RETHINKING ARCHIVAL APPRAISAL: MACROAPPRAISAL AS A TECHNOLOGY FOR CITIES

BY

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A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Rethinking Archival Appraisal: Macroappraisal as a Technology for Cities

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A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies

of The University of Manitoba

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Master's Thesis entitled:

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“So Complexly Interrelated,” Of Technology, Archives and Appraisal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergence of Archival Technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 2</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rise of Democracy: Appraisal as a Social Action</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 3</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macroappraisal as Urban Technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The Kind of Problem a City is . . . .”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This thesis draws inspiration from the work of the Canadian scientist and humanitarian, Ursula M. Franklin, and from the relevant archival theoretical literature, to explore the implications of recasting the theory and practice of archives as technology. Focusing specifically on the archival task of appraisal, the thesis reviews the evolution of modern thinking on establishing archival value and conducting appraisal in the English-speaking world and attempts to understand the dynamics of appraisal as a facet of Franklin’s expansive notion of technology. The thesis also explores the premise that Canadian concept and practice of macroappraisal is an enabler of change and an appropriate technology for sustaining democratic society.

A special focus is also given to cities as engines of both economic and cultural life in the twenty-first century and a case study of archives of the City of Winnipeg. Within this context, the thesis reviews the inception, growth, decline and renewal of a modern Canadian city and of its archives and recordkeeping systems. Drawing further inspiration from the work of urban planning theorist Jane Jacobs, the thesis considers macroappraisal within an urban setting and explores its theoretical relevance for modern accountable democracies beyond its origins as a concept and method for appraising records. The thesis explores how macroappraisal has been applied to better understand the unique “problem that a city is,” and how the common values or the broader features of macroappraisal can be meshed with the specific values and challenges that make cities – and the role and function of their archives – so unique. It concludes by suggesting that within the present political, social and economic context, macroappraisal is a redemptive technology for rethinking our cities’ futures as much as their past.
I would like to thank Professors Tom Nesmith and Terry Cook for their unwavering dedication and encouragement. Dr. Nesmith introduced me to the Archival Studies programme at the University of Manitoba and his commitment to archival education and the development of the archival profession continues to be an inspiration. I am fortunate to have had Dr. Cook as my thesis advisor. I am grateful not only for his knowledge and expertise, but also for his understanding, patience, kind words, and sage advice without which I could have not completed this thesis.

I have enjoyed the privilege of working in a positive and stimulating environment. To my colleagues at the City of Winnipeg Archives, Gerry Berkowski, Jody Baltessen, Don Kroeker, and Martin Comeau, I offer my deep appreciation for their professionalism, friendship, ideas, and valued opinions.

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INTRODUCTION

“SO COMPLEXLY INTERRELATED,”
OF TECHNOLOGIES, ARCHIVES, AND APPRAISAL

Like democracy, technology is a multifaceted entity. It includes activities as well as a body of knowledge, structures as well as the act of structuring. Our language itself is poorly suited to describe the complexity of technological interactions. The interconnectedness of many of those processes, the fact that they are so complexly interrelated, defies our normal push-me-pull-you, cause-and-consequence metaphors. How does one talk about something that is both fish and water, means as well as end?

Ursula Franklin, *The Real World of Technology*, 1990

Appraisal has not always been an archival precept. In traditional societies, archivists were not expected to make decisions about selecting records for permanent preservation. There was little need to limit acquisitions because the production of records was so meagre and number of surviving documents so scant, that archivists “rejoiced in everything that was saved” as “each and every scrap of paper lit up one more dark recess of the past.”¹ The administration of archives was a custodial enterprise, one primarily concerned with the care of records created by organizations with relatively simple administrative structures and recordkeeping systems that were for the most part stable and well defined.² (The archiving of private-sector and personal and family records is


outside the scope of this thesis, even if some of the same conditions, contexts, and concepts discussed may apply, at least in part, to that area as well.)

This traditional situation stands in sharp contrast to the present. As the universe of records continues to grow in abundance and complexity, most would agree that it is now inexhaustible. The critical appraisal issue now is not how to keep all possible records, but how and why to destroy the overwhelming majority of them after isolating a small portion that have continuing value and ensuring their preservation through time. Given that this is the promise of the profession, archivists must make decisions about the ultimate disposition of vast quantities of records. Doing so, they find themselves accountable not only to records creators and others who have an immediate or direct relationship to the records, but also to future generations whose needs and interests in the records are yet to be realized.

Although the importance of appraisal to modern-day archival programmes has never been seriously challenged, coming to a consensus of opinion on value criteria and articulating a rational basis for appraisal decisions has been a troublesome matter. The concepts of provenance, original order and respect des fonds are long-accepted tenets of archival practice. However these principles, along with their prescribed modes of application, were formed within the context of societies and organizations that are far removed from the postmodern world in which archives now operate.

Archives as records and institutions reflect the characteristics of their time and place. Thus, contemporary archives are shaped by features of the current age. Available resources are limited, if not diminishing, and the magnitude of the archival task is growing, and further compounded by widespread computer use and the intricacies of
modern information and recordkeeping systems. New mass communication and information technologies such as the Internet and World Wide Web have not only loosened the constraints of time and distance to bring people closer together and transform how people work and live; they have also spawned new patterns of social, economic and political relations that we are still struggling to understand. Moreover, the world has experienced unprecedented urban growth in recent decades. For the developed nations, the twenty-first century is decidedly an urban age.³

Related to the rise of new technologies, especially technologies of mass communication and culture, and their impact on the availability and distribution of recorded information, is increasing recognition that accountability is a main constituent of good governance and that there is an “intimate and interdependent relationship” between recordkeeping and governance.⁴ Unlike a century ago, when with few exceptions “the very notion that archives were open to public research did not exist,”⁵ public archives are now an integral part of contemporary society, and unlike private institutions that exist to serve the pursuits of private actors and the production and consumption of excludable private goods, public archives exist to deliver a public good, records of continuing value held in trust for all citizens.

³ In 1900, only 14% of the world’s population were urbanites. By 1950, 30% of the population resided in urban centres. In 2001, 75% of the population in developed regions lived in urban areas as compared to 45% of the total population. Recent projections suggest that by 2030, 82% of population in developed regions and 56% of the world’s population will be urban dwellers. See Population Reference Bureau website: http://www.prb.org/Content/NavigationMenu/PRB/Educators/Human_Population/Urbanization2/Pages/Patterns_of_World_Urbanization1.htm (accessed 06 June 2004). Also United Nations, Urban and Rural Areas 2001, (New York: UN Publications, 2003).
⁴ Andrew Lipchak, Information Management to Support Evidence-Based Governance in the Electronic Age, (Toronto: Public Policy Forum, 2002).
By extension, this means that the providers of public goods, such as public archives, are accountable not only to institutional stakeholders but also to the larger community of citizens. Transparency is a key element of this accountability and it entails, among other things, making available for public scrutiny all relevant accounts, reports and other records of the decision-making processes of governing entities. While there may be a general consensus on the need for a public good, such as public health, public education, or keeping public archives, the “publicness” of a good does not automatically imply that all people value it in the same way.6

Some degree of subjectivity is thus inherent to establishing the value of a public good. In a democratic society, it is important to ensure that the top priorities of different citizen groups are considered equitably. Public goods are non-excludable. By definition, they exist for all to enjoy and as such, there is an expectation that a public good should be made known to all. Given that public archives are entrusted with the task of preserving the collective memory and are thus obliged to meet community expectations in this regard, there is a need to “reduce the impact of subjectivity upon the assignment of archival value to records by archivists.”7 This is joined to a further need to make appraisal values and decisions comprehensible and transparent to most citizens.

For archivists working in public institutions, clearly “ours is a common cause” which is to ensure that archives are kept in the public trust. However, it is difficult to ensure any measure of consistency when passing judgment on records on their value as archives, or when called upon to justify or explain certain appraisal decisions, if there is

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no common understanding of the context of appraisal and the processes through which archival value is assigned. More than a decade has passed since “macro-appraisal” was first put into practice as a theory and strategy, conceived by Canadian Terry Cook, to provide the National Archives of Canada with a defensible rationale and viable method for assigning archival value to government records. While there have been a number of published case studies that document the experience of applying the macroappraisal model in real-world situations, the literature suggests that the impact of macroappraisal as conceived by Cook is not limited to the introduction of new institutional policies, appraisal criteria, and scheduling procedures at the National Archives of Canada. The impact also extends more broadly to its advocacy of archival appraisal “as analysis, scholarship, or procedure,” and this constitutes the recent history of the macro-appraisal concept.

Viewed from an even broader perspective as an aspect of technology, the evolution of public archives and archival appraisal takes on even greater significance and arguably, macroappraisal constitutes a new technology. The scientist and humanitarian, Ursula M. Franklin, who is known for her study of the human and social impacts of technology, has defined technology as a body of knowledge, discourse, and expertise, as well as activities, uses and practices. Technology involves “structures as well as the act of structuring.” Claiming that new technologies have pushed against the physical and social boundaries of space and time, she argues that technology has the capacity to alter...

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8 This term as first coined by Terry Cook was “macro-appraisal,” in his The Archival Appraisal of Records Containing Personal Information: A RAMP Study with Guidelines, (Paris: UNESCO, 1991). In subsequent works, Cook uses “macroappraisal,” such that this later form is now as the common spelling. Henceforth “macroappraisal” is used consistently through out the text to refer to Cook’s appraisal model.
the relationships of people to nature, to each other and to their communities, and to redefine realms of power and accountability.\textsuperscript{11} For Franklin, technology is a \textit{system} that “entails far more than its individual material components.” In her own words, “Technology involves organization, procedures, symbols, new words and equations, ideas and most of all, a mindset.”\textsuperscript{12}

This conceptualization of technology is a convenient point of departure for placing macroappraisal within the larger context of the archival paradigm of the past century and considering its social implications from a further perspective that is beyond the immediate structure and operations of archival programmes and institutions. Similar to Franklin who understands technology as something that goes beyond “material components,” Cook, after revisiting the question of what should serve as the foundation of archival practice, conceives of appraisal as something which ought to entail more than the application of empirical methods. So called, “macroappraisal,” as conceived by Cook, advocates a “top-down, mind-over-matter” approach where attention given to the appraisal of the records themselves is preceded by formulating a theory of value based on an analysis of the institutions, persons, functions, activities and events which gives rise to the creation of records. Reconceptualizing appraisal as technology with macroappraisal being a particular developmental form of this technology also implies that appraisal is an agent of change that affects not only archives and how archivists work together with others, but which also has implications for reforming the workings of traditional institutions and relations between social groups, individual citizens, and the state.

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid., 4-5.
\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., 3.
If the “yardstick” by which we measure archival value is to be drawn from the values of society, can the case be made that the archival endeavour, specifically appraisal and the identification of common values or the broader features of society which all citizens share, then in turn supports good government and contributes to the realization of community vision and an improved quality of life for citizens?

In three chapters, this thesis draws inspiration from the work of Ursula Franklin, and the relevant archival theoretical literature, to explore the implications of recasting archival theory and practice as a holistic technology. Focusing specifically on the archival task of appraisal, it reviews the evolution of modern thinking on archival value and appraisal in the English-speaking world and attempts to understand the dynamics of appraisal as a facet of Franklin’s expansive notion of technology. Given that technology is a force that forms and shapes society, the thesis will also explore the premise that macroappraisal is an enabler of change and a possible technology itself for sustaining a democratic society. A special focus for this thesis is the city as the engine of both economic and cultural life, and the last chapter incorporates a case study of macroappraisal and the archives of the City of Winnipeg. This thesis, then, is an intellectual history and conceptual probing of an archival idea, macroappraisal, with its relevance outside its federal origins tested empirically in an urban environment.

Chapter One begins with an overview of the practice of appraisal and the attribution of value as the defining feature of modern archival practice. It sets the context for the later analysis by a literature review of the two classic schools of thought on appraisal that have dominated archival thinking in English-speaking world until the last decade or so, but does so through the lens of Ursula Franklin’s concept of technology.
Chapter Two explores the implications of thinking about archival appraisal as a "social action" that has "wide-reaching and everlasting social implications." It goes considerably further than a literature review, however, in analyzing the theoretical and methodological model known as "macroappraisal" initially conceived by Terry Cook for implementation as a programme for appraisal and disposition of Canadian federal government records. Drawing again on Franklin’s understanding of technology as an agent of change, this chapter places the concept of macroappraisal within what Franklin categorizes as "redemptive technology."

Chapter Three looks at the context of appraisal in the City of Winnipeg from its incorporation in 1873, through to its current amalgamated “Unicity” form. Against this background, the evolution of the City’s archives and records management programme is considered to the present day, including the City’s recent experience with using macroappraisal technology. Based on the author’s experience as the City’s Senior Records Manager involved in the development of the current programme, this chapter focuses upon the outcome of adopting macroappraisal and its benefits. Because of space limitations, it does not provide a detailed account of the methodological steps; however, the case study is primarily intended to demonstrate how macroappraisal, reconceptualized as technology, can in fact be an enabler of change that supports building a sustainable archives and recordkeeping framework. This chapter also considers how macroappraisal is distinguished from other forms of technological development by exploring how macroappraisal, as a form of holistic technology, serves to support archivists taking ownership and responsibility for archival appraisal and asserting that appraisal can and

should be an occasion for making principled decisions that are informed by the values of the larger community of citizens.

The Conclusion reconsiders the use of macroappraisal in an urban context as particularly suited to the dimensions of a democratic local government that is committed to meeting citizens’ expectations for improved service delivery, demonstrated accountability for the provision of public goods (including public archives), and to implementing reforms that are intended to support a more open style of public decision making and implementation of public policies. In closing, it touches on the particular promise macroappraisal has as redemptive technology for a city such as Winnipeg that is struggling to halt “a slow march to decline” by striving to become a “vibrant, prosperous and healthy city which values diversity and provides all of its citizens opportunities for full participation in the economy and society.”

The methodology of the thesis will be twofold. The main theoretical writers about archival appraisal, whose works within the context of this thesis are properly considered primary sources, will be analyzed through the approach of intellectual history, and the prism of Franklin’s ideas about technology in modern democracies. The portions on the City of Winnipeg will draw on government reports, studies, and similar original documents, as well as the author’s own work experience. Together, the thesis will present the first-ever consideration of macroappraisal within an urban setting and an initial exploration of its theoretical relevance for modern accountable democracies beyond its origins as a concept and method for appraising records.

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Although the practice of keeping archives and records dates back to ancient times, it is generally acknowledged that the concepts of respect des fonds, original order, and provenance which are the foundation of the common body of archival knowledge that guides present-day archival practice were first defined in France and Germany in the nineteenth century. During this period, most of the governments of Europe opened their historical archives to public access with some restrictions, legitimizing the work of government archivists and archives as public institutions.

Like many other modern endeavors, the literature of archives is characterized by a dominance of prescribed techniques, models, and methods. Arguably, the most influential of these, and certainly the first, was the *Manual for Arrangement and Description of Archives*\(^1\) that was produced for the Dutch Association of Archivists by Samuel Muller, Johan Feith, and Robert Fruin, in cooperation with the State Archives of the Netherlands and the Ministry of the Interior. First published in 1898, “the Dutch Manual,” (as it is widely called) set down a code of practice that embodied the concepts of provenance and original order. By defining archives as “the whole of the written documents, drawing and

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printed matter, officially received or produced by an administrative body or one of its officials;"2 the Manual served to conceptualize archives as a product of modern organizations. It also helped to establish the specialized nature of archival activities conducted to support the goals and objectives of an organization.

Sociologist Max Weber, who was the first to write about the attributes of “bureaucracy,” identified six principles of modern officialdom that are common to the organization of government and the workings of office management. Among these defining characteristics, two are particularly relevant to understanding the development of processes that have resulted in the formation of modern archives. Bureaucratic culture is based on written policies or rules of conduct, and as such, bureaucracies are managed according to written documents, or “files” which are kept in some form by professional office staff with specialized technical knowledge.3

According to historian Joanne Yates, modern recordkeeping systems were a catalyst for the spread of bureaucratic control and management. Based on her study of American management practices, Yates claims that the existence of an established bureaucratic culture was integral to the growth of modern transportation and communication systems. With the development of complex organizations such as the railways that were geographically spread over different locations, various forms of

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2 Ibid., 13.
recordkeeping technology, such as classified filing systems proved to be an effective tool for coordination and establishing bureaucratic control over information creation and use.4

In a similar vein, Ursula M. Franklin has also examined the relationship between technology and culture. Franklin’s work has been enormously influential in directing attention to the social construction of technology and the links between social and technical processes. Central to Franklin’s thesis is her view of technology:

Technology is not the sum of artefacts, of the wheels and gears, of the rails and electronic transmitters. Technology is a system. It entails far more than individual material components. Technology involves organization, procedures, symbols, new words, equations, and most of all a mindset.5

With this understanding, technology is a potent social phenomenon, as in the case of where a group may be defined by their agreed practices and tools. As described by Franklin, this process can be a very powerful one:

Out of this notion of unifying practice springs the historical definition of “us” and “them” . . . it is important to realize that the experience of common practice is one of the ways in which people define themselves as groups and set themselves apart from others . . . a different way of doing something, a different tool for the same task, separates the outsider from the insider.6

For the archival profession, this unifying aspect of technology was supported and aided by publication of the Dutch Manual. By articulating archival activities in terms that distinguished them from other domains of practice, the Manual provided a common frame of reference and helped to establish a prescribed regime for the work of archives.

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5 Ursula M. Franklin, The Real World of Technology, rev. ed., (Toronto: House of Anansi Press, 1999), 2-3. This is a revised edition of the original that is based on a series of six public talks that were delivered by Franklin in 1989 which were co-sponsored by Massey College at the University of Toronto and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

6 Ibid., 6-7.
As set out in the Manual, the standard methodology for records classification, treatment, and presentation, as well as other activities related to the fulfilment of the archivist’s custodial responsibilities, suggests that there is an underlying assumption that archival functions take place within a bureaucratic regime of “well organized departmental registries within stable administrations.” Records are regarded as the by-products of competent professionals acting in conformance with the rule of law and administrative regulations. Based on these assumptions, records are considered to be reliable and trustworthy evidence of objective fact and, as such, they are deemed to have inherent value simply by existing.

The early casting of recordkeeping as a defining element of bureaucracy is considered to be a formative factor in the development of modern archives technology, as it served to foster archival processes that could support specialization and the division of labour. Both of these features are associated with a form of technological development that Franklin calls “prescriptive technology,” or specialization of process, where the making or the doing of something is broken down into clearly identifiable steps and where the doer applies procedures and adheres to prescriptions that have been set down by others who are responsible for the overall process.8

The principles that were put forth in the Dutch Manual were formally endorsed at the first International Congress for Archives that was held in Brussels in 1910.9 While this acceptance of the concepts of provenance and original order formed a consensus of opinion on methods for the arrangement and description of records, such was not the case

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7 Terry Cook, “What is Past is Prologue: A History of Archival Ideas since 1898 and the Future Paradigm Shift,” Archivaria 43 (Spring 1997): 21, henceforth cited as “What is Past is Prologue.”
8 Franklin, The Real World of Technology, 10-13.
9 Cook, “What is Past is Prologue”: 22.
for the concept of archival value and how to determine it, through appraisal or the selection of the archival record. The Manual does not address two hard questions related to records appraisal and disposition activities which in the present day are mandated archival responsibilities or which have come to be regarded as activities which are central to archival work and sustaining archives: “What records are deemed to be archival or worthy of continuing preservation?” and the companion question, “who decides?”

