold the historical and newly created records and oral histories pertaining to Residential Schools, and to bear honest witness to the atrocities of that system and safe guard the truths of that system for future generations.[23] In 2015, the TRC published their final report, which included 94 Calls to Action. Call 77 is especially salient in its emphasis of collaborative records sharing through remediation:

> We call upon provincial, territorial, municipal and community archives to work collaboratively with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation to identify and collect copies of all records relevant to the history and legacy of the residential school system, and to provide these to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.[24]

This Call to Action preceded the transfer of copies of relevant records from LAC to the NCTR. It is important to note here that what users view of the School Files Series will depend on how they access the records available through the NCTR online database. All of the digitized School Files series from LAC are housed in the NCTR database, however the way users search for and access

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[20] Nathan, Shaffer and Castor, "Stewarding Collections of Trauma," 103. See also: J.J. Ghaddar, "The Spectre in the Archive: Truth, Reconciliation and Indigenous Archival Memory," *Archivaria* 82 (2016): 9.
[21] Nathan, Shaffer and Castor, "Stewarding Collections of Trauma," 103.
[22] Truth and Reconciliation Commission, *The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, vol. 6 – Reconciliation* (2015), 142.
[23] Truth and Reconciliation Commission, *The Final Report vol. 6,* 151.
[24] Truth and Reconciliation Commission, *The Final Report vol. 6,* 155.

those records might impact whether they view the series in its original order or as an extract of the records from the series' transferred from LAC.[25]

The NCTR has a unique role and mandate specific to the Calls to Action of the Final Report of the TRC. The NCTR was established to safe guard records and oral histories about the Residential School system. The records of that system were widely dispersed and often inaccessible, obscuring the truth of what happened to the children who attended the schools, and those who never returned home. Indeed, the most important records held by the NCTR – the oral histories of Survivors of the system – did not exist prior to their creation by the TRC. The NCTR's specific mandate means that the way they acquire, arrange and present their records is much different than many traditional western archives born of colonial practices. The NCTR practices a Survivor centred approach to their record keeping, acquiring from individuals, communities and institutions the stories and records that matter to Survivors. They arrange and present those records in a way that would be more easily utilised without having to first understand colonial administrative structures and other systems that might act as barriers to access. For example, the NCTR database allows for users to search by school. This approach does not require the user to first learn and understand the colonial structure and operation of the Department of Indian Affairs in order to find records relating to the schools that Survivors attended. This is important since the demand that Survivor's learn and understand such a structure is not only a barrier to accessing records, but has the potential to retraumatize. As Mary

[25] NCTR, Brandon Residential School, School Files, Deaths of Pupils, *Letter from Rev. A. Doyle to the Secretary, Department of Mines & Resources, Indian Affairs Branch, 2 August 1940,* ref. R00007124, c-8651. – The interface page containing the metadata for these digitized records notes that the file is an extract from the original microfilm. The digitized images on the NCTR website do not contain every digitized image from the reel which LAC provides, only an extract. There is no note within the images to indicate where folios are missing.

Jane Logan McCallum has noted, accessing these records at LAC requires that you first "think like a colonizer."[26]

From the creation of the records which became the School Files Series, to the transfer of those records in various forms to numerous institutions for access, there have been several key remediations throughout the series' history. The first major remediation we can address is the microfilming of the series between 1974-1979.[27] LAC, at the time known as the Public Archives of Canada (PAC), undertook the microfilming of the records of the Department of Indian Affairs starting in 1974. Beginning with only three reels in 1974, by the end of the decade they had "copied" the records onto more than three thousand microfilm reels and fifteen thousand microfiches.[28] Reels that were deemed relevant to provinces and Indigenous groups were then sold to institutions, archives and libraries across the country to reduce travel costs and improve accessibility for Indigenous organizations.[29] Discussions at the time surrounding microfilm tended to lean into two of the essential tenets of archival work: preservation and access. In what Gerald Ham calls the "post-custodial era", archivists take more of an active role in making decisions about the future of the records they dealt with.[30] Archivists are no longer "passive custodians" of the records, but active participants in the way the record is shaped. A remediation

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[26] Mary Jane Logan McCallum, "Indigenous People, Archives and History". Shekon Neechie: An Indigenous History Site, June 21, 2018. Acccessed: https://shekonneechie.ca/2018/06/21/indigenous-people-archives-and-history/

[27] Public Archives of Canada, *Annual Report 1980-81,* 58. See also: Public Archives of Canada, *Annual Report of the Public Archives of Canada, 1975-1976,* published by Minister of Supply and Services Canada (1977), 62; Public Archives of Canada, *Annual Report of the Public Archives of Canada, 1978-1979,* published by Minister of Supply and Services Canada (1980), 67.

[28] Public Archives of Canada, *Annual Report 1980-81,* 58.

[29] Enns, "Providing access to archival information," 3-6. See also, James Morrison, "Archives and Native Claims," Archivaria 9 (1979), 24; and, Greg Bak and Kenton Story "'A Nation is Ill Served by a History which is Not Genuine:' The Past, Present and Future of RG10, the Records of the Department of Indian Affairs." Journal of the Canadian Historical Association 34, no. 1 (2024).

[30] Preeti Kaur, "Microfilm in the Archives: Past Use, Present Sustainability and Future Transformation." (M.A Thesis, University of Manitoba, 2019), 17. See also: Gerald Ham, "Archival Strategies for the Post-Custodial Era," *The American Archivist* 44, no. 3 (Summer 1981): 207.

such as microfilming requires active decisions to be made about which records are remediated and why, as well as how it is done. Microfilm not only allowed for greater preservation of the original records through fewer handlings of those originals, it also facilitated much greater access to the records' content in this new medium. Archival microfilm could be copied and sent to many locations, making large portions of archival holdings "as available as printed books" for dissemination.[31] Microfilm was also lauded for its ability to capture more nuance in the records it filmed than previous modes of copying. As an example, W. Kaye Lamb addressed his concerns regarding hand copying in a 1953 *Report of the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Historical Association,* noting that a specific series of records had needed to be copied a second time since the hand copying of previous years had left out all of the historically invaluable marginal notes and comments. Microfilm, Lamb noted, was capable of capturing the whole record, including marginal notes.[32] Not all discussions of microfilm in the archival literature, however, were as positive in these assessments.