In a keynote address given at the 2001 conference of the Association of Canadian Archivists, the Director of the South African History Archive, Verne Harris, offered a pragmatic response to these fundamental questions:

As with all questions on archives, answers are determined by those who hold power in the discourse: the macro-actors, the ones who have resources, the ones who set agendas – ... they are the ones, in short, who control record-keeping.10

Like Harris, Franklin has suggested that power relationships are imposed on and reflected in systems technology and its mindsets. Focusing specifically on how social and political relationships are manifest and laid down in the practice of technology, she argues that technology is a “fine instrument” for structuring activities to advance or maintain power and control, and serves as a catalyst for inducing dramatic changes in social and political patterns around the locus of power. However, this understanding should not be confused with technological determinism, or a belief in the autonomy of technology.11 Franklin is careful to stress that technologies are complex and inter-active, developed and used within a particular social, economic, and political context, noting too that certain technologies, as a consequence of their dependence, particularly those pertaining to the task of government and the provision of public goods and services, may become

10 Verne Harris, “On (Archival) Odyssey(s),” Archivaria 51 (Spring 2001): 11-12.
11 Franklin, The Real World of Technology, 51.
"interlocked with particular political goals and trends." Alluding to this deeper cultural link, she argues that

like democracy, technology includes ideas and practices; it includes myths and various models of reality. And like democracy, technology changes the social and individual relationships between us. It has forced us to examine and redefine our notions of power and accountability.¹²

Given that shifts of power and control are ongoing, Franklin finds the relationship between "the tool and the task" to be of fundamental importance. The success of a particular tool, be it organizational, administrative or mechanical, often leads to technology transfer or the sharing of knowledge, expertise, know-how or facilities for a purpose not originally intended by the developing body. A technology developed for one purpose can be used to achieve a totally different objective. In some cases, the use of new tools can redefine a problem and induce positive changes in social or political patterns, whereas in another instance, the transfer of technology results in unacceptable practices, the consequence of applying an initially useful tool to an inappropriate task.

Over the course of the last century, both the conceptual and material reality of records and archives has changed dramatically, along with their social, economic, and political contexts. Franklin’s view of technology as a social construction and system which embodies relationships of power and accountability is well suited to examining the task of archival appraisal or the means by which value is attributed to records that are preserved in perpetuity as archives. As described by Franklin, the implication of applying this technological perspective is that

we are considering technology as practice, but now we are looking at what is actually happening at the level of work. . . technologies involve distinctly different specializations and divisions of labour and

¹² Ibid., 2.
consequently they have very different social and political implications...
we are not asking what is being done, but how it is being done.\textsuperscript{13}

A similar perspective has been employed to provide the following review of “the
tasks and the tools” of appraisal as they have been articulated in the two classic schools
of thinking about appraisal that dominated archival perspectives until the 1980’s.

\textbf{European Tradition: Legal Logic and Bureaucratic Authority}

Originating with archives in European countries with a legal tradition that is based
in Roman law, what is sometimes referred to as the “European school” of archival
thinking leaves the determination of archival value to the discretion of records creators
and administrators. The measure of value is tied to the capacity of records to serve as
evidence in a court of law and in an established hierarchy of bureaucratic control and
management. Value is derived from legal concepts of documentary evidence. This is
linked to a long-standing belief that the principal purpose for keeping archives is the
continued preservation of records as evidence.\textsuperscript{14} As the “keeper” of the authoritative or
“official record,” the archivist’s role is two fold: to provide for the security of a central
records repository and to act as the mediator or a facilitator who encourages officials to
properly document their activities. This line of thinking which sees records imbued with
inherent value based on their evidential qualities or authenticity and admissibility as
evidence in a court of law, is sometimes referred to as the “juridical-administrative”
model of appraisal, and is most often associated with the writings of British archivist, Sir

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., 10.
\textsuperscript{14} Victoria L. Lemieux, “Let the Ghosts Speak: An Empirical Exploration of the “Nature” of the Record,”
\textit{Archivaria} 51 (Spring 2001): 93.
Hilary Jenkinson (1882-1961) who was by the end of his career, the Deputy Keeper and head of the British Public Record Office.

Although the Public Record Office had been established in 1838, it was not until sometime later, after the passage of two Acts, The Public Record Office Act of 1877 and of 1898 that the Deputy Keeper was empowered to destroy records already in his custody as well as refuse receipt of records that he considered to be worthless. In practice, the legislation did not so much as provide the means by which to select records for permanent preservation as it did to establish the authority of the Public Record Office to implement the destruction of records of lesser value in its custody and the right of the Deputy Keeper to refuse to take such records into custody. As if records were some kind of bureaucratic commodity, the primary goal of this legislation was to reduce their volume by "the regular elimination and winnowing" of records which because of their age were the least likely to be needed again.

The responsibility for identifying records of value that warranted continued preservation did not rest with the Deputy Keeper. Acts of appraisal, or decisions about what should be kept as archives, could only be properly carried out, it was assumed, by records creators, and their successors, in the course of discharging their bureaucratic duties. In Jenkinson's words,

for the Archivist to destroy a document because he thinks it useless is to import into the collection under his charge what we have been most anxious to keep out of it, an element of his personal judgment ... but for

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17 Ibid.
an Administrative body to destroy what it no longer needs is a matter entirely within its competence . . .[18]

The attribution of value originates with record creators or administrators indicating that there is a business need or a legal requirement to keep records, and not from a conscious decision to preserve records for posterity or as the basis for history.

In times of war, public archives like other public institutions were pressed into service to support wartime efforts; after both World Wars, this meant dealing with a public-sector bureaucracy of unprecedented size generating unprecedented volumes of government records. In addition to supporting the routine functions of government and its elected officials, bureaucrats in wartime had additional reasons to require access to documents from the recent past. Records were needed to provide evidence of accountability, generate propaganda, and build morale.

Drawing on the post-First World War experience of British public archives, Jenkinson built upon the principles that were first set out in the 1898 Dutch Manual. In his 1922 Manual for Archival Administration, Jenkinson introduced the “Principle of Continuous Continuity,” the concept that evidential integrity must be preserved by way of an unbroken line of responsible custody over any given record or set of records. Together with the concepts of provenance and original order, this completed what has come to be the “trilogy of context and process oriented principles” for modern archives and records management.[19]


Jenkinson argues that the archivist’s first duty is “the moral and physical defence of archives,” a responsibility which should be undertaken only with the greatest objectivity. Archivists are thus charged with the responsibility of ensuring original order, such that records are protected in repositories in the same order of classification and with the same designations they received in the office of origin and primary use and the provenance of the context of their creation is preserved by ensuring that they are organized and maintained according to their origin or source in that office. Inherent in Jenkinson’s characterization of the model archivist is an idealized view of bureaucracy, whereby the archivist is expected to be an objective and impartial custodian of documentary evidence:

His Creed, the Sanctity of Evidence; his Task, the Conservation of every scrap of Evidence attaching to the Documents committed to his charge; his Aim, to provide, without prejudice or afterthought, for all who wish to know the Means of Knowledge. . . .

The archivist is not responsible for appraisal or assigning value to records. For the archivist to attribute different values to documents and select only certain records for preservation seemed inconsistent with traditional ideas about the essential characteristics of archives. According to Jenkinson, archives are the “Documents accumulated by a natural process in the course of the Conduct of Affairs of any kind, Public, Private, or at any date; and preserved thereafter for Reference, in their own Custody, by the persons responsible for the affairs in question of their successors,” never at anytime to be conceived of as a product of conscious archival design.

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20 Jenkinson used this passage in no less than four addresses. See Cook, “What is Past is Prologue”: cf. 12.
Traditional archival theory makes no distinction between records and archives. They have equal status as material evidence of actions and transactions. Any attribution of value after the conclusion of the normal course of affairs would intervene in this “natural process,” and break the chain of continuous custody and responsible management, thereby compromising the authenticity and integrity of the documents and destroying their value as evidence of their creators’ acts and transactions.

In considering the relationship between planning and technological design, Franklin argues that it is normal for a society to evolve social institutions and to structure activities so that the “power and control of the structuring authority is maintained and advanced.”22 American archivists Mark A. Greene and Frank Boles were not the first to question Jenkinson’s supposed “impartiality, purposefulness and functionality” of bureaucratic behaviour and the “organic” formation of archives, records creators and their respective offices, but they do so very effectively.23 These Jenkinsonian concepts are simply inconsistent with direct experience concerning “the reality of human behavior and the complex dynamics of modern organizational culture,” where archives are anything but the “disinterested by-products of administrative process.”24

This challenge has been substantiated by recent organizational theory and social science research that indicates that creators cannot always be relied upon to properly carry out their recordkeeping duties in the “real world”:

Organizational records, like any product of a social process, are fundamentally self-conscious and self-interested . . . . Records are not neutral, factual, technical documents alone, although while serving

22 Franklin, The Real World of Technology, 52.
24 Ibid.
legitimate ends they must appear this way, and when serving illegitimate ones even more so. They are designed ... to produce an effect in some kind of audience.25

The concept of archives as a “natural” phenomenon resulting from the affairs of state offered little promise for archivists who were searching for an effective means to deal with an ever-growing accumulation of records and increasingly complex organizations. Informed by the experience of Second World War and the new realities of voluminous modern records that followed, it was clear to many that

Allowing the creator to designate what should be the archival record solves the problems of complexity, impermanence, and volume of contemporary records by ignoring them.26

The “juridical-administrative” focus of archival practice in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries stressed that the primary archival task was to preserve the evidentiary nature of archival material and the associated custodial aspects of archival work. This mindset would eventually give way, as will be seen, to a professional ethic centered on the attribution of value and the selection of records that warrant long-term archival preservation.

Yet despite this later shift, the European tradition of archives as evidence of administration and institutions continues to inform present-day archival practice. The foremost proponent of European archival theory now is Luciania Duranti, a scholar whose primary contribution has been to revive the discipline of “diplomatics” or the science of ancient official documents, where records are valued for their properties as

evidence and appraised for their authenticity or whether it can be proven that a document is what it claims to be.\textsuperscript{27} For Duranti, archival intervention of any sort, whether involving the existence, quality, extent or placement, of documentation, and especially appraisal and selection of some part from the whole, is unacceptable because it undermines provenance and places the assumed inherent objectivity of records at risk to the imposition of external values.\textsuperscript{28}

A more moderate view has been put forward by Terry Eastwood, one of Duranti’s colleagues at the University of British Columbia. Like Duranti, Eastwood gives primary importance to the formal evidentiary characteristics of records. He suggests that appraisal should be based on fact and carried out as scientifically as possible; however, unlike Duranti, for Eastwood, the identification and preservation of the evidential qualities of records through the analysis of the form, structure and authorship of documents, as well as the social context of their creation and purpose, is undertaken for the purpose of ensuring the preservation of the collective memory for pluralistic democratic societies that have the need “to foster the recognition and identity of cultural communities in their midst.”\textsuperscript{29} He concludes that archivists must continue to concern themselves with the integrity of the material they select while serving this dual goal of appraisal in democratic societies. Given the sheer volumes and varied nature of documentary evidence, Eastwood also acknowledges that it may be impractical, if not

\textsuperscript{29} Terry Eastwood, “Reflections on the Goal of Archival Appraisal in Democratic Societies,” \textit{Archivaria} 54 (Fall 2002): 59.
impossible, to carry out this task on a large scale when dealing with mass quantities of records due the extensive resources that it requires.\textsuperscript{30}

As a diagnostic tool at the level of the individual document, "diplomatics" and the attention it gives to the evidential qualities of records has proven to be "a new use for an old science," in Duranti's phrasing, in devising solutions to problems related to managing new forms of records in an increasingly digital universe of recorded information. However, by equating archival value with the evidential attributes of records, or confusing an assessment of value with a test for legitimacy, diplomatics exacerbates the problem of appraising the present day multitude of records.\textsuperscript{31} Terry Cook argues, for example, that archival theory has no direct relevance to appraisal theory, in that

All records by definition bear evidence to some degree of their creator's acts and transactions, thoughts and feelings, and all have an original order and context. What differs and is important, is not the evidential and contextual nature of the record, but the relative importance of the various and differing contexts of the acts and transactions, or at a higher level, of the functions and programmes or activities, or higher still, of the community or societal expectations, that caused the record to be created.\textsuperscript{32}

In the case of an electronic recordkeeping system, many, if not most, of the records that are digitally born, had they been created in paper form, would not have been deemed by their creators or others to be of high value or worthy of long-term archival preservation. Yet if appraised solely on evidentiary qualities of form and procedure, the totality of the electronic recordkeeping system ought to be preserved for its archival value. In another instance, records in paper, digital, or non-textual forms that in the


\textsuperscript{31} For an example that sets out evidential attributes, see International Standards Organization, \textit{Information and documentation -- Records Management (ISO 15489)}, Part 1:7.2, "Characteristics of a record": 7.

\textsuperscript{32} Cook, "Beyond the Screen: The Records Continuum and Archival Cultural Heritage."
course of their procedural affairs, records creators or administrators have deemed not to have continuing value will be excluded from the archival record, or cast out as it were, "beyond the pale," if they do not exit in the prescribed form or in a recordkeeping system with all the necessary functional attributes that are required for records to be acceptable as evidence in a court of law. If appraisal were to be based only on evidential criteria, these records are technically of no value.

In 1952, a Royal Commission on Departmental Records was formed to address the accumulation of vast quantities of government records and to work out a new system to deal with the "bulk problem" of England’s National Archives. While the overabundance of records was partially related to the widespread use of mechanical office technology such as electric typewriters, carbon paper and electronic dictation equipment, it also stemmed from bureaucrats neglecting to make recordkeeping decisions. There were also concerns that the integrity of the resulting archives could be compromised if there were personal motives or values exercised by departmental officials, or by their political masters in tampering with perhaps embarrassing documentary evidence. Such deliberate shaping of the record could also undermine the authority and status of the archives as "unimpeachable evidence" of fact.

Chaired by Sir James Grigg, the recommendations in the 1954 Grigg Committee Report were the basis of the 1958 Public Records Act that established legal authority for the disposition of records to the British National Archives and rights of public access. In addition to providing for statutory roles and responsibilities regarding the custody and control of government records, the Grigg Report also proposed a system of reviewing and disposing of records based on criteria of current or anticipated use as opposed to their
evidentiary value. In common with most archives institutions in the English speaking world at this time, the “Grigg System” was guided by the working model and practical tools for appraisal that had been developed by the United States National Archives following the end of Second World War.33

American Know-How: Redefining the Task

The American response to the “bulk problem” of twentieth-century archives was radically different from preceding strategies and forms the second of the two great strains of classic archival thinking about appraisal. Unlike the European tradition that is guided by archival theory and which gives primacy to the evidentiary nature of archives and preserving the principles of provenance and original order, the American solution is more pragmatic, reflecting a philosophical view or mindset that associates value with utility, which is often said to be uniquely American.

From its beginnings in 1934, one of the primary tasks of the United States National Archives has been to select federal records considered to be worthy of “permanent retention.”34 In addition to the inherited backlog from 1776 to 1934, the Second World War and the boom of post-war recovery created an overwhelming volume of new records. To stem the accumulation of records, the National Archives began to work with other federal government departments and agencies to establish records management programmes. Many of the principles and techniques used in present-day

34 The United States National Archives was established in 1934 under The National Archives Act. In 1939, the passage of a Records Disposal Act empowered the National Archivist to authorize records destruction. Appraisal criteria for the United States National Archives were first proposed in 1940. See also P.C. Brooks, “The Selection of Records for Preservation,” American Archivist 3, 1940: 221-234.
records management systems originated from the United States government’s efforts to facilitate the systematic disposal of vast quantities of records and to develop a more effective means of acquiring the archival record. As developed by the American government, the technology of “records management” provided a new context for archival appraisal. In contrast to the European tradition which focuses on the guardianship of the evidential properties of a totality of records, archivists were now charged with appraising records to uncover their value for the purpose of selecting specific records for permanent preservation as archives. This selection would be a small fragment of the whole, typically 5 per cent or less.

As conceived by the foremost American authority on appraisal, Theodore R. Schellenberg (1903-1970), the attribution of archival value is based on induction and the empirical verification of current or anticipated use. Value is thus specific to time and place and subject to external influences such as the specific interests of the various creators and users groups. Appraisal is thus systematized and dependent upon an established regime of records management, where records routinely pass through an ordered sequence of actions and events and are subject to a series of planned, coordinated, and controlled tasks.

Central to this new technology is the model of the records life cycle that is based on the notion that records are like biological organisms, each record having its own “life span.” The life-cycle model is time based, and “archiving,” or the selection of records for permanent retention, takes place after records have passed through the final phase of the

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35 The modern records schedule is a product of the Federal Records Disposal Act of 1943 which was implemented to address procedural problems by allowing for continuing schedules with administrative legal and research values as guide. In 1945, the Act was modified to allow certain common series of records to be scheduled with more consistency and regularity. This led to the implementation of general records retention schedules. See Cox, Closing an Era: Historical Perspectives on Modern Archives and Records Management, 97-99.
life cycle and their current value has expired. Records that are no longer in current use are chosen to be reincarnated as archives beyond the parameters of the life cycle and the interests of the current recordkeeping programme. Archives are thus considered to be a distinct species of records, differentiated from the rest by the need to preserve them “for reasons other than those for which they were created or accumulated.” Unlike Jenkinson’s concept of archives as the “natural” or unconscious by-product of highly idealized organizational behaviour, archives in the life-cycle model are the end-product of a technology that is specifically designed for processing records, disposing of some and transforming others into “archives.” With the introduction of the life-cycle concept, records management and archival activity went from being a series of sporadic and unrelated efforts to an organized, structured, and logically-based approach to creating, maintaining and disposing of recorded information.36

As expressed by Margaret Cross Norton, the first Director of the Illinois State Archives and with Schellenberg a pioneer of the new approach, it resulted in a fundamental change of archival purpose, “from the preservation of a totality of records to the selection of records for preservation.”37 Adopting the life-cycle model allowed archivists to participate in the selection process, albeit only after records had passed through to the final stage of the life cycle and then only in concert with the selection of records for destruction.

Although the United States National Archives had started its development some years before, a full statement of the appraisal criteria for government records did not

36 Ibid., 9.
appear until 1956. Authored by Schellenberg, who was the Director of Archival Management at the National Archives, *The Appraisal of Public Records* was intended to provide a means by which to reduce the quantity of public records in a planned manner, based on carefully determined and tested selection criteria. According to Schellenberg, this could be accomplished by applying a taxonomy of value that assumes that there are two classes of value, “primary value” to records creators or originators and “secondary value” to originators and other users.

Primary value reflects the first importance of records to their creators and their value to the bureaucracy for serving administrative needs. Secondary value reflects the importance of the records to others including present and prospective researchers. Further subdivided into two categories, secondary value consists of so-called, “evidential” and “informational” values. Schellenberg’s designation of “evidential” value differs from Jenkinson’s understanding of evidential value. For Jenkinson, evidential value is associated with the force of legal evidence that records bring to bear in a court of law. Value is derived, as seen above, from the integrity and authenticity of records that have been preserved through an unbroken chain of custody and their importance to bureaucrats in documenting the functions, programmes, policies and procedures of the bureaucracy.

For Schellenberg, evidential value is the value of records as evidence of organization and function, and the current and prospective needs and interests of researchers in studying administrative history of the records-creating agency. Archivists

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39 Ibid., 6.

40 Ibid., 6-11.
appraise records for their "evidential value" by examining the records themselves and analyzing their content and documentary purpose as well as the administrative context of their creation. As if by default, certain kinds of documents such as the "administrative orders and charts that initially define the structure and programmes of an agency" are assigned value because of certain assumptions related to their documentary form and function or the position of the office that produced them in the administrative hierarchy.  

Despite the planned and controlled situation of appraisal within the life-cycle regime, appraising records for their "informational" value or utility "for the larger documentation of American life" is much more subjective and thus a good deal less predictable. Although Schellenberg suggests that it is possible to apply various tests of value to measure uniqueness, form, and the importance of persons, things and phenomena, appraisal decisions involve speculation about the long-term needs of unknown users for documentary sources and of the possible importance of the records for posterity. Appraisal is thus dependent upon many unknown variables including the appraiser's own expertise in historical scholarship, knowledge, and experience. Schellenberg concedes that the empirical approach leaves much to chance, even admitting that "the test of importance relates to imponderable matters -- to matters that cannot be appraised with real certainty."  

Of the two categories of secondary value, informational value quickly became the dominant selection criterion for archival appraisal, so that the main gauge of informational worth became tied to the needs and priorities of those who were perceived

\[41\] Ibid., 15-16.
\[42\] Ibid., 26.
to be the most valued users of archives.\textsuperscript{43} The selection of archival records soon came to be guided by academic interests, particularly the research agendas of historians, and the skills and values of the archivist -- and the focus of their pre-appointment education -- became those of the modern historian.\textsuperscript{44}

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, a time of heightened social and political awareness, revolutionary political movements and radical social reforms, this was of particular concern as there were many new trends in historiography as well as in other areas of scholarship. Historians had begun to explore the incursion of social theory into historical analysis and scholars were undertaking social history or the study of “history from the bottom up” to better comprehend social interactions, especially among non-elite groups. With the democratization of history came an increased demand for archives and archivists to provide documentation related to new topics in social, labour, ethnic, and gender history. In the early 1980s, cultural history emerged as a distinct historical practice, the result of scholarly efforts to find “new models of reading the past.” The pursuit of new possibilities for historical inquiry and the search for meaning in various forms and processes of cultural production involved the use of diverse sources within interdisciplinary or multiple fields of scholarship, notably history, anthropology, sociology, and literary scholarship.\textsuperscript{45}

\textsuperscript{43} As stated in the 1977 manual on appraisal published by the Society of American Archivists, “successful appraisal is directly related to the archivist’s primary role as a representative of the research community. The appraiser should approach records ... [by] evaluating demand as reflected by past, present, and prospective research use ... long-term needs for documentary sources and the potential demands of scholars.” See Maynard J. Brichford, Archives and Manuscripts: Appraisal and Accessioning, (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1977), 13 cited in Cook, “What is Past is Prologue”: 29.


Archivists were expected to have training in historical research methods that would teach them to look into the origin, development, and the workings of human institutions and human behaviours, relying on records for this purpose.\textsuperscript{46} Supporting this model was the long-held life-cycle-based assumption that records management and archival processes begin with the records themselves and that the most effective means by which to gain an understanding of an organization and its functions is through direct examination of its records.\textsuperscript{47}

Even before rules for classifying, describing, and arranging archives were codified in the 1898 Dutch Manual, the creation of detailed “listings” or registers had long been the means for gaining physical and intellectual control over records and for ensuring the “persistence of their arrangement and their relationship to the record’s creator.” The persistence of this practice is related to a number of factors, including the long-standing assumption that the context of records creation is best sustained and made apparent by the physical reality of the records themselves, something which Cook has observed, is an essential proviso if records are to be used as legal evidence.\textsuperscript{48} In modern records management programmes, establishing records retention and disposition “schedules” usually begins with conducting a records inventory.\textsuperscript{49}

\textsuperscript{46} Recent NARA minimum educational qualifications for an Archivist are “completion of a 4-year bachelor’s or higher degree with a major in the history of the United States and/or in American political science or government, and one or any combination of history, American civilization, economics, political science, public administration, or government.” Available on the “USA jobs” website: http://jobsearch.usajobs.opm.gov/ (accessed 17 June 2005).

\textsuperscript{47} Ira Penn, Gail Pennix, and Jim Coulson, \textit{Records Management Handbook}, 2\textsuperscript{nd} edit., (Aldershot and Brookfield: Gower, 1994), 90-9. As described in this standard textbook, “The greatest value of the inventory is that it gives, as one’s first view of an organization’s information, a reasonably objective and complete overview of the records, their real uses, and of the organization itself…”


The use of file inventories or file lists as the principal instrument of records control and the primary means of preserving their relationship with creators has persisted through to the present day, despite the pervasiveness of electronic information systems and the increased information management capabilities which they afford. Franklin observes that tasks tend to be structured by the available tools. The practice of inventorying of records, or what Chris Hurley calls, “the tyranny of listing,” is clearly an instance where “the technology of doing something defines the activity itself, and by doing so, precludes the emergence of other ways of doing it.” The practice of listing records is still firmly anchored as a core archival and records management technique, such that it has not only defined the archival task of description as Hurley claims, but has also served to define the task of appraisal as an empirical “bottom up” process of value determination that relies on direct examination of the records themselves and analysis of their informational content.

Set within the regime of the records life cycle, appraisal is necessarily retrospective and restricted to the material reality of a residue of records that are “inactive,” that have ceased to be of interest to creators because they are no longer in demand for operational purposes or to meet evidentiary requirements. While archivists can claim responsibility for the assessment of value, they are neither responsible nor empowered to move records through the life cycle. This task falls to the purview of records managers. Even where legislation or policy exists which sets the boundaries of

51 Franklin, The Real World of Technology, 49-50.
52 Ibid.
archival control and management and prescribes the movement of records across the boundaries of the life cycle to the archival regime, it does not address records of archival value which exist within the boundaries of functional areas that are under the control of other management regimes.

By the 1970s, American archivists had started to question not only the effectiveness of conventional appraisal and records disposal methodologies, but also the intellectual rigour and consistency of appraisal decisions. By far, the most influential critic was Gerald F. Ham, who as the president of the Society of American Archivists argued that archivists were failing to fulfill their mandate, if the archival enterprise was to “provide the future with a representative record of human experience in our time.”54 In Ham’s view, by focusing on the acquisition of records, or the end result of the appraisal process, archivists had become “too closely tied to the academic marketplace.” For Ham, appraisal is an activity that should be consciously carried out within larger context of society, its purpose being to document the “broad spectrum of human experience.” He suggests that archivists need to take a more active role in the documentation process; however, this requires coordination and drawing upon intellectual resources to consider the external and interactive effects. According to Ham, appraisal is multifaceted intellectual activity that should be guided by strategic objectives:

Conceptualization must precede collection . . . for if we cannot transcend these obstacles, then the archivists will remain at best nothing more than a weathervane moved by the changing winds of historiography.55

In terms of actual practice, there are a number of “obstacles” which can limit the archivist’s capacity to carry out the appraisal task. While archivists may very well have

55 Ibid.
the skills to conduct extensive documentary research and analysis, such as in the case of the National Archives of Canada, where archivists must have graduate degrees in history or archival studies, they must also have sufficient authority and means to access all of the pertinent documentary sources of relevant information that are needed to form a comprehensive vision of government and society. The capacity for appraisal is thus, to a large extent, dependent on the nature of the legal and organizational framework within which archives exist and the situation of the appraisal function within the organization in relation to business processes owners, records creators and users. Achieving cooperation can be difficult within the traditional records management regime, where archival interests are clearly subordinate to administrative needs, operational efficiencies, and evidential requirements and where the archival perspective is furthest removed from the context of records creation and their use within organizations. Within most institutions, the placement of the archival function within the organizational structure and the low level of authority associated with archives or recordkeeping responsibilities provides limited opportunities for archivists to interact with records creators, or to exert influence upon the processes used to capture and maintain records as evidence and information about activities and transactions.

Responsibilities for recordkeeping and the disposition of records are thus fragmented and unclear, and thus archival accountability is problematic. The rigidly prescribed stages of the life cycle, and its compartmentalization of skills and information, reduces or eliminates reciprocity -- or what Franklin refers to as “some manner of interactive give and take, a genuine communication among interacting parties,”56 and

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56 Franklin, *The Real World of Technology*, 42-43. According to Franklin, whenever human activities incorporate rigidly prescribed procedures, the modes of human interaction change. Reciprocity is not
archivists are often expected to shoulder full responsibility for appraisal decisions despite having only limited control over the actual disposition of records and the implementation of appraisal decisions.

Chris Hurley, who in addition to his writing on archival description is known for his work on archives legislation,\(^5\) has developed a useful typology for considering archival roles and responsibilities within a legal framework for public archives. This model was used as an analytical aid for drafting the 1998 *State Records Act*, which replaced the 1960 New South Wales *Archives Act*. The new legislation not only established the State Records Authority of New South Wales, it also articulated a new role for archives within a public-sector organization as a standard-setting entity and as a regulator of government records management. The New South Wales (NSW) legislation is noteworthy because it was specifically designed to support accountable government, provide for electronic recordkeeping, cope with the huge bulk of records created by modern governments, as well as address all of the phases of the recordkeeping processes.\(^5\) During the 1990s, other governments in Australia and overseas attempted to resolve issues related to administrative accountability and the role and function of public archives in a democratic society, concerns which were becoming an increasingly common feature of government records legislation and policy.\(^5\)

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\(^5\) Hurley was the New Zealand National Archives General Manager from 1997 to 2003. Prior to this, he was Victoria's Keeper of Public Records from 1981 to 1990 and had worked at the National Archives of Australia in the 1970s.


\(^5\) The Australian Law Reform Commission began its review of the *Archives Act* in 1996. The final report, *Australia's Federal Record: A Review of Archives Act 1983* (ALRC 85), was tabled in the federal
By categorizing certain core characteristics, Hurley has identified three “generations” or developmental stages of archives legislation. So-called “first generation” archives legislation is born when archives are initially established on a statutory basis, as in the case of the British National Archives and the 1877 Public Records Act. According to Hurley,

First generation archives intruded only in the most gentlemanlike way on the business of government – their only power being that over destruction. They were authorised custodians but there was no mandatory requirement to transfer records and they provided access to the records that came their way but had no authority to determine when and whether they might be made publicly available.  

For the most part, government archives and recordkeeping programmes have come into existence as the legal creations of this type of “first generation” legislation. In the United States, the first National Archives Act passed in 1934 gave the National Archivist only an advisory role in disposal matters. It was not until 1939 with the passage of the Records Disposal Act that the National Archivist was empowered to authorize records destruction. Through the 1950s and 1960s, practice reflected a shift in


thinking that reflected “a more outward-looking and less custodial view of what a public records program should be,” that was in large part due to the spread of Schellenberg’s ideas. Schellenberg’s *Modern Archives*, which was published in 1956, proved to be influential both within the United States and internationally. By the 1970s the life-cycle model for records administration and the framework of use-based appraisal had long prevailed.  

Contrary to the perception of technology as simply the practical application of scientific knowledge or theory to real-world needs and problems, Franklin claims that the accelerated use of a technology also has social and cultural implications, particularly in cases where “prescriptive” forms of technology are used to order and structure administration, government and social services on a large scale. Like many other forms of mid-twentieth century technology, the life-cycle model reflects the priorities of America in the 1950s, a relatively peaceful period in American life. Many of the values of the preceding prewar generation had held firm and the status quo prevailed. Having survived the traumas of the Great Depression and the Second World War, the postwar economy thrived and expanded, swelling the ranks of the American middle class, and resulting in a general sense of well-being and prosperity. It is no wonder, then, that the technology of this period is predominantly prescriptive, reflecting an era when governments and society appeared to be more stable, more comprehensible, and more black and white.

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Schellenberg’s strategy was informed by the American political culture of “New Deal” statism, which emphasized the benefits of a management technocracy and efficiency. Within government, the idea took hold that archivists could serve as “a contributing partner to the corporate management team, by stimulating improved records management, reducing costs through disposal and better storage for secondary records, and adopting a more pro-active role in programming transfers.”

Shifting towards a more activist view is reflected by the introduction of archival legislation that is less focused upon the traditional custodial and curatorial aspects of archival work. According to Hurley, so-called, “second generation” archival legislation gives archives greater capacity “to intrude on the business of government” by mandating the transfer of record to the archival authority after a specified period of time, regulating records management activities, and establishing public rights of access to records after a specific period. Under “second generation” archival legislation, bureaucrats are no longer left with “unfettered discretion” because they are now obliged to conform to external requirements. The task of appraisal or making an informed selection of recorded information to provide for the needs of posterity becomes an act of planning, or more specifically, planning for the disposition of records through space and time. A prescribed and ordered process for administering the records management life cycle is thus a distinguishing feature of “second generation” archives laws. Within this framework, archival values and appraisal methods are more closely connected to the methods and values associated with organizational effectiveness and business management techniques:

The Archival authority must plan and implement regular programmed transfers, it must establish (and possibly enforce) records management standards, it must administer or at least be the vehicle for the exercise of public access rights. By implication (in some cases expressly) the public records program is directed not only at heritage preservation but also at improved public sector management and accountability.65

From a technological standpoint, the prevalence of Schellenberg’s appraisal model can be linked to the successful use of prescriptive technologies during the Second World War and the affluent post-war period of the 1950s and 1960s to support efforts to increase material production, raise living standards, and increase well-being on a mass scale. Conventional appraisal and disposition programmes might be considered to be production models of a kind consistent with the broad ethos of that era.

Noting that prescriptive technologies are usually associated with stable and predictable environments,66 Franklin argues that “one of the most important links between technology, society and culture,” is that prescriptive technologies are “designs for compliance.”67 Although this is a key to achieving consistent results, she suggests that where there is a prevalence of prescriptive technologies, there is also a tendency for the workforce to become acculturated into a milieu in which external control and internal compliance are perceived to be normal and necessary, and where eventually the common perception is that there is only one way of doing something.68

It might be said that such an acculturation has occurred within the archival profession with respect to appraisal. Most public archives institutions operating within a democratic society have at one time or another adopted Schellenberg’s theory of value

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65 Hurley, “From Dustbins to Disk Drives: A Survey of Archives Legislation in Australia.”
66 Franklin, The Real World of Technology, 25.
67 Ibid., 16 and 91-92.
68 Ibid.
and the life cycle model. In considering the most significant archival thinking of the last century, Cook acknowledges the hegemony of American appraisal practice:

It is no great exaggeration to say that Schellenberg’s ideas on government records management and archival appraisal, directly or through his successors, have dominated world archival thinking from the mid-twentieth century until the past decade.  

In 1989, the American archival theorist, David Bearman, stirred the waters of the archival profession when he put forward a strong case for re-thinking virtually every traditional archival techniques and their related programmes. Known for his pioneering innovative strategies for archives management, most notably strategies for managing electronic records, Bearman in his Archival Methods undertook to re-examine American archival practices. Based on a critical examination of traditional archival methods and the identification of various discrepancies, he challenged archivists to explore alternative solutions and to consider other models of archival activity. At the time, his criticisms of traditional appraisal methods were radical and particularly disconcerting.

Bearman argued that the prevailing strategy of focusing on the totality of records to select the archival record is flawed due to the massive resources that are needed to address the sheer volume of records that must be assessed. He also suggested that any efforts made by archivists to deliberately shape the archival record as a representative record of society will ultimately fail unless the scope of appraisal and selection is known to be fully comprehensive.

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71 Ibid., 15-16.
In Bearman's view, the application of a "theory of values" within the narrow institutional regime of the records management life cycle had the effect of isolating archivists from "a meaningful knowledge" of the larger universe of documentation and the appraisal activities of other institutions, which isolation limits or inhibits efforts to share knowledge and competencies. Given the indiscriminate nature of records retention outside of the records management and archives sphere, as well as the impact of conscious decisions and actions taken by non-archivists resulting in the disposal and destruction of records, he also claimed that more weight should be given to the "random and accidental processes outside of the domain of conscious culture preservation" which dwarf the impact of appraisal decisions. However, Bearman does not advocate a completely "laissez-faire" approach. When it is known that relying on non-archivists "will not adequately assure the survival of a historically valid sample," he argues that archivists should intervene and undertake to consciously shape the archival record.

For Bearman, the advent of electronic records brought home the fundamental truth of this philosophy, specifically a lawsuit initiated by a Freedom of Information request for access to electronic documents maintained on the IBM PROFS system, a proprietary email system used in the White House. While the courts confirmed the legal status of information stored in electronic mail systems and thus validated the premise that archival theory is particularly relevant to addressing electronic recordkeeping, this case had implications that reached beyond this one legal action.

72 Ibid., 13.
73 Ibid., 10-16.
74 Ibid., 16.
The "PROFS case" demonstrated that managing records in electronic form has public policy implications as well as technical ramifications. It brought forward questions surrounding the independence and authority of archivists in carrying out appraisal and setting archival requirements. With reference to the PROFS litigation, Bearman urged archivists to declare their authority and fully assume their responsibility for shaping the archival record:

Armstrong v. the Executive Office of the President revealed that a variety of issues having to do with archival accountability are unresolved in the minds of government employees and that misunderstandings of electronic records requirements are common among information system administrators. If archivists do not use this and other opportunities to articulate forcefully what we expect from records creators and system designers and to extend our mission and authorities both legally and in practice, we will lose most of the archival record of the next decade and squander our role as protector of the public interest in documented and accountable government.⁷⁶

Aside from having the sufficient authority, implementing appraisal decisions is reliant upon technical solutions that must be incorporated into the design and functionality of electronic recordkeeping systems. Following his contention that early archival intervention is necessary to manage the archival record in electronic form, Bearman also participated in a research project at the University of Pittsburgh to study functional requirements for electronic recordkeeping. His work on both the policy and technical aspects of managing electronic records supports archivists taking a very proactive stance and responsibility for determining the long-term value of records.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ Ibid. In March 1995, the Society of American Archivists issued a statement emphasizing that electronic records are indeed documents and that archivists should have "exclusive authority to determine the long-term value of records and the most appropriate methods of ensuring preservation and continuing access."

⁷⁷ The University of Pittsburgh Recordkeeping Functional Requirements Project was funded by the National Historic Publications and Records Commission which from 1 Feb. 1993 to 31 Jan. 1996. Other project staff were Richard Cox, Wendy Duff, and David Wallace. See the "Pittsburgh Project" website: http://web.archive.org/web/19991218161107/www.sis.pitt.edu/~nhprc/bibl-do.html (accessed 20 June
Franklin finds that when work is organized according to rigid guidelines or business rules, it implies that there is a low tolerance for variance and little latitude for judgement. These are essentially the features of a production model, where individual tasks must be necessarily performed to narrow prescriptions and it is assumed that the terms and conditions for production are, “at least in principle, entirely controllable.” There is also an underlying assumption that, if in practice, control is not complete or completely successful, improvements can be made incrementally through increased knowledge, redesign and reorganization so that all parameters are controllable, and thus overall control is achieved and maintained. While such predictability may be key to achieving greater efficiency and maximizing control, Franklin argues that the use of such prescriptive technology has even more far-reaching effects because it eliminates occasions for independent decision making and personal judgement in general, especially when it comes to making principled decisions because “the goal of technology has been incorporated a priori into the design and is not negotiable.” The logic of prescriptive technology suffocates other forms of social logic wherever prescriptive technologies are structured and used to perform social transactions. This would appear to be the case with the conventional model of appraisal. As if by default, according to Schellenberg, certain kinds of documents, such as the “administrative orders and charts that initially define the structure and programs of an agency,” are of long-term archival value based on

79 Ibid., 18.
80 Ibid., 92.
certain pre-conceived assumptions related to their documentary form and function or the position of the office that produced them in the administrative hierarchy.\textsuperscript{81}

In Bearman’s critique of such conventional appraisal, he posits a similar sense of the archival disenfranchisement associated with Schellenberg’s formulaic theory of value and the primacy that it gives to empirical or \textit{a posteriori} knowledge over the application of archival principles, scholarship, and expertise. Bearman suggests that value criteria for appraisal are generally put into practice as “a sort of catechism or flowchart” of questions that are routinely asked of each potential accession before acquiring it, at a record-by-record or series-by-series basis, in isolation from the larger functional work-process or recordkeeping universe.\textsuperscript{82} He regards the conventional thinking about appraisal to be a form of cost-benefit analysis where value is based on determining the benefits that might be derived from retaining certain records and weighing these against the cost of permanent retention. Given the subjective nature and difficulty of quantifying benefits within the context of institutions and the larger society and calculating the cost of permanent preservation, Bearman argues that the use of cost-benefit models is inappropriate to determining archival value. In his view, techniques of risk management should be substituted for evaluating records disposal decisions.\textsuperscript{83}

Yet these cogent criticisms by Bearman were offered in hindsight, long after Schellenberg’s taxonomy of values had been accepted by practitioners as the criteria for the selection of records for permanent archival or historical preservation. The American model offered a practical means for archivists to come to terms with what was seen as the dual-purpose appraisal, the attribution of value for evidence and for research.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{81} Schellenberg, \textit{The Appraisal of Modern Public Records}, 14.
\item \textsuperscript{82} Bearman, \textit{Archival Methods}, 9.
\item \textsuperscript{83} Franklin, \textit{The Real World of Technology}, 16.
\end{itemize}
Although purposely designed to systematize appraisal and to provide a more efficient means of “scheduling” or managing the retention and disposition of government records, Schellenberg’s model fell short when put into actual practice on a mass “production” scale, and especially when put to the test in the political and social milieu of public archives in the late twentieth century. In 1974, as already seen, Gerald Ham first raised the alarm in English and, by the later 1980s, strongly reinforced by David Bearman, the perceived failure of what had come to be considered as the “standard” practice of appraisal caused some leading members of the archival community to consider new ideas and to seek alternative strategies.