As discussed in the second chapter of this thesis, microfilm is a technology that, by its nature, changes the way we interact with records. While there are many advantages related to the microfilming of records, there will inevitably be some form of loss, whether that be experiential or material.[33] The materiality of records is significant for records of all media, as that materiality conveys both the history of the record as an object and those various groups and institutions who interacted with the record.[34] A change in medium will always represent a change in what can be known from any given record. Archivists make the conscious choice to change records when

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[31] Ham, "Archival Strategies for the Post-Custodial Era," 208.
[32] W. Kaye Lamb, "The Federal Archival Scene," *Report of the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Historical Association* 32, No. 1 (1953), 66. https://www.erudit.org/en/journals/ram/1953-v32-n1-ram1263/300346ar.pdf
[33] Kaur, "Microfilm in the Archives," 25.
[34] Kaur, "Microfilm in the Archives," 25. See also: Ala Rekrut, "Matters of Substance: Materiality and Meaning in Historical Records and their Digital Images," *Archives and Manuscripts 42,* no. 3 (2014): 238-240.

they remediate onto microfilm. As with any remediation process, microfilm takes one record and makes it two, giving archivists further records material to contend with. In the past this issue has occasionally been dealt with through destruction. Concerns regarding storage space and the fact that microfilm is smaller, has led in the past to the destruction of original records after their microfilming.[35] Microfilming often results in losses in colour, details and dimension which, as Ala Rekrut notes, changes our experience of the record and alters what we can know.[36] These losses in material and experience are often seen as the drawbacks of microfilming records. However, when viewed through the framework of hypermediacy, this remediation creates new records rather than altering an original. When making the decision to microfilm the records of the School Files Series, LAC determined that the advantages of microfilming the records were worth whatever loss was seen as possible. Access to the records' content for groups across the country, especially Indigenous researchers, was the primary goal of this remediation in the series.

The second major remediation to these records was the digitization of the microfilms. In 2005, LAC worked alongside and in discussion with a wide set of Canadian stakeholders reflecting a variety of digital environment interests.[37] A National Summit in 2006 of this same interest group resulted in the development of the *Canadian Digital Information Strategy*. The strategy laid out some crucial goals, including bolstering content and maximizing access.[38] A few years later these goals were solidified by LAC in their 2008-2009 *Report on Plans and Priorities.* With the launch of their internal mass digitization program that year, LAC focused on improving access to records content through digitization. They also cited supporting the

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[35] Kaur, "Microfilm in the Archives," 26-27. See also, Eyford, "Tranferred, Preserved and Destroyed," 123-130.
[36] Ala Rekrut, "Reconnecting Mind and Matter: Materiality in Archival Theory and Practice," (M.A. Thesis, University of Manitoba, 2009), 115.
[37] Library and Archives Canada - Digital Information Steering Committee, "Digital Initiatives at LAC, 2009-2014," 1.
[38] Library and Archives Canada - Digital Information Steering Committee, "Digital Initiatives at LAC, 2009-2014," 1.

"preservation of fragile material and content at risk of format obsolescence" as well as "advancing the research and learning needs of Canadians".[39] Similar to microfilm, digitization provides a valuable solution to the challenges of preservation and accessibility.[40] Digitization provides much greater access to the content of the record without jeopardizing the condition of the original. The possibilities of access to content with digitized records can span across not only institutions but the globe, with the potential to be accessed by people in many places. However, with digitization, many of the same challenges facing microfilm still apply, especially when it is microfilms being digitized. Digitization creates two-dimensional images and changes how we interact with the record in both experience and material. Loss of three-dimensional aspects of the record as well as other aspects of the record's materiality are considerations which make the digital copy contested. Beyond this, digital environments change rapidly and require format updates in order for records to remain viable.[41] Despite these challenges, the benefits of digitization in a largely digital world continue to make it the preferred method of remediation in Canadian archives. When looking at the records of the School Files Series in particular we can see that the remediations from paper to microfilm, and from microfilm to digital, followed generally held understandings about the benefits of those remediations. However, because nothing can be the same as something else and because all acts of remediation are acts of record creation, there are inevitably changes to the way we interact with these records.

The Brandon Residential School opened in 1895 under the operation of the Methodist United Church and missionary John Semmens.[42] The students who attended were recruited from

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[39] Library and Archives Canada - Digital Information Steering Committee, "Digital Initiatives at LAC, 2009-2014," 2.
[40] Zack Lischer-Katz, "Studying the materiality of media archives in the age of digitization: Forensics, infrastructures and ecologies," *First Monday* 22, No.1 - 2 (January 2017).
[41] Lischer-Katz, "Studying the materiality of media archives," (digital article with no page numbers).
[42] NCTR, "Brandon," accessed 19 January 2024 https://nctr.ca/residential-schools/manitoba/brandon/

northern Manitoba, including Norway House, God's Lake, Berens River, Nelson House, Oxford House, Island Lake, Fisher River, Cross Lake and many other locations.[43] The school's curriculum focused on farming, house-keeping, nursing and other manual skills which accompanied a great deal of unpaid and heavy labour expected of students. When combined with illness, deaths of students at Brandon were not uncommon and two cemeteries have been associated with the school.[44] The NCTR identifies at least seventy-six children who died at Brandon, however the expected number is much higher as many who died were not recorded in the named registers.