The desire to have a more effective means of selecting records of value, as well as a more defensible justification of such permanent value choices, led to the development of new appraisal technologies. This was further fuelled by certain changes in the social and political landscape and by the introduction of conceptual models that provided new perspectives on the nature of records and archives and their relationship to technology, society and culture. In large part, this was the result of technology transfer or the use of technologies originally intended for activities and realms of practice outside of the archival sphere. Of particular note is the application of concepts and models that have their roots in the fields of sociology, literary and cultural studies, communications, management and the insights and formulations of postmodernism.84

Schellenberg’s “theory of value” and the life-cycle model continue to be firmly entrenched in its still-influential home base, the United States. Even though it has been recognized that it is not meeting the requirements of present-day institutions, change is

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slow in coming to pass. Almost fifty years after the introduction of these concepts, the United States National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) report in 2002 on the redesign of the federal records management programme included these disturbing findings:

NARA and agency staff find the current approach to scheduling and appraisal to be labor intensive, time consuming and cumbersome. More importantly, the current approach is not working. Developing up to date schedules across Government is impossible with existing resources using our current methods.  

Despite this stark recognition, and the disclaimer that “records appraisal is not rote exercise,” or a mechanical process, NARA’s approach to appraisal continues to be based upon what is essentially an empirical record-centred process that is guided by Schellenberg’s “theory of value.” Like the initial guidelines for appraising federal government records, NARA’s newly drafted appraisal policy continues to incorporate a prescriptive mode of thinking and production logic. Although Schellenberg’s original taxonomy has been modified to reflect the mission of the present institution which is to ensure “ready access to essential evidence,” the focus of archival appraisal continues to be on appraising the evidential and informational value of actual records and determining their capacity to document the rights of American citizens, the actions or accountability of federal officials, and the “national experience,” or the effects of federal government action on the nation and on understanding its history and culture.


Franklin has suggested that, as an alternative to production-based models, the features of growth, the processes and cycles of growing and the “diversity of the components of growing organisms” are more suited to situations where the parameters of value are related to the uncertainties of the real world and a multifaceted environment rather than to a controlled and homogenous environment of production. Within the archival profession, similar arguments have been put forth for supplanting Schellenberg’s production-centered model of archival appraisal for the selection of the archival record. Instead, a more organic model of growth is advocated, wherein archives are not seized or “commandeered,” but conceived to be more like something that is nurtured and encouraged through the use of appraisal techniques that seek to identify the ever-changing conditions that are most likely to yield records of greatest value and provide for the disposition of these records as archives.87

One of the early proponents of a more organic model was Canadian archival pioneer, Hugh Taylor. In considering the implications of the advances in computer technology in the early 1980s, Taylor recognized that issues related to the use of new technologies reach far beyond technical concerns.88 In considering the impact of electronic information and communication systems on archival practice, he suggested that archivists should adopt a “new form of social historiography” that would shift the focus of appraisal away from the record itself to concentrate on identifying the patterns and connections of “the transactions and customs to which they bore witness as

87 Franklin, The Real World of Technology, 22-23.
Taylor’s understanding of provenance as a conceptual construct, where meaning is not drawn from the record itself, but from the “very act and deed” which it symbolizes, led the way towards a more holistic way of thinking that would enable archivists to take full control and responsibility for appraisal decisions. His ideas spawned the development of new models for appraisal where “archival value” is not synonymous with “research value” or equated to the demand for records as “end-products,” but is instead based on the relative importance and significance of the societal context of their creation. Most notably, Taylor’s ideas inspired fellow Canadian Terry Cook to come up with a radically new model that would shift the focus of archival appraisal “from the actual record to the conceptual context of its creation, from the physical artifact to the intellectual purpose behind it, from matter to mind.”

Acknowledging explicitly the influence of Franklin and others who conceive of technology as something “which stretches far beyond the mechanical” to include bureaucracy and “the scholarly and scientific disciplines themselves,” Taylor likewise takes a broader view of technology and technological processes. He rejects the notion of archival practice as “empirical discipline based on the scientific study of fact,” and argues that archival activity should be conceived as “an intellectual discipline based on the philosophical study of ideas.” Building upon Taylor’s insights, Cook would later adopt a similar perspective which “downplays the physical” aspects of records and recordkeeping technologies in favour of a new theoretical model and methodology for

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archival appraisal, which is now commonly known as "macroappraisal" or "functional appraisal," and which is based on the societal context in which records are created rather than records per se.
By the late 1980s, both in Europe and North America, the conceptual framework of archives was undergoing significant change. While this was largely due to the influence of historians and new trends in historiography, it also reflects significant changes in social policies and political circumstances that were occurring at this time. Among these was the relaxing of long-held tensions between nations, the sense of "détente" and the end of the Cold War, leading to the collapse of many long-standing authoritarian regimes and the emergence of a number of new democratic institutions.

The promotion of democratic principles reinforced the premise that accountability is a main constituent of good governance. As providers of a public good within a democratic society, archives are accountable not only to records creators and institutional stakeholders, but also to the larger community of citizens, and indeed to posterity. This archival challenge of the coming millennium was clearly expressed in The Strategic Plan of the National Archives and Records Administration 1997-2007:

Accountability of Government agencies and officials lies at the heart of democracy in modern society and... the continuity of government, its accountability, and public faith in its credibility depend in no small part on
our ability to provide ready access to essential evidence . . . in the form of government records.¹

As a result of the introduction or strengthening of “freedom of information” or “access to information” legislation in most democratic societies in the last third of the twentieth century, requirements to document the interactions of citizens and their relationship with the state became even more rigorous than ever. In the wake of proposed reforms to Canada’s Access to Information Act, in 2002, the National Archivist of Canada, Ian Wilson, indicated that meeting citizens’ requirements for access is now on par with enabling the traditional historical rationale for maintaining archives:

Our goal is not merely to facilitate historical research, but to serve and protect all citizens by documenting government business and preserving government information to enable people – many of whom would not normally think they would ever need to use the archives – to prove citizenship, establish entitlements to pension, settle land claims, or to document other rights, privileges and obligations. . . .²

In archives literature, these ideas are advanced by what might be called the “third way” of thinking about appraisal. Unlike other appraisal strategies that have been guided by bureaucratic values and academic interests, this new approach is distinguished by its origins connected to various “societal models” of the late twentieth century and efforts to reconcile institutional goals with societal values and the interests of citizens, all within this new accountability milieu. Guided by the values of society, archives and archival decisions are placed within a broader context and, as described in the words of one

archivist, the act of appraisal is rendered a “social action” which “rests upon a narrow platform of validation.”³

Franklin has observed that a key aspect of accountability is that it involves some degree of reciprocity.⁴ This line of thinking is similar to German archivist Hans Booms’ ideas concerning the formation of archives as a representative record of society. Booms proposed that there should be active citizen engagement in the orchestration of public archives, and indeed his was the first prominent international archival voice for this new third way of approaching appraisal.⁵

As an archivist of the state archives of the German Federal Republic (GFR), Booms also rose to the challenge of finding a means by which to resolve quandaries of appraisal and archival value. German public archives had already developed distinct approaches to appraisal that were somewhat outside of the traditional European School. In the democratic German Federal Republic (GFR), the measure of value was comparable to Schellenberg’s criteria for evidential value. Records value was assigned according to the relative “importance” or significance of the records-creating agency based on its hierarchical position within government. In the socialist German Democratic Republic, by contrast, so-called “scientific” standards for appraisal were derived from political ideology, specifically Marxist theories of history and historical materialism. The inherent parochialism of this approach is reflected in the comments of Hans-Joachim Schreckenbach, an archivist of the East German State Archives, who asserted that “archives in capitalist countries possess no real solutions to the problem of the appraisal

of information -- and with that, the solution to the question of value." To address these ideological differences and in specific response to Schreckenbach’s claim, Booms proposed a “democratic solution” to appraisal.

In a groundbreaking 1972 German-language article entitled (as translated) “Society and the Formation of Documentary Heritage: Issues in the Appraisal of Archival Sources,” Booms argued that the standards for appraisal should be determined by the values of society contemporary to the records creators. He proposed to accomplish this by building an archival “documentation plan” that would be subject to public review and verifiable by analysis using the historical method.

As conceived by Booms, the documentation plan is a prototype model for organizing historical events into a “hierarchy of value” or a grid of social significance that would provide “precise direction” for appraising great volumes of records. Public opinion would shape the documentary heritage, which the archivist would interpret via the documentation plan, to determine which documents possess the optimum concentration of desired information to form archives. These archives would then reflect a comprehensive view of the collective consciousness from which they had been chosen, and thus of the events which were considered to be important during a particular period in time, and most worthy of inclusion in archives for their related records.

Booms’ contribution to archival knowledge is not so much to be found in his strategy for planned documentation, but in his articulation of a new theoretical model that was purposely designed to ensure the formation of a documentary heritage that will serve to support the totality of a collective cultural, economic, and political memory of modern

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6 Ibid.: 106.
7 Ibid.
8 Ibid.: 105.
society. This was a radical departure from the empirical use-based approach to appraisal that prevailed during the second half of the twentieth century. In contrast to a traditional records management regime that subordinates archival value to institutional values in an appraisal process which takes place near the end of the records life cycle, in Booms’ regime, archival value exists independently outside of the recordkeeping and records management process. Archival value is drawn from a gradient of the collective priorities of society and by measuring the societal significance of past facts and the value that the contemporary society attached to them, and thus to their related records.9

Placing appraisal decisions within a wider context of a democratic society increases the possibility of cooperation and collaboration with institutional and individual records creators, administrators and researchers and the possibility of incorporating some degree of reciprocity into the process. This model evidently is best suited to institutions that have taken on the responsibility for structuring a common documentary future or within a political context where public archives are held accountable for providing a public good.10 Unlike Jenkinson’s model of “archives as evidence,” where the determination of value is an administrative function of bureaucracy, or Schellenberg’s “archives for use,” where appraisal is pragmatic and value is utilitarian and dependent on criteria that are external to the original context of the record and its provenance, in Booms’ “society based” model, the determination of archival value is the sole domain of archivists who are entrusted to shape and preserve the transparent lens of the collective memory.11

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9 Ibid.: 104.
10Ibid.: 103.
According to Booms' rigorous specifications, the archival documentation plan is the product of a collaborative effort among archivists, developed in consultation with experts from other areas of knowledge, "sanctioned and controlled by society at large and analyzed using the historical method of documentary criticism."\(^{12}\) Despite the intellectual appeal of its theoretical substance, Booms' "democratic" approach has some strategic weaknesses, the most obvious of these being the extensive resources that would be required to prepare and implement an archival documentation plan on such a scale.

Lacking an existing framework for incorporating public opinion directly into the appraisal process, and given the complexity of establishing a formal process that would enable archival documentation plans to be legitimized by public consensus, Booms eventually abandoned his original idea of making the documentation plans subject to public debate. The actual selection of records to be included in the documentary heritage according to a pre-conceived documentation plan relies on the capacity of archivists to systematically appraise the content of vast quantities of records on a record-by-record basis and hermeneutics,\(^{13}\) specifically, on the extent of archival subjectivity in close readings of records for the purpose of understanding their social significance. However, even when guided by a well-defined documentation plan for a given subject category and time period, one that establishes the events, actions, omissions and developments that are essential to document, and even with archivists having full authority for appraisal decisions, document-based appraisal conducted "from the bottom up" is simply not practical or efficient for dealing with mass quantities of records.


\(^{13}\) Ibid.: 105.
Despite the increased capacity for automation and control that might be realized through the application of information systems technology, the "bulk problem" of appraisal has since become even more acute with the proliferation of recorded information in electronic form. When considering the information that is needed to appraise electronic records for archival value, it becomes even more obvious that document-based methods lacked the capacity to provide the contextual information that is needed to determine value or identify which records are worthy of keeping on a long-term basis.

Some years after the translation and publication of Booms' article in 1987 that de facto brought it to the attention of the English-speaking world, David Bearman along with Margaret Hedstrom, another leading thinker and educator in the archival field who has researched and written extensively on archives, electronic records management, and digital preservation, concluded that it should not be necessary to identify, list, and schedule the total accumulation of records in order to identify the very small portion of records that are of archival value.¹⁴ Based on his own earlier research, Bearman argued for being able to appraise large volumes of records by focusing on "what should be documented" rather than on what documentation should be kept.¹⁵ However, in Bearman's view, planned "documentation strategies,"¹⁶ such as the models conceived by Booms and Samuels, were unsatisfactory as the primary means of engineering the archival record. Instead, he advocates "permitting the archivist to be proactive" by

¹⁵ Bearman, Archival Methods, 14-15.
¹⁶ The term, "documentation strategy," is used here in a generic sense to refer to collaborative models for the selection of multi-institutional records that follow methodology based on the creation of a predetermined plan to document a specific geographic area, event, subject or thematic area.
making appraisal judgements before records are created and “requiring records creators to be accountable for avoiding institutional risks by documenting specific activities.” 17

Even if implementation were feasible, a more serious weakness of Booms’ de facto documentation strategy, although he did not call it that, is that, like Schellenberg’s concept of information value, Booms’ strategy disregards the contextual factors of records creation:

It remains for the archivist to determine which documents, regardless of their provenance, possess the optimum concentration of desired information so that a maximum of documentation is achieved with a minimum of documents.18

Booms would later acknowledge that his original strategy did not provide for respect of provenance, one of the fundamental principles of archives. Moreover, Boom’s strategy was essentially born out of an ideological effort of putting forward a more “democratic” framework by placing that which is most valued by society at the centre of appraisal decisions. His initial intent was to simply “point the way towards a feasible, practicable solution.”19 Writing in 1991, he conceded that the solution must not only be grounded in theory, but also be practical enough to be usable.20

Franklin has insightfully compared technology to democracy, claiming that in various forms, each has significant impact on social relationships:

Technology like democracy includes ideas and practices; it includes myths and various models of reality. And like democracy, technology changes the social and individual relationships between us. It has forced us to examine and redefine our notions of power and accountability.21

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17 Ibid., 16.
19 Ibid.
21 Franklin, The Real World of Technology, 2.
In terms of archival practice, such a link between democracy and appraisal would come to be realized with the development of Terry Cook’s model of macroappraisal, consisting of both concept and technique that is designed to enable the attribution of value based on “a socio-cultural justification.” In large part, the development of macroappraisal was driven by requirements for public accountability and rights of public access, as well as the practical breakdown of the Schellenbergian records management archival appraisal life cycle paradigm. However, a broader vision was needed to narrow the gap between technology, theory, and practice. Macroappraisal as a viable concept and model of practice overlaps with the emergence of new conceptual models seeking to refocus archival practice shifting from the physical record to the conceptual context of recordkeeping, while still allowing for the practical application of archival knowledge to this end.

In addition to Booms’ method of “ascribing value through an appraisal process of positive value selection,” there were other strategies which placed both the act of archival appraisal and the archivist within the context of a larger society and where the formation of the documentary heritage is actively carried out according to an archivally conceived plan. However, unlike Booms, who formulated his strategy after a redemptive theoretical stance to rectify what he regarded as unacceptable appraisal theoretical assumptions and actual practices of established institutional archives, these strategies were formulated as practical solutions to meet the needs of collecting archives or archives that seek to acquire records from sources other than their parent or sponsor organization.

For collecting archives, the scope of archival appraisal is determined by their collection policies and the nature of the warrant that provides them with their archival authority. Similar to Booms’ society-oriented approach, these strategies are intended to facilitate the formation of a broader view of society through a more inclusive documentary heritage that would include social and political movements, local communities, minority groups, popular culture and events, and other subjects that would normally fall outside of the mainstream of academic interests or be overlooked or deliberately excluded from the appraisal process under institutional use-based appraisal regimes.

Among these other society-oriented approaches is the “documentation strategy” that was developed by the American archivist, Helen Willa Samuels. In a 1986 article entitled “Who Controls the Past?,” Samuels introduced a concept of broad documentation which had its beginnings in the 1960s with efforts at the American Institute of Physics to coordinate the documentation of multi-institutional scientific research projects. Like Booms, who claimed that archivists must first establish some criteria for value before making appraisal judgements, Samuels asserts that “analysis and planning must precede documentary efforts.” Taking this one step further, she also suggests that “institutions must work together because modern documentation crosses institutional lines,” and then sets out a model “documentation strategy” for accomplishing this goal. Designed for use where there is a need or desire to document an ongoing issue, activity or geographic area that crosses the collecting mandates of different archival institutions, Samuel’s strategy consists of a prescribed sequence of steps. First, choosing and defining

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the topic, then selecting advisors and choosing a site from which to implement the strategy, conducting research and analysis of the documentation, and then selecting and ultimately depositing the documentation into the care of the appropriate archival institution.

Like other strategies that employ a structured documentation plan, Samuel’s approach rests upon the archivist’s capacity to conduct comprehensive research, involving specialized subject-area knowledge and the cooperation of stakeholders that have an interest in either “the creation of the records or the archival retention of a portion of them.” The critical success factors for any documentation strategy are ultimately the willingness and ability of stakeholders to take an active part in developing a cooperative plan and the long-term commitment to the plan’s implementation.²⁵

Unlike Boom’s documentation strategy model, Samuels’ model for planned documentation has been demonstrated through actual practice, proving to be more of a strategic planning and coordination tool for acquisition programmes than a method of archival appraisal. Given the diversity of institutional goals and competing priorities, a sustainable cooperative effort is needed to ensure that “an adequate amount of documentation exists for a given subject area.”²⁶ Even within a single organization or for a narrow area of interest shared by a few institutions, this can be difficult, if not impractical to administer. The commitment and resources of participants may wane over time, especially if documentation plans are multi-institutional and prove to be too costly to implement and sustain.

²⁶ A twenty-five year effort was required for the American Institute of Physics to realize a documentation plan. For another example of the difficulties of an attempt at cooperative strategy, see Teresa Thompson, “Ecumenical Records and Documentation Strategy: Applying ‘Total Archives,’” Archivaria 30 (Summer 1990): 104-9.
Samuel’s documentation model has also been criticized on theoretical grounds. The most serious criticism having been put forth by Cook, who argues that appraisal based on subject categories or a thematic approach is “unarchival,”\(^{27}\) because the provenance dimension is weakened when external subject or thematic values that are not inherent to the records are put first in designating appraisal values. As a further criticism, Cook notes that given the \textit{a priori} nature of the approach, the themes or topics that are selected to be documented will necessarily always be in dispute,\(^ {28}\) and unless documentation plans are strictly defined or applied within very narrow parameters, there is a very large possibility of overlap and duplication of research and acquisition. While these shortcomings might be grounds for dismissing documentation strategy as an archival tool,\(^ {29}\) there are some proponents, Cook among these, who agree that Samuel’s methodology has merit, but not as a primary method of appraisal for government or institutional archives.\(^ {30}\)

It has thus been suggested that documentation strategy is more suited to coordinating the acquisition of personal manuscripts and the records of private organizations and, as such, it is now more commonly regarded as a means by which to “locate rather than to appraise the records of significant individuals and organizations.”\(^ {31}\) From this perspective, Samuels’ strategy fits well with the concept of “total archives,” a


concept that was born in Canada whereby institutions attempt to integrate aspects of the public records and private manuscript archives traditions by:

... documenting all aspects of historical development, seeking the records not just of officialdom or of a governing elite but of all segments of a community, and combining official administrative records and related private files, architectural drawings, maps, microfilm, and other documentary forms all touching on the development of the organization or region.32

Documentation strategies emerged helpfully during a time when archivists were attempting to reconcile the documentation needs of independent institutions and various communities of records creators with the selection of a more complex archival record of modern society where recorded information is created and shared among diverse groups.

Whatever its own practical limitations, Samuels’ documentation strategy model certainly proved to be a catalyst for further discussion and development of appraisal theory.33 Samuels’ strategies caused archivists to “rethink” or at least review their understanding of appraisal and what it entails and requires of the archivist. As noted by American archival scholar and educator, Richard J. Cox:

the seminal essays published on archival documentation strategy testify that it was formulated because of the increasing quantity of records, the rapidly developing complexity of their form, and the challenges associated with the interrelatedness of records creators – all indicative of an uneasiness many archivists felt when conducting appraisal.34

32 Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, Canadian Archives, Report to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada by the Consultative Group on Archives, (Ottawa, 1980), 63-64.
33 The significance of Samuel’s ideas on appraisal in generating further discussion on key issues and drawing out innovative views on the fundamental goals of appraisal and archival responsibility are reflected in Terry Cook’s comments on Samuel’s plenary address delivered to the Association of Canadian Archivists Annual Conference held in Banff, May 1991. See Cook, “Documenting Theory”:181-191.
Schellenberg had argued that uncertainty was a necessary aspect of appraisal, claiming that “ascertaining values in records cannot be reduced to exact standards” and “can be little more than general principles.” Yet by the later 1980s, there was growing discomfort among the archival profession with the “chaotic manner in which appraisal was being carried out and the seemingly confused purposes served by appraisal.” This realization caused some archivists to shift their attention to cooperation and coordination as a way of bringing order to a vast universe of documentation. The cooperative approach is common to Booms’ and Samuels’ documentation plan/strategies. Equally appealing was their the long-term perspective and comprehensive scope, as well as the concept of the archivist actively establishing specific documentation goals that will sustain the pragmatic acquisition of documentation over time. Bearman agreed with the concept of a “concerted and cooperative” documentation strategy, but he was also critical of the “excessive manpower requirements,” needed to produce a viable documentation strategy. Like Cook, he also found Samuels’s methodology for determining an appropriate thematic or subject focus for appraisal to be unclear or underdeveloped.

After further consideration, Samuels modified her original documentation strategy approach so that records could be connected to both their functional provenance (or to their origins as determined by function or work activities) and to their structural provenance (or their origin in an administrative or institutional structure). She argued that augmenting the original strategy with knowledge of the functions of creating institutions would help to sharpen documentation goals.

36 Cox, Closing an Era, Historical Perspectives on Modern Archives and Records Management, 102.
37 Bearman, Archival Methods, 14.
38 Ibid., see also Cook, “Mind Over Matter,” 47.
In 1992, Samuels, who was then the Archivist for the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, in her *Varsity Letters: Documenting Modern Colleges and Universities*, built upon the premises of her earlier work and incorporated the use of functional analysis into a documentation strategy concept for academic institutions. Known as “institutional functional analysis,” the appraisal process begins by establishing a functional taxonomy to classify activities that are common to a certain type of institution and identifying the types of records that should be collected. Selected areas for documentation are then compared with documentation collected by other repositories to identify where there might be gaps and to further define and establish collection goals or retention requirements for documentation.

By appending functional analysis to her original documentation strategy, Samuels provides for the structural and functional context that is needed to give shape to the aggregate archival record as well as the intellectual tools that are needed as to locate the sites of the “official records” of an institution, or records which must be retained to meet evidentiary requirements.

Cook, who was at first a severe critic of documentation strategy, subsequently applauded Samuel’s later rejection of use-defined value. He also noted that, like Samuels, Booms had similarly modified his planned documentation approach:

> Both of these major thinkers on appraisal matters, unbeknownst to each other, thus added significant new dimensions to their ideas and moved in the same provenance-based, functions-driven direction for the same reason at the same time....

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40 Cook, “What is Past is Prologue”: 56-7.
Booms concluded that it would not be feasible to implement his original documentation plan. As an alternative, he proposed a framework that would support the coordination of various institutional goals and facilitate cooperation among institutions. Rather than assuming that it is possible to directly discern societal values through researching public opinion and mass media emphasis, he now claimed that “provenance must remain the immutable foundation of the appraisal process.” He was not alone in taking this position. In 1993, by way of a volume of thematic essays from various contributors, Canadian archival educator Tom Nesmith established that there had in fact been “a rediscovery of provenance” within the archival profession.

It seems that Booms had also “rediscovered” the power of the principle of provenance, of how knowledge of the conceptual provenance of records, or “the evidential context which gave them birth,” facilitates making informed appraisal decisions. To delve into the context of records creation more deeply, he proposed a modified three-step appraisal methodology which consist of developing a chronology of significant events, preparing administrative histories of records creators based on a knowledge of their structure, functions and activities, and reviewing existing records through the examination of finding aids and other metadata against these criteria to judge their value.

Booms and Samuels are credited with pioneering the “documentation strategy,” a mode of thinking which takes appraisal beyond the compass of institutional boundaries.

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and the physical reality of pre-defined records series. By conceptualizing the selection of the archival record as an ongoing activity within society, as opposed to being merely a component of administrative processes, the attribution of appraisal value becomes a social action that is directed to documenting the collective memory. When based on a comprehensive understanding of societal structures, functions, records creators, and recordkeeping processes, appraisal transcends the routine application of utilitarian criteria of value to become a more holistic form of technology.

However this recognition was not given without some reservations, as Cook and others have noted, even the most mature expression of "documentation strategy," Samuels' model of institutional functional analysis, lacks a rational methodology for identifying and prioritizing functions and activities. Because it is institutionally and generically based, it suggests that there is a universal and objective set of records which comprise "adequate" documentation of each and every example of a particular type of institution. By giving more weight to function over structure, functional analysis, or appraisal based on the relative importance of functions within an institution, still "skirts the issue of determining the relative importance of one institution to another," which is a major issue when implementing larger documentary goals or administering a multi-institutional programme for an entire level of government, and there is still potential for unnecessary duplication of effort.

In terms of technological development, documentation strategy incorporates some aspects of production logic, but to a lesser degree than the records life-cycle model.

The implication is that by choosing a particular theme or topic to be documented and by following a particular regimen, as in Samuels’ model, of establishing an advisory group and a repository site, structuring the inquiry and examining the form and substance of available documentation, then selecting and placing the documentation in an appropriate archival institution, that all this will result in a predictable and consistent product. However, unlike the widespread use of Schellenberg’s taxonomy of value, documentation strategy has not become common practice due to the extensive resources and sustained commitment on the part of multiple stakeholders that is required to implement this technology.

Franklin has observed that “Growth occurs; it is not made” and that, within a growth model, all that human intervention can do is to “discover the best conditions for growth and then try to nourish them.”47 A similar sentiment is reflected in Booms’ view of appraisal, which he finds to be necessarily subjective, “rooted in the very essence of human existence, such that it is a condition that cannot be change or removed, only confined.”48 This should not be taken as surrendering to randomness, as suggested in part by Bearman, nor as a backwards-looking nod to Jenkinson, and his concept of archives as the evidential by-product of a “natural” process of accumulation that occurs without archival intervention. Advocating that society, not bureaucrats or the interests of select user groups, should animate the core values of appraisal decision making, Booms concluded, as summarized by Cook, that:

The solution is not to retreat from inevitable subjectivity into a Jenkinsonian illusion of impartiality, but rather to define appraisal theory and consequent methodology – and then carry out the actual work in

47 Franklin, *The Real World of Technology*, 22.
adherence to these definitions – in defendable, accountable and transparent ways.\textsuperscript{49}

Booms’ insights, reflecting Franklin’s growth model, suggest that the societal-based situation of modern-day archives and the concept of attributing functional value, calls for the development of a new form technology that is guided by something other than legal logic, bureaucratic process, or a prescriptive production mentality.

**Postmodern Forms of Technology**

Moving the locus of archival value away from the record and beyond the context of a single institution and incorporating societal values into formal documentation strategies shifted the focus of appraisal away from the record and towards the creative act or the “authoring intent, process, and functionality” behind the record.\textsuperscript{50} But these trends also precipitated the development of a different kind of technology – one that allows archivists to take full charge of the appraisal process and narrow the gap between theory and practice. Along with the identification of society as the “yardstick by which we can measure value,”\textsuperscript{51} there have also been other developments both inside and outside of the field of archival study that further shaped archival technology and the work of appraisal. As in the case of Booms’ work, while many of these developments were intended to support a lofty goal of strengthening the relationship between the state and society at large, connecting democratic process with evidence of accountability and the concept of archives as a public good, these efforts were also driven by practical need to make the

\textsuperscript{49} Cook, “Macroappraisal in Theory and Practice: Origins, Characteristics, and Implementation in Canada.”


selection process more rational and efficient. In 1991, Booms reconsidered his original documentation plan and concluded that it was “too theoretical and not practical enough to be useable,”52 but he qualified this modification by stating that

Neither does the solution lie only in refining those archival acquisition techniques that help archivists gain intellectual and administrative control over the material at the pre-archival stage, indispensable though these techniques may be for the process of appraisal.53

In the evolution of appraisal practice, the 1991 ACA conference was a significant event. The sharing of ideas by Cook, Booms, Samuels, and Craig clearly established that there was an international consensus concerning the need to narrow the gap between archival theory and practice and the reality of the modern-day universe of records. Later on, Nesmith expanded upon the nature of this need that was yet to be addressed:

archivists require a useful analysis of record-creating functions to … connect the documentary needs identified in the contemporary chronicle with the records themselves . . . the process of appraisal entails the immediate transition from the content of historical events, of subject matter to provenance and its aspects.54

The emergence of a new conceptual model of records and recordkeeping was fundamental to the development of new appraisal techniques. In an essay that was commissioned to commemorate a century of archival ideas since the publication of the 1898 Dutch Manual, Terry Cook notes that the history of archival thought is distinguished by the interaction of theory and practice. In his view, one of the major developments that altered the course of archival thinking is the conceptual model of the “records continuum.” By providing an alternative to the records life-cycle, the

continuum model helped to consolidate the seemingly disparate interests of records creators, records managers and archivists and to place recordkeeping activities, records and archives into a "real world" context of time and space. The introduction of this new conceptual model was key to fostering the development of new processes that have helped archivists narrow the gap between theory and practice. Arguably, the records continuum set the stage for reinventing archival concepts, processes and priorities. In the 1990s, it was also evident that there was a new level of synergy among the international archival community, particularly among archival thinkers in the United States, Canada, and Australia.

The concept of a records continuum was first envisioned in the 1950s, by Australia's first national archivist, Ian McLean, as a means of reconciling records management and archival functions. Although it was mentioned again in the mid 1980s, most notably by Canadian archivist Jay Atherton, in terms of blended reference services to current active and older archival records, the records continuum did not emerge as a theoretical model until 1990s, when it was articulated in its mature form by Australian Frank Upward.

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56 Most notably the theoretical and practical work of David Bearman and his colleagues at the University of Pittsburgh, Bearman visiting Australia in 1991 and in subsequent visits establishing a close working relationship with the Australian archival community; and Terry Cook then at the National Archives of Canada, since the 1990s traveling widely in the international archival community, including three sets of lecture series across Australia. Among the key Australian contributors are Chris Hurley, then in the early 1990s Victorian Keeper of Public Records, David Roberts, then Head of the Records Management Office of New South Wales, Glenda Acland, then Queensland University Archivist, and Sue McKemmish, Head of the Department of Librarianship, Archives and Records at Monash University.


The primary motivation for the development of the continuum model was archival concern for the fate of electronic records. Without active intervention, digital records documenting vital transactions and key events might never be created or adequately preserved. Lacking a strategy for implementing early archival intervention within the strict divisions of the life-cycle model, the continuum approach offers a means to resolve this problem by providing for the integration of recordkeeping responsibilities and accountabilities across all separate phases of the traditional life cycle.

In Upward’s model, records are conceived as logical as oppose to physical entities, and they are multi-purpose, used for across time and not necessarily sequentially for transactional, evidentiary and historical memory purposes. This abolishes the traditional distinction between records and archives as “a species of record that must be preserved for reasons other than those for which they were created,” and unifies archival and recordkeeping activities by their common purpose. Upward suggests that recordkeeping should be integrated into business and societal processes and that archival principles and the practical application of archival knowledge should be the foundation for recordkeeping practices. Four dimensions representing document creation, records capture, the organization of corporate and personal memory, and the pluralization of such corporate memory into collective societal memory are arranged on four axes, representing evidentiality, transactionality, identity, and recordkeeping formats, to provide a new framework for understanding records, their relationship with other records, and the contexts of their creation and use.

The life cycle is a representation of material form and an ordered progression of records through time whereas, by contrast, the continuum is an environment in which records processes occur. As described by Australian archivist Anne Pederson, these models are also distinct in their purpose:

The life cycle relates to records and information... records have a life cycle. The continuum is not about records. It is about a regime for recordkeeping. The continuum is a model for management that relates to the recordkeeping regime which is continuous, dynamic and ongoing without any distinct breaks or phases.  

In a comprehensive review of the continuum model and its implication for managing electronic records, Chinese scholar, Xiaomi An, provides a detailed history of continuum thinking and a comparison of the advantages of the records continuum over the life-cycle model. With respect to appraisal and the criteria for selecting archives, An points out that, within the context of the continuum model, historical value and currency both give way to the concept of “continuing value,” and appraisal takes place from “beginning to end” rather than being restricted to taking place only at the end of the records’ movement into an archives or a shredder. Records are both current and historical at the point of their creation and perpetually connected to the context of creation, even when carried forward into new circumstances and re-presented for use.  

Cook has suggested that the continuum model is “a unifying vision for all archivists.” However, he also cautions against placing too much emphasis on the first and second dimensions of the continuum, specifically business activities, risk avoidance, market opportunities, or the desire to avoid embarrassment or accountability and other

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activities related to “creating reliable documents as authentic recorded evidence,” and thereby overlooking the dynamics of the corporate and especially the societal collective dimensions of the model. He argues that Upward’s model is often misinterpreted as privileging “evidence” over memory, in large part because it fails to clearly articulate the fluid nature of the relationship between the inner and outer-most dimensions of the model. The dynamic of the creation of evidence, the documentation of corporate memory and the archival construction of social or collective memory appear to be unidirectional, from the origins in government departments at the centre of the model to the archives at the outer edge. Ironically, this is not unlike the life cycle that the continuum model strives to reject. In Cook’s view, the influence of memory on the creation of evidence should be shown in such a way as to graphically appear to have the same or more weight.62 This relates to the duality of the process of documenting the corporate memory, or what Cook refers to as “the process of governance,” and the archival construction of the collective memory to meet broader community expectations. He also disagrees with the notion that there is no essential “division” between the work of records managers and archivists because, in his view, this perception subordinates and devalues the cultural and heritage dimensions of archives.63 Organizational memory should be regarded as being merely distinct, not subordinate or of lesser significance. For Cook, the continuum model is a tool by which to strike a balanced view of archives as evidence and archives as the collective memory of society.

Continuum-oriented thinking was first put into practice by the Archives Authority of New South Wales. As outlined by its Director, David Roberts, the continuum served

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63 Ibid.
as the conceptual basis for new multi-dimensional “whole of government” model that consists of a framework of policy, legislation, standards, codes of best practice, guidelines and manuals, training, services, and support that is sustained by the active collaboration of records managers and the archival authority. Unlike the prescriptive records management life-cycle model, the development of the continuum-based “whole of government” model was not so much consistent and comprehensive as organic. As described by Roberts, it emerged from

a number of parallel developments -- new State records legislation, new strategies for managing electronic records, the push for recordkeeping standards, the continuum approach to managing records and archives, the recordkeeping perspective — are so connected, and contain so many common elements, that they fall together to represent a coherent model with remarkable ease.64

The New South Wales experience draws attention to the importance of acknowledging considerations of practice, especially to establishing a framework of legislation, standards, guidance, training, tools and the active collaboration of agency records managers and the government records authority. These are all elements that are needed to translate appraisal theory into recordkeeping practice. The radical implication of continuum thinking is that the formation of the archival record should not only be integrated into the records management function, but also into the entire business functions of organizations, thus eliminating the specialized role and function of archivists and records managers. The practical outcome of this scenario is reflected in the most mature “generation” of Hurley’s typology concerning archival legislation. His so-called

“third generation” legislation assumes a full realization of the continuum view, where recordkeeping is a shared responsibility and an integral part of the corporate culture, so that recordkeeping and archives will not, therefore, be a matter of making one person or body responsible for satisfying every recordkeeping rule by moving records into a domain within which one person or body has exclusive and total control for everything -- such as an archives authority. Rather, it will be an important part of the legislative task to establish a framework for identifying which bodies are responsible for which records (wherever they may be found) and, where overlap or ambiguity is possible, who has primary responsibility.65

After it was incorporated into Australian models of archival practice, the concept of the continuum model has been well received and adopted world wide. The International Standards Organization Records Management Standard (ISO 15489), that was issued in 2003, is modelled on the first Australian Records Management Standard (AS 4390), which is essentially a codification of continuum-based thinking. The ISO 15489 standard has been formally adopted by a number of national archives authorities, notably Australia, Great Britain, and Canada, as well as the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration. The redesign of the U.S. federal records management programme that was drafted in 2002 proposes that

NARA would adopt the records continuum model which requires that “archives” be identified early in their “life cycle” and then managed as archives as long as needed. This approach in the U.S. context would involve NARA in records relating to rights, government accountability,

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and records of continuing value from the beginning and focus NARA on monitoring how they are managed.66

It should be noted however, that while the Records Management standard is fertile ground for developing a more holistic understanding of the creation and disposition of records, the standard is silent with respect to the attribution of value and justification of appraisal decisions. It does not provide an alternate logic to Schellenberg’s utilitarian taxonomy of value; it merely suggests an alternate framework where appraisal may still be based on taxonomic values, if usefully placing appraisal closer to the point of records creation.

In terms of technological development, the continuum model shifts the focus of appraisal from product to process, from production to growth and from a prescriptive to a holistic form of technology, from where the doer specializes “not only in one technique,” but in a certain type of product and is in control of the process. The products of their work are one of a kind, however similar they may appear to be to the casual observer. Each product is unique. Although normally associated with an old-world tradition of craftsmanship, holistic technologies seem appropriate to the situation of public archives in the postmodern age and the function of appraisal within a fluid and dynamic environment wherein the formation of archives, like growth, “cannot be commandeered, only nurtured and encouraged by providing a suitable environment.” As opposed to using prescriptive technology for tasks that require caring, feedback, and adjustment and

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involve unpredictability and nuances of meaning, Franklin argues that these kinds of tasks are best done holistically.67

Moreover, the use of a holistic technology allows the archivist to take full, as oppose to partial, control of appraisal. As conceived by Franklin, holistic forms of technologies are well suited to the context and the craft of appraising the records of government for the purpose of the preserving archives based on a common understanding of relative values:

All craftsman share a knowledge. They have held reality down, flattened to a bench; cut wood to their own purpose, compelled the growth of pattern with the patient shuttle. Control is theirs . . . Using holistic technologies does not mean that people do not work together, but the way in which they work together, leaves the individual in control of a particular process of creating or doing something.68

Continuum thinking has helped to foster the development of holistic technology within the context of archival practice.

For Franklin, changes or innovations in practice and modifications of knowledge are situational, driven by a common experience shared by those who are on the receiving end of a technology. Given that values differ with time and place, Cook has suggested that the task of appraisal is an ongoing activity which involves “a perpetual re-shaping and re-understanding of records” and their changing context, even after they have crossed the threshold of the archive itself.69

Cook’s perspective on the task of appraisal is comparable to Franklin’s ideas on the growth and advancement of technology. As opposed to being a linear positivist

68 Ibid., 11.
progression, she finds technological change to be more akin to a historical, virtual, and postmodern “web of interactions,” whereby

A change in one facet of technology...changes the practice of technology in all sectors. In terms not of system but of a web of interactions which allows us to observe how stresses on one thread affect all others. The image also acknowledges the inherent strength of a web and recognizes the existence of patterns and designs. Anyone who has ever woven or knitted knows that one can change patterns but only at particular points and only in a particular way so as not to destroy the fabric itself. Pattern changes can be achieved, but more importantly, *there are other patterns.* The web of technology can indeed be woven differently, but even to discuss such intentional changes of pattern requires an examination of the features of the current pattern and an understanding of the origins and the purpose of the present design.  

If we understand technology as Franklin does, as the means by which people get work done and bring concepts and processes to life, appraisal is thus just as much an exercise in change management as it is in archives and records management.

**Redemptive Technologies: Macroappraisal**

Franklin is a strong advocate of the development of what she refers to as “redemptive technologies” that result from the review or reconsideration of the merits of existing technologies in terms of the appropriateness of their current application. The practice of diplomatics is an example of technology that has been recast into a changed structure and used for a changed task. Although diplomatics methods may have been used inappropriately for determining archival value, the archival application of diplomatics has been redeemed by its use within the domain of electronic recordkeeping systems, whereby existing knowledge and expertise are employed to solve problems and

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70 Franklin, *The Real World of Technology*, 52.
71 Ibid., 130-132.
design solutions related to ensuring the authenticity, trustworthiness, and reliability of electronic records.