While the records I have analysed in this section were chosen primarily for their overlap between the digital holdings of LAC and the NCTR, they also deal with school administration and student deaths from the records of the Department of Indian Affairs and must be understood in the context of their creation. These records document details of the school's administration which were subsequently sent to the Department of Indian Affairs, including correspondence and records on the deaths of students at Brandon. These records aided in maintaining and perpetuating the system of genocide and oppression that the Residential School system is now known to have been. As such, how we remediate and present these records, how they are accessed, and what can be known from them is incredibly important to ongoing work making known the truth about the harms of the Residential School system in Canada.

The school files of the Brandon Residential School, from the School Files Series, can be accessed at several archival institutions across Canada in their paper, microfilm and digital forms. Microfilm copies sold by LAC to the province of Manitoba are accessible in that format

[43] Anne Lindsay, "In Pictures and Words: Life at Brandon Residential School," *Manitoba History; Winnipeg,* Issue 87 (Summer 2018), 36.
[44] TRC, "Canada's Residential Schools: Missing Children and Unmarked Burials," *The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, volume 4* (2015), 191. See also, Lindsay, "In Pictures and Words," 36-38.

at the Archives of Manitoba, while digital copies of those same reels can be accessed through both the LAC website and the online database for the NCTR. In each of these three situations the records are affected to some degree by remediation. When viewing the records on microfilm, the functionality of the medium dictates that the individual records move across the reader horizontally. It is possible to view several pages of the general administration files within the same screen as they are on a continuous reel and to see the edges of the film where at intervals the "Kodak safety film" stamp appears.[45] While the image quality is not ideal and does not account for colour of the original records, it does demonstrate the entire page of the paper record being captured.[46] In viewing the record on the microfilm reel, the continuity of the records is demonstrated. You can see multiple pages at once, just like in viewing a physical file of paper records. It is clear that these records are part of a series and form an intellectual unit. However, this also means that when records are left out of the filming for various reasons, such as access restrictions, it is impossible for researchers to know unless care has been taken to include a note on the reel indicating the folios removed. Notes, however, of the original medium and order of the records have not been included in many of the reels available. This lack of metadata regarding the original record and subsequent removal of folios, covers and other such materials represent a break in the chain of remediation since the remediated records do not demonstrate enough information to maintain that chain.

The largest effect the remediation to microfilm can be said to have is an experiential one. The microfilming of the paper records captured most of the content to the greatest extent

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[45] Archives of Manitoba, LAC microfilms, School Files Series, *Brandon Residential School – General Administration*, reel c-8647; Archives of Manitoba, LAC microfilms, School Files Series, *Brandon Residential School – Methodist – General Administration,* reel c-8648.

[46] Archives of Manitoba, LAC microfilms, School Files Series, *Letter from Rev. A. Sutherland to Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Ottawa, 22 August 1896,* reel c-8467.

technology would allow at the time, though not in all cases. The changes that affect interaction with the record are where the microfilming has the greatest impact. While many records' content were captured fully, many media like photographs may not have had captions and dorso sides included. With the paper records, the physical record is presented to the user along with the box it was stored in. The manual flipping of pages and feeling of the records material qualities are some of the qualities "lost" in a remediation. The user is still getting the bulk of the content of the records in most cases. The microfilm visibly captures some of the previous medium within the film, presenting a juxtaposed record where its past and present are both visible to the user.[47] However, without the critical metadata being added to the remediated record, the record cannot be said to represent hypermediacy. A note or start frame including information about the original record, about the remediation itself and including indications of removed folder jackets and folios would be essential information to maintaining a chain of remediation, and therefore the provenance of the records. This sort of information is critical to ensuring the context of a record's creation is preserved, and the remediation by archival institutions acknowledged as part of that creation, with all the implied choices, biases and historical context therein.

Viewing the same records as digital images provides a different experience. The digitization of the microfilm takes the continuous reels and creates images of the individual records on the reel. The interface decisions made by LAC in the digital medium then requires that users move through the records one by one, as individual images. The continuity of the microfilm reel is altered in this process as it is no longer possible to view the surrounding records

[47] Archives of Manitoba, LAC microfilms, School Files Series, *Letter from Sgt. John Servans to the Indian Commissioner, Regina, 21 January 1897,* reel c-8647.

in the same screen.[48] The individual digital images of the microfilmed records are brighter and provide greater detail of the original paper records, despite being taken from the microfilms.[49] While most of the content of the original paper records has been captured in the new digital medium, it is not always visually clear that these digital records came from a microfilm. The edges of the reel are not visible in every digitized image, though the "Kodak safety film" stamp does remain in the images where it was present on the reel.[50] While the black and white colouring and quality of the image are indicative of a digitization of a microfilm, this is not noted anywhere, nor are there always edges of the film to indicate certainly that this is a microfilm of a record, which has then been digitized. If the user were familiar with what a digitized microfilm looked like, then the record could be considered an example of hypermediacy on its own. However, presuming all users hold an understanding of the characteristics of common archival remediations is ignorant to the various backgrounds and ways of knowing that users may come to archival research from.[51] A representation of hypermediacy which maintains provenance relies on the addition of metadata to the remediated record.

To a certain extent, the digitization of the microfilms containing the Brandon Residential School files obscures their remediation from the microfilm. While the images still provide improved preservation and access to the content of the records, they may not provide the ideal

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[48] Library and Archives Canada, School Files Series, *Brandon Residential School – General Administration,* reel c-8647. Accessed via https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/mass-digitized-archives/school-files-1879-1953/Pages/school-files-1879-1953.aspx

[49] Library and Archives Canada, School Files Series, *Letter from Reverend A. Sutherland to Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Ottawa, 22 August 1896,* reel c-8647. Accessed via https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/mass-digitized-archives/school-files-1879-1953/Pages/school-files-1879-1953.aspx

[50] Library and Archives Canada, School Files Series, *Letter from Sgt. John Servans to the Indian Commissioner, Regina, 21 January 1897,* reel c-8647. Accessed via https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/mass-digitized-archives/school-files-1879-1953/Pages/school-files-1879-1953.aspx

[51] Geoffrey Yeo, "Nothing is the Same as Something Else: Significant Properties and Notions of Identity and Originality," *Archival Science 10* (June 2010): 87-88. See also, Helen Hockx-Yu and Gareth Knight, "What to preserve? Significant properties of digital objects," Int J DigitCuration 3, no. 1 (2008): 142.

hypermediacy that would keep intact the provenance and active role of the archival institutions in creating these digital records. More metadata about the original record, changes made to the remediated record and subsequent remediations would be needed to ensure an intact chain of remediation. Hypermediacy remediates by acknowledging the creation of a new record, whose content is the previous media. In order for hypermediacy to be demonstrated and the chain of remediation kept intact, it would need to be acknowledged that the images are digitisations of microfilm, which filmed original paper records. In order for a juxtaposition of media to occur and an acknowledgement of the new record created, the user must be aware of both the old and new media in the remediated record, through the addition of descriptive metadata. This metadata would include information about the remediation itself, such as date of creation, responsible parties and possible notes pointing to policy and decision documents regarding the creation of those records. This would ensure the context of the remediation is visible to users and available for use in interpretation of the records.

The digitized copies available through the NCTR database provide yet another varied experience with these records. While the digitized images available are direct copies provided by LAC to the TRC, they represent two distinct digital records. The NCTR online database does not present the entire digitized reels for Brandon Residential School. Instead, they have an extract of folios from the reels deemed significant in creating and fostering an understanding of the Residential School system and its harms, as dictated by its specific and unique mandate.[52] The images available are the product of the same digitization project done by LAC; the digital record is identical in what can be viewed by the user.[53] However, the NCTR digital images being an

[52] NCTR, "Our Mandate," on National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation. November 21, 2022. https://nctr.ca/about/about-the-nctr/our-mandate/

[53] NCTR, Brandon Residential School, School Files, General Administration, *Letter from Rev. A. Sutherland to Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Ottawa, 22 August 1896,* ref. R00007098, reel-c-8647.

extract of records rather than the entire microfilm affects the user's interpretation of the records, and this is done with intention. The NCTR leads with a Survivor-centred approach to their record keeping. They arrange and present the records of their holdings in a way that would be more easily utilised without having to first understand colonial administrative structures and other systems that might act as barriers to access. This changes the way records are interacted with and viewed with the intention of making research accessible to Survivors of the Residential School System. The NCTR has provided descriptive metadata to notify users that what they are viewing is an extract of the available administrative records from Brandon Residential School rather than the entire file, which demonstrates the interventions of the institution not to include the entire digitized microfilm reel along with their purpose. However, the selection of records still creates a rupture in what can be known from the series and the connections between the records of the series. While we are able to infer from the metadata that we are viewing an extracted section of a digitized microfilm, the digital object itself is the same image as provided by LAC and, as with the microfilm itself, does not contain the metadata needed to maintain the chain of remediation.[54] The inclusion of a note regarding the paper to microfilm remediation and note of removed folios and any other changes made to the remediated record could make the records a good example of hypermediacy.

With all of the associated challenges, the remediations that have taken place are significant and important to the preservation and access to these records. While in an ideal remediation we would be able to view information of the previous medium and the new medium itself, an expression of hypermediacy which has a clear juxtaposition of its old and new media, these remediations are still valuable and necessary to the School Files Series. The remediations

[54] NCTR, Brandon Residential School, School Files, Deaths of Pupils, *Letter from Rev. A. Doyle to the Secretary, Department of Mines & Resources, Indian Affairs Branch, 2 August 1940,* ref. R00007124, c-8651.

present in this series do not wholly represent an expression of hypermediacy since the decisions leading to these remediations did not seek to highlight those process of remediation in their created records: microfilming and digitization. To represent the provenance of records during remediation and to ensure the interventions of archivists are visible, hypermediacy (as a framework) can provide context that might otherwise be overlooked in the remediations records continue to undergo. Primarily this requires ensuring a visible chain of remediation through identifiable old and new media in the remediated record, along with metadata regarding the original and the new, remediated record. These additions would ensure the provenance of records and their remediations is made visible to users, holding responsible parties accountable for their decisions and biases and providing historical context for the creation of remediated records.

Maple Leaves: The Study of Manuscripts and Early Printed Books in Western Canada:

The Maple Leaves Project is a collaborative project which aims to "identify, record, and track the journey and contents of uncatalogued manuscripts and early printed books in public and private collections. Its ultimate goal is to support scholarship further by providing a more comprehensive integrated catalogue of books held throughout the region."[55] This case study looks at part of the project that is focused on the Dysart Memorial Collection of rare books and manuscripts which are housed in the University of Manitoba Archives and Special Collections (UMASC), along with the archival records of their purchase. The project aims at moving the current descriptive data for this special collection into the UMASC archival database and digitizing parts of the collection, creating a descriptive Dysart Collection series which catalogues and tracks the journey of the items in the Dysart collection. This goal is intended to intellectually unify the Dysart collection with the archival holdings which must be viewed within the same

[55] David Watt, Sharon Wright and Paul Dyck, "The Study of Renaissance and Reformation Books on the Canadian Prairies," *Renaissance and Reformation Studies 37.3* (2014), pp. 238.