Macroappraisal may also be considered to be a “redemptive technology” because it evolved from Cook’s review of conventional appraisal practices and his subsequent efforts to develop an alternate strategy that could replace the Schellebergian paradigm of a prescriptive production-based technology of appraisal. Influenced by the new “societal framework” of values, democratic ideals and the need for public archives to be both responsive and accountable, as well by concepts of postmodernism and continuum thinking about the nature of recordkeeping and archives, and the practical need to find a way to deal with the disposition of immense volumes of records both in paper and electronic form, Cook endeavoured to reform conventional appraisal practices, and in doing so, effect changes in the social and political patterns of the formation and role of public archives. This effort resulted in the development of macroappraisal, a new form of appraisal technology that articulates a strong congruence of theory and strategy, which is perhaps its greatest value.⁷²

The first expression of the theoretical stance of “macro-appraisal” was written in 1989, and appeared in 1991, in a study of the appraisal of case files that was done by Cook for the International Council of Archives.⁷³ In addressing the need to reduce the bulk of government records, Cook claimed that the source of archival value exists in the points where individual citizens are directly engaged with the state through its bureaucracy, specifically in case files which contain personnel information, as these are

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most likely to reveal the “hot spots” where the citizen and the state interact most vigorously. He argued that it is only after conducting thorough research and gaining a comprehensive view of the related recordkeeping functions that records should be subjected to selection or sampling. Cook also provided a variety of selection and sampling methods that could be used to reduce the bulk while maintaining the integrity of the whole by preserving a representative record.

In 1992, Cook put forward a fuller statement of the “macro-appraisal” concept in “Mind Over Matter: Towards a New Theory of Archival Appraisal.”74 At the core of Cook’s conceptual model is his theory that the attribution of value should rest upon “how accurately records project and sharpen the image of the citizen-state dialectic, and of the separate actors, agents, and functions involved therein.”75 Unlike conventional Schellenbergian appraisal, Cook rejects searching for explicit value in records and acquiring records to mirror research trends.” In macroappraisal, “the last thing an archivist does in appraising records is to appraise records.”76 Like Booms and Samuels’ documentation strategies, macroappraisal is “a work of careful analysis and of archival scholarship, not mere procedure,”77 as it requires that the archivist ask “what should be documented?” before even trying to decide which records should be kept. Adopting this strategy of valuation, however, does not necessarily eliminate the need for examining actual groups of records and taking material factors into consideration such as conservation needs, space requirements and processing cost. But central to Cook’s

75 Ibid, 59.
77 Cook, “Mind Over Matter,” 47.
methodological model that accompanies the theory is the premise that records of value can be located and ranked according to their relative importance through the articulation of institutional mandates, organizational culture, administrative structure, citizen-state interactions, and associated functions, business and recordkeeping processes, or what has been called the “history of the record,” which constitutes a knowledge of contextual provenance.

Knowing where records of greatest value are likely to be created or found before carrying out an appraisal of the physical record reduces the dimensions and scope of the task to a more manageable size. This offers a solution to the “archival problem” of vast quantities of records that are yet to be appraised. If discrete points of value can be identified based on a comprehensive view and a through understanding of the functioning of bureaucracy, when viewed together from the distance of a further perspective in time, these should provide a reasonably clear representation or impression of both the bureaucracy and the human side of the experience. Thus it is only after determining what functions and activities should be documented, identifying the agents or offices within the organization that are primarily responsible for delivering these functions, and then determining which of these agents or functions are most important and how they impact on and interact with citizens, that actual records or series of records can be designated as “archival,” based on their potential to be acquired or brought under the control of the archival authority to be preserved and used as archives. Systematic techniques of selecting or sampling based on traditional “micro-appraisal” criteria such as age, extent, uniqueness, time span, completeness, and fragility, can then be applied at the file or series level or even down to the item level, if more detailed criteria are warranted to reduce the
bulk of records that will be preserved and managed as archives while still maintaining the integrity and provenance of the whole, the sharpness of the societal image and the vestige of collective memory.⁷⁸

Cook built upon these insights and drew on others from outside of the archives field to develop a programme for the National Archives of Canada for the appraisal of federal government records. Although Cook stresses that “theory comes first,” he also gives equal weight to the fact that his original statement of the theoretical model of macroappraisal included a prototype model for implementation⁷⁹ and that the working model that he developed for the National Archives of Canada was primarily driven by the need to address practical concerns.

In a 1999 public lecture on archival appraisal that was sponsored by the University of Maryland and presented to NARA staff, Cook made a special point of acknowledging Schellenberg’s work and the pervasive influence of his theories and methodology. Commenting on his own work, Cook emphasized that although it is deliberately grounded in theoretical premises that are clear, direct and consistent, macroappraisal was born with high regard for “practice” and the meaning that it has for those involved:

While I have indicated already some theoretical problems with Schellenberg’s approach to determining value, there are practical ones as well. These practical considerations were as significant in the changes implemented at the National Archives in Canada, and elsewhere, as any concern for theoretical clarity, just as it was practical breakdowns in the former records disposition process that forced change, not some new theory of management.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Ibid.
Given that by this time, the U.S. government had experienced both the successes and failures of the "reinventing government" reform initiative, Cook's comments seem intended to distance macroappraisal as not being derivative from this kind of enterprise. For Cook, theory is the complement to practice, such that theory and practice should interact and cross-fertilize each other, rather than one being derivative or dependent on the other. While macroappraisal theory provides basic principles for re-conceptualizing appraisal, unlike radical business process reengineering efforts, it does not insist on sweeping away old practices, even though it can help archivists to "focus on the justifications necessary to explain why we do what we do to our various publics," and "animate a vision necessary to unite staff behind new approaches."82

As adopted in 1990-91 by the National Archives of Canada, macroappraisal was driven by the practical needs of an established government institution that is responsible for "managing the records of state for the benefit and use of citizens."83 Although the 1987 National Archives of Canada Act had given the National Archivist control and authority over the destruction of records by federal institutions by obliging government institutions to seek archival permission to dispose of records, Records Disposition Authorities issued under the act were not comprehensive and many existing authorities were out of date or unenforceable.84 This was in large part due to the archives

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81 For insight into why disregard for the sociable "practice" of work has undermined the success of business process reengineering in many organizations, see John Seely Brown and Paul Duguid, The Social Life of Information, (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2000), 91-99. One of Brown and Duguid's central arguments is that reengineering fails when people forget the practice that provides meaning to the process.
82 Cook, "Archival Appraisal and Collection: Issues, Challenges, New Approaches."
84 Under the 1989 federal Management of Government Information Holdings Policy, the scheduling of records is the responsibility of institutions conducted within the context of business needs analysis. Appraisal decisions are thus in reference to granting Records Disposition Authorities rather than approval of records retention schedules.
relationship with government institutions being *ad hoc* and voluntary and thus outside of the scope of normal business processes. While there had been a certain level of motivation to improve the existing programme, conducting a review of the appraisal and disposition practices became an even higher priority when the two divisions of the National Archives that were responsible for paper-based textual records and electronic records merged to form a single division. In 1989-90, the National Archives began a major appraisal reform initiative because of a vast accumulation of government records and concerns that the records that were being acquired were not fully representative of government policies and programmes.

The operating environment of the Archives had also changed significantly with the passage of the *Privacy Act* in 1983. Under the provisions of the *Privacy Act* and the *Access to Information Act*, in order to help requestors find government records and determine where to send their requests, those government institutions subject to the two Acts are required to describe their organization and records in a Directory of Government records. In addition to programme records holdings, this must includes descriptions of all “Personal Information Banks” of any information about individuals held by federal institutions and specifications of when such records would be destroyed, as documented in Records Disposition Authorities issued by the National Archives.85

Yet perhaps the most compelling reason for bringing about appraisal reform, or at least for its originator Cook and his National Archives colleagues, was that during the 1980s, staff members of the Archives were involved with a Royal Commission of Inquiry

85 These requirements are now met by the publication of Info Source, a “series of publications” which contain information about the Government of Canada, its organization and information holdings. It is a key reference tool to assist members of the public in exercising their rights under the *Access to Information Act* and the *Privacy Act*. See Government of Canada, “Infosource” website, “Infosource Publications": [http://www.infosource.gc.ca/index_e.asp](http://www.infosource.gc.ca/index_e.asp) (accessed 20 March 2005).
that had been appointed to investigate the destruction of government immigration records related to the prosecution of Nazi war criminals who had entered Canada after 1945. As staff members of the National Archives, Cook and Robert Hayward were called to testify before the Commission. In two extended sessions of special inquiry into federal government records scheduling, disposition and appraisal practices:

archivists and records managers had to defend publicly, under sworn oath, a disposition system that they knew over the previous decade was breaking down and appraisal approach that seemingly had produced the wrong results. No archives in any country could wish for a worse scenario . . . The National Archives of Canada and its disposition and appraisal processes stood accused of collusion in a state cover-up of the war criminals of the Holocaust, and of grievous incompetence in two of its core functions. 

Although the Commission's final 1987 report did not censure the National Archives for its actions, as described by Hayward, the effect of the experience was that it forced the Archives to look carefully at records appraisal and disposition:

our work was open to public examination and we were being held accountable for our actions, and that we should take what ever measures were needed to improve our selection and scheduling of government records. The Commission of Inquiry acted as a catalyst . . . to reforming a records disposition system that had gradually broken down or become outdated.

In retrospect, the Commission of Inquiry marked a certain “coming of age” for the archival profession in Canada. The concept of a profession “implies both real parameters and professionals who bear some responsibility for the effects of their advice.” In a citizen-based democracy, this means that, like other professionals, archivists are willing

86 Cook, “Macroappraisal in Theory and Practice: Origins, Characteristics, and Implementation in Canada.”
to take responsibility for their decisions and advice. They are prepared to go beyond simply promising to uphold a creed of archival principles to publicly defending their decisions.

In 2002, Cook delivered a paper which summarized the key components of his concept of macro-appraisal and expanded upon the functional analysis component of macroappraisal methodology. Beginning with his conviction that appraisal is properly an active process that is supported by an articulated theory or concept of appraisal and archival value so as to be consistently implemented and defensible, he argues that, contrary to the “bottom up” perspective of traditional archival and records management practice which begins with the records themselves, macroappraisal begins with an analysis of contextual provenance and the extent to which records reflect citizen-state interaction within the larger society. Cook soundly rejects the concept of appraising records for their “informational value” as well as the attribution of value based solely on the criteria for trustworthy evidence. He makes it clear that appraisal theory or the theoretical definition of value should not be confused with appraisal strategy or the methodology of acquisition nor should it be taken to be the same as setting business rules for records capture or scheduling records transfers to archives. While careful to make this distinction, much of the appeal of the macroappraisal model is that it offers a viable means whereby archival principles can be put into practice to gain efficiencies within the context of a working reality. Finally, Cook acknowledges that appraisal is a subjective process and because of this subjectivity, he argues that archivists and their institutions should take full responsibility for ensuring the integrity of the appraisal process and their
appraisal decisions by making appraisal processes and decisions transparent through good documentation.\footnote{Cook, "Macro-appraisal and Functional Analysis,": 7.}

He completes his review of the macroappraisal model by outlining a twelve-step methodology with functional criteria for testing or confirming the macroappraisal hypothesis by means of the micro-level appraisal of selected records within the functional programme that is being appraised. In keeping with the systematic “top-down” approach, this begins with the assessment of more general attributes, such as legislation, formal regulations and policies, then proceeds to move down to assess the particular attributes of work units and work process and finally drilling down to assess the extent to which there is evidence of genuine citizen-state interaction in specific documentary forms as well as the capacity of the records to reflect activity that has taken place within the context of day-to-day programme operations.\footnote{Ibid.}

In light of the documentation strategies that have been developed by Booms and Samuels, the concept of a top-down and research-based approach is not an entire innovation by Cook nor is it the sole distinguishing feature of a macroappraisal strategy. Initially unbeknownst to Cook, the National Archives of the Netherlands in 1991 had undertaken the Project Implementation Reduction Period (PIVOT) project to appraise and transfer substantial backlogs of government records.\footnote{Peter Horsman, Appraisal on Wooden Shoes: The Netherlands PIVOT Project, mentions a backlog of five hundred linear kilometres of government records awaiting appraisal and transfer, cited in Elizabeth Shepherd, “Macro Appraisal,” 14 August 1997: cf, 56. Available on University College London, School of Library, Archive, and Information Studies website: http://www.uc.ac.uk/SLAISprojects/endnote.htm (accessed 13 August 2002).} PIVOT was based on a complete analysis of government functions prior to proceeding with records appraisal and
disposition. Similar to the functional perspective of macroappraisal, the focus of the PIVOT project:

is the organisation and its environment, not the records. The activities of government departments should in the main represent government's output in society. If a government function does not contribute to the goal, it is not considered worthy of documentation for posterity. The evidential value of the records derives from the value of the function. In theory, the intrinsic value of records plays no role, though in practice there may be exceptional concerning specific historical events. . . . In short, the method of appraisal is based on organisational research rather than on documentary analysis.92

Although cross-government and cross-institutional functional analysis is the means by which appraisal begins for both the PIVOT approach and Cook's macroappraisal, they differ greatly in their underlying theoretical assumptions concerning the concept of value and the goal of appraisal. The Dutch PIVOT model associates value with the functionality of government and its programmes as they relate to society and the goal is to document the primary functions of government itself. After these functions are identified and described and the legal basis for the functions is established, the functions are appraised and records are disposed of on the basis of the importance or significance of the function. The PIVOT model makes no provision for examining the actual records that are involved, and the Dutch acquisition strategy does not "comprehend documentation other than policy records," since the scope of the functional analysis does not extend to programme implementation or interaction with civil constituency. Therefore, case files are acquired only in rare instances as examples of administrative process.

As Richard Brown, one of Cook’s former appraisal colleagues at the National Archives of Canada has noted, the logic of the Dutch model is reminiscent of the ideas of Weber and Jenkinson, where administrative bodies are assumed to be rational entities and records are the “disinterested by-products” of administrative process and that value is inherent based on the status and behaviour attributed to records creators. Although records are correlated to the context of their creation, archival value has been interpreted exclusively to mean evidential value and the evaluation of the record is removed from the appraisal process.93

That the primary goal of the PIVOT project was to expedite the reduction of the backlog of archival transfers from government departments is reflected in the comments of one Dutch archivist involved with the project, who was pleased to report that “ship loads of records” could now be destroyed without their having been given a glance or “without a single page being read!”94 Yet despite making some progress in dealing with the appraisal backlog, when the PIVOT project ended after twelve years in 2003, it had not yielded the desired results.95

Macroappraisal as conceived by Cook is primarily distinguished from other functional analysis approaches by its principal focus to document governance and the citizen-state interaction, not to document only the functions of government or bureaucracy. As Cook described it on the National Archives of Canada website, the focus of macroappraisal

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is "societal" to identify records which provide illustration of how government operates and affects Canadian society. The goal is not to provide archival evidence of functions and activities as an end itself.\(^6\)

Like the PIVOT strategy, macroappraisal starts by identifying records creators and their functions and their capacity to create records of value, then based on a comprehensive review or assessment of functions and structure, ranking record creators based on such functional research and "pinpointing" the structural sites of important functions and sub-functions. Although in the first instance, macroappraisal emphasizes the value of the location or the sites of records creation, which are referred to as "Offices of Primary Interest," unlike the PIVOT strategy, macroappraisal proceeds further and attempts to determine the most focused sites of "citizen-state interaction" or the specific circumstances such as the delivery of a particular programme or service where it is most likely that the convergence or divergence of function, structure and citizen will be most pronounced. Following the completion of macro-level analysis, the third phase of the macroappraisal model consists of two-steps: formulating a macroappraisal hypothesis about where the best records will be and which of the functionalities of governance they are likely to document; then testing the hypothesis against actual records within the functional programme that is being appraised; and reviewing the value of other records outside of the programme where there might be duplication or where recordkeeping or information systems cross functions and structural boundaries.

With regard to the use of functional analysis and the "top-down" approach, Cook's macroappraisal model has been subject to criticisms much like those directed at business process reengineering methods. To correct the misconception that

macroappraisal is similar to the Dutch PIVOT strategy, or that it focuses strictly on the functional decomposition of longitudinal process and a linear view of organizational functions, Cook makes the point that “functional analysis” within the context of macroappraisal is not the same as the use of functional analysis in business area analysis, process re-engineering, or systems design, given that its purpose is to uncover sites of potentially high archival value rather than to reorganize an organization around processes. Macroappraisal focuses not just on function, but on “the three-way interaction of function, structure, and citizen.” It is this aspect of macroappraisal that turns the unilateral force of “government” into a two-way process of “governance.” Although it is an integral part of Cook’s model, macroappraisal is about more than using functional analysis. This premise will be further explored in Chapter 3 of this thesis.

For archivists, records managers, and administrators, Cook’s macroappraisal model has obvious appeal. As an alternative to the conventional “bottom-up” model of appraisal, macroappraisal is not only a feasible solution for dealing with the vast quantities and varieties of records created by modern institutions. It also holds added attraction because it is clearly driven by an archival agenda, grounded in archival knowledge and tempered by the experience of archival practice. As such, it provides archivists with an opportunity to gain efficiencies without compromising archival principles. Adopting a planned approach to appraisal releases the archivist from the ad hoc aspect of appraisal within the life-cycle context and the burden of having to review closely and oversee the disposition of the totality of records, which in the past has been

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98 Ibid.
the primary focus of conventional appraisal activity, instead of focusing on the much smaller portion with potential archival value.

At the National Archives there was a certain sense of archival emancipation that came about with adopting a comprehensive macroappraisal approach. Archivists were no longer “stuck down in trenches facing five hundred systems in a single large agency and trying to appraise them one-by-one in a near hopeless attempt to stitch together disparate systems and applications.” 99 In the field of health and social welfare, veteran appraisal archivist Catherine Bailey found that a clear definition of agencies, programmes, and client groups, and other factors related to determining sites of citizen-state interaction enabled archivists to focus more quickly on the appraisal of records of potentially high archival value. However, where functions crossed over organizational boundaries, she also found that it was necessary to review the actual records to ensure that the nature of the records matched the conclusion of the macroappraisal analysis.100

As reflected in Bailey’s account and the experiences of other macro-appraisal practitioners,101 at the core of many problems related to implementing appraisal decisions is how to translate functional analysis and appraisal decisions that are expressed in functional terms into disposition instructions that have meaning in the “real world” of records and records management. Bailey and colleague Brian Beaven suggest that new

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tools are needed so that functional appraisal decisions might be more easily implemented by practitioners who still are dealing with traditional subject-based recordkeeping systems and well-established life-cycle records management processes.\textsuperscript{102} This is linked to how the work of appraisal is transformed into practice and how the connection between the conceptual model and the records base is actualized in the form of records transfers and the accessioning of archival records from a particular structure or contextual location.

Most of those who advocate that the "reality of the record base is an indispensable component of all acts of appraisal" are in agreement (if not always proponents) of the plan and premise of macroappraisal. In commenting on Boom’s documentation plan, Canadian archival scholar Barbara Craig, who is know for her work on health records and British Treasury archives, argues that in addition to there being a long-term commitment to the appraisal programme, there should also be “a separation between the time when records were created and used and the time when they are appraised,” or appraised for acquisition. Craig claims that this “cooling off” period is necessary to allow for a “generous period of reflection.” She expresses concerns about disregarding the specialized nature of archival study and knowledge of records in favour of appraisal decisions based purely on functional analysis or “information divorced from the realities of documentary expression.”\textsuperscript{103} While Cook would most certainly agree with Craig that appraisal decisions should not be based purely on functional analysis without a knowledge of the records, this knowledge could be either direct or indirect, thus

\textsuperscript{102} Catherine Bailey and Brian Beavan, “Turning Macro-appraisal Decisions into Archival Records,” paper presented at the Association of Canadian Archivists 30\textsuperscript{th} Anniversary Conference, Saskatoon, SK, 9-11 June 2005.

precluding the need in some cases for the archivist to look at the actual records. Given the rapidly changing patterns and dynamics of organizational development and in the wake of a preponderance of transient electronic records, allowing a cooling off period puts records at risk. Craig’s concern for sustainable archives would be better served by more timely appraisal, especially since the preservation of digital records involves implementing technical solutions which must be incorporated into the designs of various the recordkeeping systems, often before the first or many records have even been created.