physical space, in order to simplify access for researchers. The project also intends to intellectually unite the Dysart collection with its archival purchase records to form a series encompassing the formation of this unique set of records and manuscripts. The long-term goals of the project are aimed at eventually connecting digitally with other institutions in Canada who hold medieval and early modern manuscripts and books, creating a larger scale database of the rare texts available across Western Canadian institutions and their associated records. For the project's creators, the work here is part of ongoing research into medieval and early modern manuscripts found in Canadian institutions and the implications of their acquisition as collections in a settler nation.[56]

In 1972 the Dysart Collection was partially exhibited before a larger exhibit was made in 1973, when the catalogue for the collection was created. The catalogue for the collection notes that, among the books and manuscripts are sixteen incunabula, possibly representing one of the largest collections of early printed books in Western Canada at that time. The Dysart collection is a special collection, meaning while it technically encompasses printed materials which would usually be the purview of a library, the fragility or rarity of the materials requires that they be treated and accessed a bit differently from other library materials. Those requirements tend to place special collections under the guise of archival spaces, where proper handling, preservation and access can occur. While the project is ongoing, the most immediate goal was to translate the current library standards used for describing the Dysart collection into an archival descriptive system and provide a more suitable digital object feature for viewing digitized objects from this collection. As a research assistant on this project, I was tasked with determining how to map library descriptive data into an archival system using the Rules for Archival Description (RAD),

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[56] David Watt, "Introduction: What Do We Study When We Study Manuscripts in Canada?" *Florilegium,* Vol. 33 (2016), pp. 5.

and to aid in the creation of the standards for the project's digitization efforts. Presently the digitization has yet to get underway as the project was delayed by the Covid-19 pandemic, though the mapping of the bibliographic library metadata into RAD categories has been completed, along with the digitization standards for the project. With the completion of this stage of the project, I can use the work finished thus far to examine how a framework of hypermediacy might look when put into place in an archival system and how this project specifically might aid the University of Manitoba's efforts towards reconciliation.

It is initially surprising to note the number of medieval and early modern manuscripts held in collections across Canada. While these collections are much smaller than their European counterparts, the interest is in the very different way that such collections were formed. David Watt, one of the leads on the Maple Leaves Project, in his 2016 introduction to a *Florilegium* special issue on medieval manuscripts in Canada, notes that these Canadian collections resemble those found in other former settler colonies, the items selected, purchased and pieced together with consideration for economic value, aesthetics and pedagogy.[57] Watt points out that manuscripts found in settler nations often reveal much about the people who made the decisions to acquire them and the factors underlying those decisions.[58]

In 1953, the Dysart Memorial Collection was integrated into the university libraries during the official opening of the new library building (now known as the Elizabeth Dafoe Library). The collection was gifted in honour of Justice Andrew Knox Dysart, the fourth chancellor of the university, following his death. Funds for the acquisition were provided by the Manitoba Brewers' and Hotelmen's Welfare Fund, and the selection of books and manuscripts was made by the then president of the university, Dr. Albert Henry S. Gillson. The collection

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[57] Watt, "Introduction," 5.
[58] Watt, "Introduction," 5.

contains nine manuscripts and sixty books representing a range of roughly six hundred years, though a significant portion of them represent the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.[59] The collection contents include Catholic liturgical manuscripts and other religious materials, ancient histories written in the medieval and early modern period, legal documents, European and "World" histories, works of theology, philosophy, poetry, science, math and literature. Many of these include author names and historic people recognizable as part of the Western canon. These would have been considered significant additions to any Canadian institution of higher learning in the middle of the twentieth century.[60] These sixty-nine books and manuscripts do not encompass the whole of the selection by Gillson however. Though not purchased through the same fund and thought of separately from the Dysart Collection, Gillson selected a total of 180 books to be acquired by the University library, only sixty-nine of which became the Dysart collection. The choice of which items from Gillson's list formed the Dysart collection was made mostly of an economic necessity, using up $9999.15 of the provided ten thousand dollars from the Manitoba Brewers' and Hotelmen's Welfare Fund.[61] However, there are other clear values behind the selection of books, which add to a wider phenomenon of medieval and early modern books being held across Canada.

In their work on Renaissance and Reformation books on the Canadian Prairies, David Watt, Sharon Wright and Paul Dyck provide an analysis of the bookplate imagery commemorating the Dysart collection. They describe the bookplate, with its traditional European imagery and invocation of the process *translation studii,* as representing the transfer of learning

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[59] University of Manitoba Libraries, *The Dysart Memorial Collection of Rare Books and Manuscripts: An Exhibition held at Gallery 1.1.1.,* The University of Manitoba, April 23 – May 11, 1973, Hignell Printing Limited (1973).
[60] University of Manitoba Libraries, *The Dysart Memorial Collection of Rare Books and Manuscripts,* catalogue.
[61] Watt et al, "Renaissance and Reformation Books," 252.

and cultural values from one place to another, in this case from Europe to the Canadian west.[62] They note that it is not hard to imagine why the ideal was embraced by scholars in colonial North America, who viewed themselves as a logical next destination for the transference of such values. The imagery commemorating the Dysart collection is indicative of sentiments across North America, both at the time of their acquisition and earlier. The acquisition of such rare manuscripts and books, covering topics of religion, morality, science and history, is part of the transmission of European culture and artifacts to former colonies. In the foreword to the Dysart collection exhibition, Edward Doré remarks on the "superb quality" of the collection and its selection, which he says illustrates "the place of the book as the instrument of civilized thought through many centuries of Western civilization."[63]

Doré's comment is significant for a few reasons. First, it implicates the Dysart collection as part of the tradition of transferring European learning and cultural values to the Canadian prairies, much like the collection's own bookplate does. The collection is thus part of a process which prizes European knowledge, culture and values and works to superimpose them onto the landscape of the Canadian prairies, a place where these book's value and learning did not originate. Second, the comment also acts as part of a modern European cultural conception that "the book" and written history is superior to other modes of understanding and knowing, as it is the "civilized" mode of historical memory.

These ideas are problematic when placed geographically on the Canadian prairies, and can be seen not just in the acquisition of European artifacts and books by the University of Manitoba, but in systems like the Indian Residential School system. Watt makes note of this in

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[62] Watt et al, "Renaissance and Reformation Books," 248.

[63] Edward Doré, "Foreword," *The Dysart Memorial Collection of Rare Books and Manuscripts: An Exhibition held at Gallery 1.1.1.,* The University of Manitoba, April 23 – May 11, 1973, Hignell Printing Limited (1973).

his discussion of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation and its archives, also located at the University of Manitoba. The archives hold the gathered records of many archival institutions, along with Survivor stories, meant to be a place where the truth of Survivor experiences are honoured and kept safe for future generations.[64] Watt notes that:

> The Survivors' testimony reveals the catastrophic consequences of policies implicitly or explicitly based on claims of cultural superiority — claims that depend in part on the idea of *translatio studii* celebrated in the medievalist scene in the Dysart Collection bookplate. I think it is important to recognize that the residential school system and the acquisition of manuscripts in Canada are driven by some of the same values.[65]

Translatio studii is an historiographical concept in which history is viewed as a sequence of knowledge transfers from one geographic location to another. The acquisition of the Dysart Collection is part of this tradition which acts as a tool of colonial power, helping to translate European values and culture to the Canadian prairies at the expense of the Indigenous peoples already on this land. The acquisition of European cultural artifacts in the Dysart Collection, then, serves as a tool of erasure – similar to how Douglas Brymner and Arthur Doughty sought to erase Indigenous history by bringing remediated colonial records to Canada from European archives. By superimposing European culture, learning and values over those of Indigenous peoples and histories, special collections like the Dysart Collection can be seen as acting as a tool of the same colonial power responsible for systems like the Indian Residential School system. So, how can remediation of such collections break this tradition and actually work towards reconciliation rather than against it?

There has been very limited remediation in the Dysart collection due to the rare and fragile nature of many of the volumes included. A virtual exhibit including just one folio each

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[64] National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, "Our Mandate," accessed 19 January 2024 https://nctr.ca/about/about-the-nctr/our-mandate/

[65] Watt, "Introduction," 12.

from eight of the sixty-nine rare books and manuscripts is available through the Archives and Special Collections digital collections website. The eight digitized images demonstrate the colour of the original records, as well as the quality of the content. However, the edges of the pages are not visible and it is not clear from the images whether the folios are from bound volumes or loose sheets.[66] In some cases, it is unclear whether the entire page has been captured, as marginal markings run off the edges of the image.[67] Additionally, the current digital exhibit has very little descriptive metadata information about the original items the images are from, or about the remediation itself. Why were these eight images remediated and not others; what is excluded and why – these questions are not answered in this presentation of the remediated records. This leaves users to interpret the intentions and values of those who created such an exhibit. This display speaks more to a desire to demonstrate the University of Manitoba's rare "treasures", signalling the university's participation in the big leagues of rare book and manuscript collections. This also seems to suggest that the value of this exhibit comes from the value inherent in the items of the collection itself, further participating in that notion of *translatio studii.*

In these digital records there is no hypermediacy because the former medium has not been "captured" in the new one, meaning there is no clear indication of what is being remediated based on the remediation provided or what has been excluded. This lack of hypermediacy obscures the intellectual integrity of the records and causes a distortion in the "transmission of

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[66] University of Manitoba Archives and Special Collections, Dysart Memorial Collection of Rare Books and Manuscripts, Item 4, *C. Julius Caesar [Julii Celsi commentaria],* c. 15th century. November 21, 2022, https://libguides.lib.umanitoba.ca/c.php?g=503468&p=3455110

[67] University of Manitoba Archives and Special Collections, Dysart Memorial Collection of Rare Books and Manuscripts, Item 8, *Philip II, King of Spain [Carta executoria de Gaspar de Gauna, Valladoid, 1569],* October 20, 1569. November 21, 2022, https://libguides.lib.umanitoba.ca/c.php?g=503468&p=3455185

the original meaning and characteristics of the records."[68] The effect is both experiential and material. The losses created by this remediation alter what the user can know about the records and in doing so, changes the possible interpretations of the records. This remediation, without indication of what exactly has occurred and what isn't being represented, obscure the choices made by those involved in this remediation.

While it is not necessary for the full experience of a medium to be remediated for hypermediacy to work, it is important that we can know the full extent of what is being remediated. This means information about the previous medium and its remediation should be visible with the remediated record through descriptive metadata. Instead, this remediation of a handful of folios from the Dysart Collection prizes the content of the records as the value to researchers, rather than the context of the creation, acquisition and movement of these materials from Europe to the Canadian prairies. As we know from previous chapters however, content and context cannot be divorced in remediation, as the two are intertwined. Media and historical context impacts the content of the record that is created, just as the content of that record then impacts what is remediated and why. Traditional digitization of rare books sought to provide access to content, to provide a new access point to the original rather than to create a wholly new item.[69] In doing so it maintains the values and purpose for the collection's original acquisition: to provide access to texts that translate European knowledge and values to a Canadian university user, the value of which is unstated and unquestioned. This sort of remediation maintains

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[68] Tom Nesmith, "Seeing Archives: Postmodernism and the Changing Intellectual Place of Archives," *The American Archivist,* Vol. 65, No. 1 (2002): 27.

[69] Diana Kichuk, "Metamorphosis: Remediation in Early English Books Online (EEBO)," *Literary and Linguistic Computing,* Vol. 22, No. 3 (2007), 296-297. Kichuk discusses EEBO and the enthusiasm by scholars that this remediation provided access to the "real thing" rather than the surrogate or new record that remediation creates.

translatio studii, and as such maintains colonial narrative. However, remediation of the Dysart Collection using a model of hypermediacy can break this narrative.