Also among those who maintain that macroappraisal decisions should be validated by an evaluative examination of the record itself is Cook’s National Archives colleague, and later successor directing the appraisal programme, Richard Brown, who goes even further to recommend the use of hermeneutic reading techniques in the archival assessment. Brown argues that the introduction of hermeneutic interpretation of texts potentially offers a “more sensitive macro reading of the public information environment than may be otherwise conveyed by purely structuralist appraisal thinking.”104 He suggests that archival hermeneutics allows for identifying multi-creator sets of text as evidence of shared functions or where certain creators might be considered collectively on the basis of their generic functions and transactive roles within the bureaucracy. Brown’s comments are insightful, especially in view on the largely unstructured environment of computer-based information systems. However, he is careful to stress that the application of a “hermeneutic reading” of the records should not be confused with the practice of diplomatics and the reading of text to determine authenticity as associated with the attribution of evidential value.105 He is also clear, as

105 Ibid.: 157-159.
is Cook, that such reading of records as text to discern their contextual interconnections is not the same as Schellenberg's archivists reading texts for their informational content and research values.

Criticism of macroappraisal and the application of functional analysis concerning the distance that it places between the archivist and ultimate object of archival acquisition -- the record -- reflect a broader critique of assumptions about how functions or processes are defined by organizations as opposed to how these are realized in terms of actual practice or the way in which individuals apply process rules to their specific jobs. Some management experts have argued that such a gap is largely due to the tunnel vision of focusing upon longitudinal processes or a lack of an understanding and accounting of the role of sociability, or regard for the sociable "practice of work or the social networks that add meaning to all forms of work."\textsuperscript{106} As described by Brown, the "world of public archives," is very much cast in the tradition of structured and controlled modes of a production whereby

the canons of hierarchy structure, authority, and synchronicity diacritically connected with traditional notions of provenance, [have] contrived to envelope the archivist in an occupational environment of institutional order-knowledge based on associations and patterns of stability, predictability and homogeneity.\textsuperscript{107}

Taking a functional perspective, and considering only process-based accounts of why things are done, tends to give a bloodless account of programmes and activities. It misses the view from within and the lateral links of interaction, or where "making sense,

\textsuperscript{107} Brown, "Macro-Appraisal Theory and the Context of the Public Records Creator": 128.
interpreting, and understanding are both problematic and highly valued areas,“108 where, if anywhere, citizen-state interaction is likely to be at a premium.

Brown has made the observation that macroappraisal is primarily a methodology of analysis and identification rather than a theory of evaluation. In his view, first and foremost, macroappraisal is designed to identify functions, programmes and services within the context of the organizational framework rather than their specific value in relation to the records which are created and kept in their support.109 While this view is supported by practitioners of macroappraisal methodology, some like Bailey has found that it is often difficult to make a connection between specific functions and the traditional subject-based recordkeeping systems that support them.110 She notes the importance of being able to communicate the results of macroappraisal decisions and the means by which these should be applied to existing recordkeeping systems.

Beaven has suggested that the main test of the success of any archival assessment rests upon “the practicality of the vehicle created to convey and apply the authority.”111 He also argues that taking a direct look at the records should not be relegated or limited to the second stage macroappraisal as Cook had originally suggested or conceived as being an optional task. For Beaven, “micro-appraisal" is not only necessary but in most cases, critical to actually identifying and realizing the selection of the archival record. Taking a direct look at the records and undertaking micro-appraisal might even be needed to provide sufficiently specific details to support the initial inference of archival value from functional importance in situations where unlike the

109 Brown, “Back to the Strategic Roots: Appraisal Reform at the National Archives of Canada.”
110 Bailey, “From the Top Down: The Practice of Macro-Appraisal”: 120-121.
National Archives, the archivist does not have the benefit of years of disposition experience and documentation which permits an accumulated knowledge of the records to be read indirectly into an analysis of function.\textsuperscript{112}

Craig also makes the point about “practical, managerial and administrative issues,” or the context in which the work of appraisal is carried out, claiming that the implementation of any appraisal and disposition programme requires that the archivist must have adequate research time, thinking time, consultation time, and sampling/study time. Solutions are not technology bound. She argues that having the capacity to execute the practical steps of the appraisal process, and the negotiation involved in actual practice, are just as important as establishing theoretical concepts and a visionary plan especially where functions and accountabilities cross over organizational or institutional boundaries.\textsuperscript{113} Roberts’ “whole of government” recordkeeping model takes Craig’s requirements for implementing an appraisal and disposition even further by making a strong case for establishing an encompassing framework of legislation, policy, standards and best practices and a coherent regime of guidelines and procedures, training, services and support for recordkeeping in the public sector.\textsuperscript{114}

Cook notes that another key factor in successfully adopting a macroappraisal strategy is how the new programme is implemented within the existing structure of the sponsor or parent body and the extent to which shifting from traditional appraisal methodology to the use of functional analysis as a planned approach to records appraisal and disposition constitutes a major change in established practice and organizational

\textsuperscript{112} Beaven, “Macro-Appraisal: From Theory to Practice”: 162-165.
culture. It was necessary for the National Archives to establish a whole new relationship with government institutions to implement the macroappraisal model. This involved establishing a functional classification of institutions\textsuperscript{115} according to their importance and likelihood as a source of archival records, then establishing a “Government-Wide Plan” for the comprehensive implementation of appraisal and records disposition in priority order according to function, then using project management methodology to negotiate with individual institutions to establish an institutional “Multi-Year Disposition Plan” (MYDP). The MYDP is a formal agreement which sets out a specific implementation plan that includes a timetable for preparing and submitting institutional Records Disposition Submissions to the National Archives, review of the received submissions and researching and writing the Archival Appraisal Reports, drafting of Terms and Conditions for Transfer of Records for those that have archival value and, finally, the issuing of approved Records Disposition Authorities.\textsuperscript{116} The development of these tools involved reviewing past assumptions related to the existing framework for traditional records retention scheduling, and then grafting onto them active archival targeting.\textsuperscript{117}

Within the traditional context of a life-cycle regime, appraisal is conceived similar to a production-oriented process which discounts context, or more specifically the human dimension and the varied nature of records creation and the social groups that public

\textsuperscript{115} Initially 174 institutions were classified into four categories, with highest priority given to “Category 1 Institutions” with mandated functions that have greatest impact on Canadian society or government, such as the Treasury Board, Department of Justice, and the former Department of National Health and Welfare and lowest priority given to “Category 4 Institutions” with highly specialized and narrow functions of limited importance or marginal nature or where information is found in records of institutions listed in higher categories, such as the Patent Medicines, Board, Royal Mint, pilotage authorities. See Library and Archives Canada, Information Management Services. “Government-Wide Plan for the Disposition of Records, 1991-1996.” Available on: http://www.collectionscanada.ca/information-management/0625/0625020305_e.html (accessed 30 March 2005).

\textsuperscript{116} Bailey, “From the Top Down: The Practice of Macro-Appraisal”: 97-99.

\textsuperscript{117} Cook, “Archival Appraisal and Collection: Issues, Challenges, New Approaches.”
archives serve in favour of more pragmatic rationale. For Schellenberg, this was clearly the case:

In appraising the value of information in public records, the archivist is not greatly concerned with the source of the records – what agency created them, or what activities caused their creation. The concern here is with the information that is in them.\(^{118}\)

Franklin has suggested that when processes are organized in a prescriptive fashion such as the arrangement of activities within the life cycle, there is a low tolerance for variance and little latitude for personal judgement. Individual tasks must be necessarily performed in sequence to narrow prescriptions and things are made under conditions that are, at least in principle, entirely controllable. There is also an underlying assumption that improvements in knowledge, design and organization can occur so that all essential parameters will become controllable and as such, the product will be predictable.\(^{119}\)

Given that macroappraisal strives to identify circumstances where the citizens consciously interact with agencies and programmes and especially where they will have room for intervention, discretion and influence on decisions, or where programmes allow flexibility and discretion for citizens to express their opinions and where the citizen-state dialectic is thus at least partially shared, Cook and his colleagues call for a significantly different view of records creation. Depending upon the context, this may involve not only a shift in archival perspective, but also a shift of greater magnitude that could involve instituting major process changes or the transformation of corporate culture.

In retrospect, Cook later concluded that while the decision to adopt an incremental or phased approach under the MYDP process enabled the timely completion


\(^{119}\) Franklin, *The Real World of Technology*, 81.
of appraisal and disposition projects that were likely to have "high archival payoff," the trade-off was that these efforts would often have to be revisited after the completion of subsequent projects as a more comprehensive perspective came into view. As well, projects involving common or shared functions could only be undertaken after a significant number of function- or institution-specific macroappraisal projects had been completed. This underscores the reality that there are few institutions that have the capacity and the necessary framework in place to fully implement a macroappraisal and disposition programme in one single effort. As seen, the Dutch tried with the PIVOT project, over many years and resources, and failed.

Since first implementing macroappraisal in 1991, the National Archives has continued to review and make revisions to its appraisal methodology. However, the functional-structural core approach has not been altered nor has it been diverted from supporting the fundamental premise that the most likely source of records of significant value is at the centre of the junctures where the programme, agency and citizen dialectic takes place. As Bailey points out, the need for large amounts of supporting research and the high frequency of organizational change and constraints upon available resources are ever-present challenges to implementing the model.

By 1999, despite the National Archives having undergone a significant transformation in terms of its business processes and the establishment of the intellectual grounds for appraisal decisions, there were concerns about the status of the programme with respect to meeting the goals of full coverage provided by archival authorities for the disposition of government records and sustaining a fully implemented macroappraisal

120 Cook, "Macroappraisal in Theory and Practice: Origins, Characteristics, and Implementation in Canada."
121 Bailey, "From the Top Down: The Practice of Macro-Appraisal": 122.
strategy based on functional analysis to acquire archival records. Many of these issues were related to programme planning and the coordination of roles and responsibilities, and other aspects of implementing a government-wide programme, such as the varying capabilities of government institutions to implement a planned disposition programme and meet archival requirements which, despite some highly successfully efforts, had resulted in slow and uneven progress overall. As described by Brown, despite the National Archives efforts to gain control of the government records disposition agenda, the appraisal programmes was still largely reactive and subject to external institutional goals and other pressures which inhibited the Archives’ capacity to fully implement the objectives of macroappraisal.  

The 2001 “Guidelines for Performing an Archival Appraisal on Government Records” outline the features of the revised appraisal methodology that were produced as result of this internal review. These included more detailed functional appraisal criteria and the setting out of documentation goals which specified that acquisition activity should be limited to Offices of Primary Interest for a particular function and to institutions with an accountability mandate under law or policy. Revisions and enhancements, as well as the use of a standardized Archival Appraisal Report which supports an electronic Records Disposition and Authority Control System information system, were also added.

With the creation in 2004 of the new Library and Archives Canada agency, the recommendations of the 2003 Auditor General’s Report on the Protection of Cultural Heritage in the Federal Government are a priority to be implemented. The Auditor

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General called for improvements to the records disposition authorities' regime that were related to problems that are similar to those which back in the 1990s had initiated appraisal reform and the implementation of macroappraisal. After twelve years, the Government-Wide Plan was deemed to have been of limited success, given that there are still many government agencies where records disposal is not covered by a new macroappraisal records disposition authority and where the existing authorities are now obsolete or inappropriate. While these shortcomings can be attributed to limited resources and the pressure to meet immediate needs for authorized records disposition which has made the archival research agenda a lower priority, or indeed to other priorities within Library and Archives Canada, the Auditor General’s finding that “departments and agencies do not respect the schedules for records retention”\textsuperscript{124} is more problematic.

Given that most programme models for the appraisal and disposition of government records encourage the use of a particular model in a variety of situations for the production of predictable results, these models almost by definition are conceived and constructed without links into a specific context. Such an approach discounts important factors and disregards the effects resulting from the impact of production, or in the case of archives, the repercussions of appraisal decisions. According to Franklin, “such externalities are considered irrelevant to the activity itself and are therefore the business of someone else.”\textsuperscript{125} Hurley describes the consequences of assuming such a stance in terms of practice:

\textsuperscript{125} Franklin, \textit{The Real World of Technology}, 21. Franklin uses the model of a production line to provide examples of “externalities,” such as pollution or the physical and mental health of the workers which in the production model are considered to be “other people’s problems,” and which if ignored, can have devastating consequences for all.
where distinct management regimes are established — one in which agencies manage records until they are finished with them and another in which archives takes over care, custody and control. It is no wonder that many agencies, under this model, care little about archives. Why should they? Under this model, archives are clearly somebody else’s business. The wonder is that so many agencies under this model did and do still do care. If one set about deliberately trying to find a model whose specific aim was to disincline agencies to care about archives, this would be it.126

In an address given to the Association of Canadian Archivists in 2004, the Auditor General of Canada, Sheila Fraser, noted that the Government Records and Disposition Program — that is, the main tool for identifying, managing, and acquiring the archival records of the Government of Canada -- was in a crisis situation. Moreover, at the time, the Auditor General was also of the opinion that this was far from being resolved:

The use of inaccurate or inappropriate authorities seriously undermines the ability of the National Archives to fulfill its mandate. It creates the potential for incorrect identification of records of historic value, the destruction of valuable records, and the use of too many resources, both time and space. It also hinders the access of Canadians to these records. 127

In response, Library and Archives Canada is presently planning a new strategic approach to the appraisal and acquisition of government records of archival value, although the core theory and methodologies of macroappraisal remain unchallenged. Departments and agencies will no longer follow a Multi-Year Disposition Plan. In accordance with the new Library and Archives of Canada Act128 that allows the Librarian and Archivist to require the transfer of government records that in the Archivist’s opinion

128 Library and Archives of Canada Act, 2004, c.11.
are at risk of damage or destruction, new internal procedures and guidelines are being developed for records disposition planning and the transfer of government records having archival value to Library and Archives Canada.\textsuperscript{129}

Australian John Roberts has compared the experience of implementing a macroappraisal-based programme for government in the Canadian context with that of South Africa and New Zealand. Writing in 2002, he concluded that the critical success factor for implementing macroappraisal methodology consists of adequate resourcing, agency support and competence, and political support.\textsuperscript{130} Despite the appeal of its underlying theoretical premise of societal attribution of value, macroappraisal is comparable to adopting the rule of democracy in places unfamiliar with the concept or practice. In Roberts' words, "While the model may indeed be applicable – even desirable, it may also be hard to apply."\textsuperscript{131}

Despite what is now known about the difficulties of its full implementation, the Canadian model of macroappraisal has come to be regarded within the international archival community as a model to be emulated. A recent search of the Internet reveals that a "macroappraisal" strategy has been adopted by other jurisdictions, notably, the National Archives of Australia\textsuperscript{132} and the Public Records Office (PRO) of the United

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Canada, Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, \textit{DPR 2003-2004 National Library of Canada and National Archives of Canada}.
\item Ibid.: 67.
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Kingdom. Given that these are relatively recent developments, there is still not much to be found in the published literature pertaining to an analysis of their particular experiences and the specifics of macroappraisal programme designed for implementation in these new programmes.

It is important to note that various macroappraisal strategies are contingent upon the framework within which they are born. For example, the National Archives of Australia macroappraisal methodology is distinctly different because it is based upon the functional analysis methodology for Designing and Implementing a Record Keeping System (DIRKS), which complies with the Australian Standard for Records Management, *AS ISO 15489*. Even though it may be possible to identify common or generic functions of government, the indicators of importance will not be the same for each model. What is considered to be a routine level of citizen-state interaction will depend on the specifics of time and place, as in the case of National Archives of South Africa, where adopting a macroappraisal strategy has been driven by dramatic social and political transformations rather than theoretical debates on the concept of value or programme imperatives to realize cost-saving and efficiencies and further improve the quality of the archival record.

NARA’s recent efforts to reform the U.S. government records programme appear to draw, at least in part, on functional appraisal and macroappraisal thinking to reorient its approach. Core programme areas and work processes and priorities for committing

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NARA resources are based on an assessment of function and activity rather than administrative structures and striking a balance between records that must be kept for evidential value and records of continuing value.¹³⁶

Cook maintains that even though macroappraisal was conceived within the context of the “macro” level of government as a strategy to be adopted by national archives intuitions and implemented as a government-wide programme for the appraisal and disposition of federal government records, it is well suited to other levels of government and institutions including the records of business organizations, academic institutions, hospitals, labour unions, religious institutions and other modern organizations.¹³⁷ While there have been efforts to apply macroappraisal concepts made by archivists working in non-federal government institutions, documentation of this experience has so far been limited to a few case studies related to the use of macroappraisal techniques for the appraisal of the records of a specific functions or agency, as opposed to formally adopting an institutional programme for macroappraisal. As such, the experiences of adopting a macroappraisal functional analysis approach for archival appraisal conducted outside of a national archives or non-government environment is still a largely uncharted area of practice, which the next chapter of this thesis will attempt to rectify.

One exception is a hybrid strategy that incorporates features of various approaches to appraisal, including documentation strategy, institutional functional analysis, and collection analysis, as well as priority setting and top-down thinking from macroappraisal. This amalgam was conceived by American archivists Mark A. Greene

and Todd J. Daniels-Howell and documented in a case study of the Minnesota Historical Society (MHS).\textsuperscript{138} The so-called, “Minnesota Method” was developed as a pragmatic solution for the MHS, one of the two largest collecting repositories of the records of twentieth-century American business.

Presented as part of a larger effort to “refine and redefine the appraisal and use of corporate records,”\textsuperscript{139} after surveying the current thinking on appraisal and various methodologies, Greene and Daniels-Howell have concluded that “all archival appraisal is local and subjective.”\textsuperscript{140} The Minnesota Method is a planned documentation strategy which relies on extensive research, analysis and survey of documentation, consultation with experts and coordination of efforts among institutions and individuals to determine documentation levels based upon identification and prioritizing of the sectors from which records will be sought and the definition of business functions and associated collection levels to produce a model and then testing of the model to document topics within a broader area of interest and finally the ranking of these documentation levels into tiers, such that priority levels are regularly reviewed and refined every few years.\textsuperscript{141}

The authors suggest that this model could be applied to church records and records of non-profit organizations and other archives that are mandated to select records according to the policy of the organization.\textsuperscript{142} Although the task is viewed to be broad in scope and bulk, the authors contend that a pragmatic, but rational and logical approach is still needed to tell the story of why appraisal choices have been made and how. Based on

\textsuperscript{139} Ibid., iv.
\textsuperscript{140} Ibid., 162.
\textsuperscript{141} Ibid., 172.
\textsuperscript{142} Ibid., 203.
the literature, the "Minnesota Method" appears not to have been widely adopted by other institutions as a strategy for appraisal. This seems to further underscore the significant consideration that must be given to the external framework of appraisal, including the specifics of institutional goals and priorities, practical concerns of collection levels, institutional priorities, and the broader aspects of technology transfer between various contexts of appraisal and the sponsors of archives.

The context of public archives and government records management programmes is distinct from those of private institutions and collecting archives in determining the effectiveness of the method and, ultimately, the nature of the appraisal process. A case study of the application of a modified macroappraisal approach within a business archives environment has been conducted by Martha McLeod, an archivist working for Great West Life Assurance and London Life Insurance, two large insurance companies. While McLeod advocates the use of macroappraisal technology for the appraisal of corporate records within the private sector, she omits the essential citizen-state component. McLeod also concludes that an appropriate organizational structure, resources and amenable corporate culture towards archives and record management are necessary requirements for the successful implementation on any significant scale of a macroappraisal based strategy.143

Since 2002, the City of Calgary Archives has employed a macroappraisal approach for appraising civic records. This is notable not only because it is an example of macroappraisal within a local government environment, but also because, with the exception of the National Archives of Canada, the City of Calgary site provides the most

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fulsome accounting of its appraisal rationale and methodology through the “Archives Policy and Procedures Manual” that is readily available on the City’s website. As stated in the Manual, the City of Calgary follows

the archival appraisal method of corporate functional analysis. . . based on the understanding that records are a representation of particular functions or activities of the organization that created them. . . the concept of value . . . is transferred from the value of the record/document itself to the value of the function that created the record/document. 144

The City of Calgary Archives programme of functional analysis is guided by its Corporate Records Classification and Retention Schedule which was developed in 1999. This in turn was based on an analysis of the functional areas within the City’s administration following a City-wide Organizational Review that had resulted in a major reorganization of the City’s administrative management structure. 145 However, while the Procedures Manual sets out the methodology of functional appraisal in some detail, even citing the National Archives of Canada’s appraisal guidelines in reference to appraisal criteria, the specifics of the City’s records classification and retention schedule itself are not available to the public on the website.