The aims of the Maple Leaves Project seek to rectify some of the experiential issues of this previous remediation and provide descriptive information which maintains the chain of remediation and therefore the provenance of the records. Before setting out to re-digitize any of the records in this collection, the research team determined that some best practices should be established. Due to the unique nature of this project, the best practices established for the project drew from several sources in both library and archival studies. The Dysart Collection is a special collection that uses bibliographic library standards for description. The project goals established that this information had to be mapped into an archival descriptive database, so that the remediated books and manuscripts could be managed and accessed together with remediated versions of the purchase records and other records.

The guidelines provided by the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), along with those created by the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), set out similar practices for digitization and were drawn together as an initial guideline for the project. The IFLA guidelines establish two key elements that it considers throughout: the intellectual content the records contain and the material record as an artefact itself.[70] The first step in best practices ensures preservation, determining the material condition of the records and whether any preservation work would be required prior to digitization. This step is important. While remediations such as digitization is itself a preservation measure, providing an extended lifetime for original records by reducing their use, the process of remediation also has the potential to cause damage to records. The selection of records for

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[70] International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, *Guidelines for Planning the Digitization of Rare Books and Manuscripts Collections,* 2014.

digitization is another important step. This is the step where biases and individual decisions are most evident in what is remediated. For the Dysart Collection, the project started with the volumes which had already been remediated before as individual images, though the aim is to include all sixty-nine items along with the records of the collection's purchase and formation.

Once records are selected and prepared for digitization it then must be considered how to digitize them. Technical aspects aside, a great deal of importance is placed on what is captured in the image by these guidelines. The IFLA guidelines outline this as fidelity to the original:

> It is important to preserve and recreate as much as possible the look and feel of the original object. The entire physical object should be captured and not just the intellectual content. It is necessary to photograph entire pages front and back (including beyond the edges) and not to crop images within the page edges. Bound volumes should be photographed cover-to-cover, including flyleaves, empty pages, pastedowns and bindings…No matter the format, the entire work or artefact should be reproduced.[71]

Similarly, the guidelines provided by NARA discuss what should be captured in the digitized image:

> We recommend the entire document be scanned, no cropping allowed. A small border should be visible around the entire document or photographic image. Careful placement of documents on flatbed scanners may require the originals to be away from platen edge to avoid cropping.[72]

The key similarity in both is the need to capture the entirety of the record being scanned, including a small border around the entire record where possible. While it is impossible to fully recreate an old medium in a new one, leaving a break or space surrounding the record acts to create that juxtaposition of the old medium in the new, signalling hypermediacy. It would be clear, in this digitization, what the original medium of the record is and the content it includes, and that the record being viewed is not in its original medium.

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[71] IFLA, *Guidelines for Planning the Digitization of Rare Books and Manuscripts Collections,* 11.
[72] U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, *Technical Guidelines for Digitizing Archival Materials for Electronic Access: Creation of Production Master Files – Raster Images* (June 2004), 42.

Additionally, both sets of guidelines address the need for clear descriptive metadata: information about the physical description of the record, its format and its intellectual content.[73] This is essential in maintaining the chain of remediation, by providing information about the previous medium of the record and the new digital medium, also highlighting aspects or characteristics excluded or lost from a remediation.

These best practices align with a framework of hypermediacy. The practice of scanning the entirety of the record to capture content and create juxtaposition and providing descriptive metadata about the original medium and any changes made in remediation both work to highlight the remediation of the old medium into the new, providing a model of hypermediacy. To maintain the chain of remediation and proper provenance, metadata about the remediation itself should be added. The date of remediation, the responsible party and possibly a note about where more information could be found regarding decision-making and policy advance hypermediacy and maintain the provenance information of the remediated record.

Beyond the digitization of the records, the Maple Leaves Project also considered the presentation of the records in the digital environment. A digital interface functions in a way like an archival space, holding information about records and providing access to them. As such, the layout of the digital interface affects how the users can interact with the records. Several options were considered, but in the end the goal of having the digital record and its metadata available on the same screen, along with the integration of the system into what is already being used by the University of Manitoba Archives, meant that the project opted to work with the archives'

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[73] IFLA, *Guidelines for Planning the Digitization of Rare Books and Manuscripts Collections,* 13-14. See also: NARA, *Technical Guidelines for Digitizing Archival Materials,* 7.

existing Access to Memory (or AtoM) database, with the added digital object feature.[74] This provides access to the digitized record on the same screen as the metadata, much like the AtoM instance used by the NCTR database. The choice of this database structure for the project supports hypermediacy in the presentation of the digitized records, by including both the digital object and metadata together to represent and maintain the chain of remediation. This metadata includes information about the remediation, such as what has been remediated (the entire record, folios excluded, etc.), when the remediation was done and by whom (institution or responsible party). This metadata signals to users that the digitized record is not the original and indicates what occurred to make the version they are viewing.

The metadata provided through this framework of hypermediacy indicates the parties responsible for remediation and makes them visible as creators of the remediated record. This visibility as a creator means that they (institutions and individuals) can be held responsible for choices made during the remediation, including their biases and individual understandings of the work. This allows users to question why items were remediated, and better understand the decisions going into such creation and what sort of biases might be a part of the record with which they are interacting.

The Dysart Collection being tied intellectually, through metadata and archival description, to its purchase and other records allows users to interrogate the collection's purpose and the colonial biases that went into the acquisition of these volumes. The presentation of items in the collection together with the purchase and other records and metadata about the items and records, and about their remediation, all combine to change the narrative of the collection in its

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[74] Canadian Heritage Information Network, *Collections Management System Criteria Checklist,* Department of Canadian Heritage (2020). This criteria list was used in determining which database options best met the project goals and requirements.

remediated form. This allows users of the Dysart Collection to have a fuller understanding of how this collection came to be, how it has been altered and how the parties responsible for its creation have impacted its representation. The narrative of the remediated records demonstrates the provenance of the Dysart Collection, the choices and biases behind its formation and acknowledge the colonial nature of its original acquisition. This is an important step that aids in the university's path towards reconciliation, by acknowledging and making visible the myriad ways colonialism has pervaded every aspect of the university's function, and by coming to terms with those impacts.

Conclusion:

This chapter has provided two case studies in remediation, one that demonstrates a long history of remediation and one that is only in its inception. The records of the Brandon School Files series, from the RG10 record set, have throughout their long history undergone multiple remediations. The Black Series, and more specifically the reorganized School Files Series, provides a particular opportunity to explore how remediation has occurred in the past across the history of a single series, since this series in particular has undergone two major remediations. The case study focused on those records pertaining to the Brandon Residential School from within the series as an example of how these records have been remediated in the past and what effects those changes have had on the accessible records, paying particular attention to whether those remediations can be said to reflect a framework of hypermediacy. The microfilming of the Brandon School Files created records which demonstrated a juxtaposition of old and new media, though the metadata for that remediation might have gone further in noting removed folios and un-filmed elements, and in establishing who made the remediations, when they were made, and why. The digitization of those microfilms, while incredibly important for access and preservation, did not provide a concrete demonstration of hypermediacy.

The Maple Leaves Project, while still ongoing, is creating remediations of items from the Dysart Collection as well as records of the collection's purchase and management, with the intention of advancing the University of Manitoba on its path towards reconciliation. Most of these items and records will be remediated for the first time. The project goal of creating these new remediations, along with the development of guidelines for the project that advance awareness of hypermediacy, provided an example of how a remediation project can incorporate hypermediacy from the start. While results from this project are not yet available, the structuring of the project guidelines with hypermediacy in mind demonstrates how to implement such a framework in the future and establishes the benefit of this type of reframing to advance decolonization.

Conclusion

In the past few decades, media studies concepts have shaped literature surrounding the role of archivists and the work we do. One of those notions is that there is no way to avoid mediated experience. No form of communication is unlimited in its ability to represent reality, as all communications are mediations. As noted in media studies literature, any improvement in understanding through communication can only come from identifying and exploring as many of the mediating factors as possible. In archival settings, the exploration of those mediating factors highlights the role of archivists and archival institutions as creators of the knowledge presented in archives.[1] It is important that the contributions of archives and archivists be visible to users, so that the provenance of records is not obscured and the full context of a record's creation is provided for interpretation and analysis by users.

In the first chapter I demonstrate how media studies theories of remediation can be applied to archival theory and practice, and specifically that the strategy known as 'hypermediacy' can provide a framework through which archival remediation can be reconceptualized. Hypermediacy values the contrast of various media in their presentation. In creating a juxtaposition between old and new media, hypermediacy makes visible the work done to remediate. Hypermediacy maintains provenance, custodial history and records connections while also demonstrating the interventions of archivists through descriptive information, and other metadata, alongside the record's representation in its new media. In an archival setting, hypermediacy as the aim of remediation can look like a number of things in various media, however the important element in any act of remediation to make visible the chain of

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[1] Tom Nesmith, "Seeing Archives: Post Modernism and the Changing Place of Archives," *The American Archivist* 65, no. 1 (2002): 26.

remediation and the role of archivists and archival institutions. The juxtaposition of old and new media required by a framework of hypermediacy demonstrates that a new record has been created in a new medium, maintains provenance and makes visible the active role of archivists in producing the remediated record.

In the second chapter I examined the history of remediation in Canadian archival practice, through the notion of reformatting as remediation. Beginning with the early history of Canadian archival theory and practice and the earliest form of remediation, scribal copying, the chapter progressed through some of the most common remediations seen in archival practice. Archival literature surrounding scribal copying, microfilming, digitization and digital file format migration all demonstrate a conception of copying as a form of remediation and demonstrate through the wide spread use and discussion of these practices, that remediation is central and intrinsic in Canadian archival theory and practice. In demonstrating that essential nature of remediation to our understanding of archival work, I emphasize the importance of reconceptualizing remediation so that provenance is maintained and the power and privilege of the role of the archivist is made clear.

In the final chapter I provide a critical analysis of two case studies in remediation, one which demonstrates a long history of remediation and one which is only at its beginning. The first case study focused on those records pertaining to the Brandon Residential School from within the RG10 *School Files Series* as an example of how these records have been remediated in the past and what effects those changes have had on the accessibility of the records. By examining the records in various media and across several institutions I demonstrated that, while those remediations were important for the preservation and access of the series, the remediations of the series represent an imperfect expression of some elements of hypermediacy. The second

case study focused on the Maple Leaves Project, still in its early stages, focusing on the development of project guidelines through a framework of hypermediacy which could advance the university's efforts at reconciliation. In these case studies I demonstrate how hypermediacy either does and or does not appear, and how a framework of hypermediacy might look for archival practice.

Remediation is one of the most visible sites of intervention and power by archivists. The functions of preservation and access in archival theory both determine that the reformatting of records onto new media is a necessary and favorable practice that ensures longevity of original records, allows access across distance and safeguards against total loss. Yet archival literature lacks the language and framework for identifying and discussing those essential remediations as record creation rather than as merely augmenting access to original records. When reconceptualized through the lens of hypermediacy, archival remediations can acknowledge that acts of reformatting are, in fact, acts of record creation. Doing so allows archivists to apply a conceptual framework of hypermediacy to maintain provenance and highlight the role of the archivist as co-creator of the records, with all of the choices, biases and historical context necessary for analysing records fully.

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