When summarizing the features that distinguish “macroappraisal” technology from its predecessors, Cook stresses that appraisal deals with the determination of the value or the significance of records and that it has no direct relationship with, and should thus not be confused with, activities or tasks which deal with the characteristics of

records as evidence.\textsuperscript{146} To ensure that the appropriate tools will be used to carry out the task, Cook maintains that:

Theory comes first, from which strategy, then methodology, then practice must be derived. Otherwise there will be no logical or defendable core to the work of appraisal.\textsuperscript{147}

Different tasks call for different tools. The practical tools of appraisal are properly the result of there being different conceptual understandings of the same task. Akin to Cook’s view of the relationship between theory and practice, Franklin argues that technology is not pre-ordained; and that its development is essentially linked to common values:

The notion that the technical requirements for an efficient operation dictate the technology is laid out is usually not correct. The way a task at hand is dealt with can change as the values and priorities of a society change.\textsuperscript{148}

Operating from this perspective, macroappraisal as a form of Franklin’s “redemptive technology” has proven to be an agent of change and reform, not only with respect to appraisal strategy and criteria for the selection of the archival record, but also as a means of redefining work processes and relationships, as well as providing the leverage by which to shift the focus of power to where authority and accountability for appraisal rests squarely on the shoulders of archivists and their archival expertise. Macroappraisal, as conceived by Cook, is distinguished from other approaches that utilize functional analysis by its principal focus to document governance and the citizen-state interaction, not documenting the functions of government or bureaucracy per se.

\textsuperscript{146} Cook, “Macro-appraisal and Functional Analysis,”: 7.

\textsuperscript{147} Ibid.: 8.

\textsuperscript{148} Franklin, \textit{The Real World of Technology}, 112.
The focus of macroappraisal is unapologetically societal: to identify records which provide images of how government operates and affects Canadian society, and how society (citizens) in turn interact with and shape government. The goal is “not to provide evidence of functions and activities as an end in itself.”¹⁴⁹ To a large extent, macroappraisal has fulfilled its originator’s primary objective, which in Cook’s own words, was to “put the ‘citizen’ back in the citizen-state relationship” and to document “governance rather than government” while enabling sustainable and defensible and accountable appraisal decisions and outcomes.¹⁵⁰ Canada’s National Archivist makes a strong case for thinking in broader terms of the process of governance, as opposed to the more limited sphere of governments or corporate operations:

Governance includes cognizance of the dialogue and interaction of citizens and groups with the state, the impact of the state on society and the functions or activities of societies itself, as much as it does the inner workings of government and business structures.¹⁵¹

Unlike the prescriptive production-oriented model of conventional appraisal, the holistic character of macroappraisal is more suited to the dynamic environment of an integrated postmodern universe of records. Moreover, the characteristics of the macroappraisal strategic approach include a high regard for knowledge, experience, discernment and an overview of a given situation. Unlike traditional pre-defined theories of value, this allows for consistency and integrity by way of “principled” as opposed to predictable appraisal decisions and decision-making methodology and the use of criteria that are transparent and easily understood. Macroappraisal also attempts to put the

¹⁵¹ Ian Wilson as summarized by Cook, “What’s Past is Prologue”: 34.
archivist back into the appraisal process, whereby appraisal decisions are based on archival rather than business or legal values and supported by archival principles of provenance and context. Like other redemptive technologies which address the unmet needs of those on the receiving end of the technology,152 macroappraisal offers a means for the planned disposition of records which is different in kind from the prescriptive planning associated with the utilitarian regime of records management and its cost-benefit orientation in Schellenberg’s theory of life-cycle value. While macroappraisal is a comprehensive “top down” approach which looks at the context of records proceeding from macro-functions on down to micro-transactions, it is ethically oriented from the “bottom up,” that is, from the citizen’s perspective. Macroappraisal gives priority to minimizing the possibility of loss of historical sources to society resulting from appraisal decisions based only on institutional imperatives.153

Franklin also notes that another dimension of redemptive technology arises out of the study of things that do work. Rather than completely rejecting traditional records-based appraisal techniques, micro-appraisal criteria at the record and the series level have been appropriately incorporated and effectively applied to strengthen macroappraisal methodology.

Macroappraisal at the level of a national government may not be completely portable. Some of its components which call for original research and an in-depth understanding of organizational behaviour, corporate-cultural recordkeeping practices, historical and contemporary structures and processes, and key individuals, as well as a knowledge of social and political issues of local interest, may exceed the capabilities of

smaller institutions. Yet macroappraisal succeeds as being a technology that has revitalized the archival agenda. The introduction of macroappraisal has given the task of appraisal a transfusion of meaning and purpose that has helped archivists in their attempts to further narrow the gap between theory and practice, the modern and the postmodern, the life cycle and the continuum, and the traditional and the leading edge. As opposed to being merely a prescribed technique or procedure for assigning value and assessing the demand for records, macroappraisal is arguably now regarded as a "mindset" and distinguishable as a holistic technology that embodies goals and values that are distinctly "archival."

In the face of increasing dependence upon information systems technology and the imperative for more open government and accountability in public recordkeeping, it is suggested that macroappraisal thinking will in large part be a factor in sustaining the archival profession and its efforts to preserve significant public records as archives, as an integral part of the collective memory of society. Macroappraisal allows archivists to bring greater consistency into defining the structure into which archival practice fits. It imbues appraisal, which is perhaps the most fundamental of all archival tasks, with greater meaning and purpose, serving to strengthen the community of practice and providing further defence against a spiral into random improvisation and inconsistency.

Similar to business culture and the management philosophy of "re-engineering," where the inherent business processes orientation changes the management perspective from a structural to a process view of operations, macroappraisal has the effect of altering the archival perspective such that

... one's individual activity fits together with the work of others to create a result for the customer, an individual or enterprise that values the result.
There is as much a community in process as in practice. For the individual and the enterprise, fulfillment requires a blend of these two axes.154

An important aspect of Cook’s work is that macroappraisal is not rigidly held or defended, but offered as a open-ended dynamic technology (as mindset) that can be used to push the boundaries of archival practice and to realize results not only in terms of the acquisition of archival records, but also as a means of supporting other elements which sustain the public archives enterprise as a pillar of responsive and responsible democratic government.

The following chapter is a case study of macroappraisal applied within the particular context of city government. It demonstrates how macroappraisal as redemptive technology can also act as a catalyst for change in both the organizational culture and in the formal framework for archives and recordkeeping and how this serves to strengthen the necessary connections between a strong system of municipal government, representative democracy, and City archives, which all contribute to sustaining a “vibrant, prosperous, and healthy city.”

CHAPTER 3

MACROAPPRaisal AS URBAN TECHNOLOGY

It would seem foolish to assume that in a world in which technology has changed all practices and relationships, the practice of government and the relationship between the governed and those who govern would remain unaffected...

Ursula Franklin, *The Real World of Technology*, 1990

Although the Library and National Archives of Canada has been called “a living laboratory” for testing the Canadian variant of appraisal as a social action and for the realization of a larger theoretical agenda which seeks to attribute archival value according to the values of society, as suggested in the previous chapter, little has been written about the experience of implementing macroappraisal in other kinds of institutions. This is most likely because in most instances many institutions lack the resources to do so and the existing administrative and legal structures to implement a macroappraisal and records disposition programme as a single effort. The Dutch PIVOT project, which involved a much smaller and less complex type of macroappraisal, demonstrates that even where there is dedicated commitment and significant resources, undertaking macroappraisal is a monumental task. As Cook points out, both the Canadian and Dutch experience

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demonstrate that “it takes a decade or more to move through an administration for the first time appraising all functions and programmes, and all related records in all media.”

The macroappraisal model that was fashioned by Cook for the National Archives of Canada came about as a remedy “for bad past practice” and in response to an “imperative to identify a new intellectual paradigm for appraisal,” as well as demands to better demonstrate public accountability. One such example of poor practice was the failure of several generations of archivists to document adequately their appraisal decisions, their assumptions behind them and their supporting research findings. This resulted in the loss of generations of archival knowledge of the functional context which, in macroappraisal, could have served as pre-fabricated or ready-made foundation for building an appraisal and disposition programme.

As the work of practitioners such as Catherine Bailey, Brian Beaven, Jean-Stéphen Piché, Jim Suderman, and Cook himself suggests, even if a legal warrant and a facilitative administrative structure are in place, along with experienced professional archival expertise, the most critical factor to the success of macroappraisal as an archival technology is the extent to which there is pre-knowledge of the context of records creation. For public archives that are entrusted with the responsibility of shaping the collective memory of civil society, the most successful application of macroappraisal, has been where, in addition to having sufficient resources in the way of archival expertise and an appropriate framework, there has been a pre-existing knowledge of the organizational

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culture, business processes, and of the records themselves which provided a comprehensive and unambiguous view of the context of appraisal.

While there has been some analysis of “alternate constructions of actual practice” in the public sector that acknowledges and explores differences in scope, emphasis, and execution of macroappraisal at the national level based on different department’s differing organizational cultures and record-keeping practices, or indeed other countries’ archival traditions, there is yet to be an analysis of the macroappraisal model applied to appraisal within the context of local government.

**An Urban Appraisal Context: The City of Winnipeg**

The City of Winnipeg experience bears out the assertion that the framework and the responsibilities of city government are very different from those of a province, state, or nation. Among cities in North America, Winnipeg also has the distinction of being the site of certain innovations in urban governance, which not unlike macroappraisal were formulated after a long-standing commitment to citizen engagement and providing opportunities for citizens to interact and participate in democratic government. A review of the City of Winnipeg experience should also shed further light on how macroappraisal might be viewed as an example of Ursula Franklin’s “technological stance,” one that embodies explicit value judgements which, in this case, rests on the belief that “society should animate the core values of archival appraisal.”

The following analysis outlines the platform of contextual knowledge that supports the practice of macroappraisal in the City of Winnipeg. Emphasis is given to the particular features which, in an urban situation, set macroappraisal apart from archival practice in other levels of government,

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specifically, the elasticity of jurisdictional boundaries, frequent modifications to organizational structure, and the more immediate nature of the citizen-state interaction that is unique to local government.

Like other Canadian cities, Winnipeg is a “creature of the province” with its size and structure, as well as its functions and ability to raise capital, determined by provincial legislation. Governed since inception by its own “stand alone” legislation, Winnipeg is a Charter City that has powers and responsibilities not given to other municipalities in the province, as well as greater autonomy to raise money, an independent property assessment system, and a separate planning administration.5

The Act to Incorporate the City of Winnipeg was passed by the Manitoba provincial legislature on November 8, 1873. With incorporation came the order of democratic civic government and the establishment of new structures and processes of governance, including ward boundaries, council elections, tax collection based on property assessments, licensing for various activities and privileges, and local services such as a city fire brigade and water works. Most importantly, at least from an archival perspective, incorporation also resulted in the establishment of a system for keeping the records of city government and civic administration.6

5 Other charter cities in Canada are Vancouver, Montreal, and Saint John’s. Given that provincial policies and programmes often do not fit the needs of a major urban area, the primary characteristic and purpose for having a Charter is to provide a customized legal framework which recognizes the uniqueness of a city’s responsibilities and needs and is more easily amended to reflect changing urban realities than a municipal act of general application. A Charter sets out the city’s spheres of power with respect to local matters and gives the city the ability to act independently within these spheres (e.g. public/private partnerships). Each Charter codifies the laws applicable to the particular city and contains powers not given to other municipalities. See City of Toronto, Corporate Services Department. “Powers of Canadian Cities – The legal framework,” June 2000, report (updated October 2001).

6 For an account of City of Winnipeg’s incorporation and early history, see “An Act of Imagination,” available on the “Pathways to Winnipeg History” website: http://www.winnipeg.ca/clerks/docs/pathways/Imagination01/Imagination01Pg00.htm (accessed 20 May 2005).
The most common pattern of urban growth is where areas outside of a central city incorporate themselves into different local governments. This was the growth pattern around what is now modern-day Winnipeg. Winnipeg as an urban area had three core municipalities which split or recombined several times in different patterns creating new "rural municipalities," towns, and villages – even parallel cities. By 1955, there were seven cities, two towns and fourteen rural municipalities. Despite the positive aspects of all this evident new growth and development, there were also numerous problems and inefficiencies associated with the planning and delivery of services by these numerous and varying local governments.

To address this situation, the Manitoba government undertook a major study that was completed in 1959. Following the resulting recommendation that services such as water supply, sewage disposal, property assessment, transit, regional streets and parks should be consolidated, in 1961, the Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg was created under The Metropolitan Corporation of Winnipeg Act which imposed a "two-tier" system of local government over the greater Winnipeg area.

Under the "Metro" system, the Metropolitan Council had sole authority over all planning, zoning and issuing of building permits, as well as the responsibility for the

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7 Robert L. Bish, *Local Government Amalgamations: Discredited Nineteenth-Century Ideals Alive in the Twenty-First*, C.D. Howe Institute Commentary, no. 150, March 2001, (C.D Howe Institute: 2001), 5-7. The organization and operation of local government is usually associated with the growth of a central city which is dominated by a downtown business core and a nearby manufacturing or warehousing area adjacent to the principle means of transportation (usually rail or waterway) which are both surrounded by residential sectors or neighbourhoods. According to Bish, spatial patterns of development and the evolution of local government in growing urban areas are found to be similar across North America.

8 As an early example of this constant municipal flux, St. Boniface was incorporated as a municipality in 1880, but in 1903 the RM of St. Vital was formed out of part of it. In 1912, the RM of Fort Garry was formed out of part of St. Vital. Meanwhile, in 1883, part of St. Boniface became a town and later in 1908 it became a city. The remainder was left as the RM of St. Boniface and was eventually absorbed into the City of St. Boniface. For an overview of the development of Manitoba's Capital Region, see "Appendix C: Capital Region Planning Framework: A Brief Historical Perspective," in Manitoba, *Planning Manitoba's Capital Region: Next Steps*, 2001.
preparation of a master long-range plan. Individual municipalities within Metropolitan Winnipeg maintained authority for taxation, libraries, fire services, police and a number of other matters deemed "local" under the Act, while the Metropolitan Corporation looked after and coordinated a second tier of services deemed as "regional" in nature, such as water supply and sewage disposal, transit, property assessment, arterial streets and bridges, municipal golf courses, and regional parks.

Public discontent and political pressures caused the government to revisit the two-tier system of local government. In 1962, the government established the Greater Winnipeg Review Commission to deal with problems related to the rapid growth of suburban areas around Winnipeg’s core. While the Review Commission’s recommendations resulted in amendments to the original Act, these proved to be merely temporary “band-aid” solutions.

In 1970, the Manitoba government issued a White Paper\(^9\) that made the case for the creation of a new form of municipal government. The authors of the White Paper found that confused lines of authority and overlapping roles and responsibilities of the two-tier system was a major source of citizens’ frustrations. They concluded that the two-tier system of government, which was designed to better coordinate resources and increase efficiencies, was now the primary obstacle to addressing urban problems and sustaining growth and development. Under the two-tier system,

The lines of authority in many instances were blurred or else duplicated. Individual citizens and development investors alike become confused and often exasperated in any attempt to unravel the complex lines of authority. And, overlaid on the inherent confusions of a two-tier system…the simple

fact that the problems and difficulties of the urban community transcend jurisdictions and boundary lines. . . .

The 1960s and early 1970s were also characterized by large-scale economic and social development, including the expansion of various social programmes, citizens’ groups, and the growth of urban studies. Public demand for greater democratization and citizens’ raised expectations for higher living standards and improved delivery of public goods and services were the impetus for the spread of a new wave of urban reform and neighbourhood participation.

In order for local government to be more responsive and efficient, citizens must be able to make their wishes known. It should be noted that local government is the only level of government where the governing body, City Council, may be addressed directly by concerned citizens while in session. After hearing from citizens, the Committee concluded that “almost all of the urban area’s difficulties stem in whole or in part, from three main roots – fragmented authority, segmented financial capacity and lack of citizen involvement.”

As a means of addressing all of these difficulties, the Committee recommended that local services should be brought under a single administration and that the political processes of government made closer to the people. The Committee’s report emphasized that providing for transparency and ease of communication with citizens should be an imperative of local government, stating that it was the “absolute conviction” of the government that no attempt at urban reform would succeed without a strong sense of identification and intensifying the communication between the citizen and his local

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11 Manitoba, Proposals for Urban Reorganization in the Greater Winnipeg Area, 9.
government. This recognition of the public’s need or demand for information about City “government structures and processes” laid the groundwork for the implementation of an innovative model of governance that was designed to make local government more open and accessible, a fundamental aim of City government.

Following these recommendations, the present City of Winnipeg came into being with the passage of The City of Winnipeg Act. When the new City officially came into existence on January 1, 1972, it amalgamated thirteen separate civic governments into one municipal corporation. The unified City of Winnipeg, commonly referred to as “Unicity,” replaced the Metropolitan Corporation of Winnipeg and its two-tier system of local-regional government with a comprehensive single-tier system of urban government, consisting of fifty Councillors, one elected from each of the fifty wards and a Mayor elected at large across the entire city.

This new model also included innovations that were intended to increase opportunities for citizen participation through public meetings, hearings, elections, and direct contact with officials. The legislation provided for the creation of thirteen Community Committees comprised of Councillors who represent the wards within a particular community that are responsible for the carrying out certain duties related to local services and for decisions related to land use and development, including rezoning.

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12 Ibid., 9.
13 See “About FIPPA: The City of Winnipeg and The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act,” which states that: “The City of Winnipeg is committed to promoting citizen engagement in political decision-making processes by providing access to information in a responsive, comprehensive and transparent manner and to the protection of privacy and the proper collection and use of personal information in accordance with the requirements of FIPPA.” Available on the City of Winnipeg website: http://www.winnipeg.ca/clerks/docs/fippa/fippa.htm (accessed 20 May 2004).
14 On July 27, 1971, Royal assent was given to Bill 35, being Chapter 105 of the Statutes of Manitoba, known as the City of Winnipeg Act, that incorporated the City of Winnipeg, the City of St. Boniface, the City of St. Vital, the City of Transcona, the City of St. James-Assiniboia, the City of East Kildonan, the City of West Kildonan, the R.M. of North Kildonan, the R.M. of Old Kildonan, the R.M. of Fort Garry, the R.M. of Charleswood, the Town of Tuxedo, and the Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg into a unified City of Winnipeg.
variances and conditional uses and other issues of immediate interest to citizens living within a particular community.\textsuperscript{15} To allow for direct citizen participation, the Act also provided for the creation of Resident Advisory Groups that were composed of citizens elected at Community Committee meetings. Both of these features were intended to serve as tools of community representation and “to provide ready access by the people to the local government system.”\textsuperscript{16}

This restructuring was one of the most dramatic examples of large-scale urban amalgamation before the creation of the present City of Toronto “mega-city” in 1998. To this day, the amalgamation into the new Winnipeg “Unicity” is regarded as an innovative and progressive model that has since been studied by numerous cities across North America. The numerous amalgamations that have occurred in major metropolitan areas in Canada over the past decade are evidence that such forms of reorganization are still regarded as a means whereby local government can rationalize service delivery, reduce taxes and gain administrative efficiencies in local government.

The \textit{City of Winnipeg Act} also provided for periodic review of the legislation by a provincially appointed committee. Subsequent reviews of Community area boundaries and ward divisions resulted in further amendments to the Act, which eliminated the Resident Advisory Groups and reduced the number of communities and wards to the current number: five communities comprised of a total of fifteen wards. Each has a Community Committee of Council that is comprised of the Councillors who represent the wards within the particular Community.

\textsuperscript{15} A comprehensive one-tier system of government includes at least 70\% of the population of the entire city region. A single tier municipality is responsible for all local government functions within its territory that are not assigned to local special purpose bodies, thus all municipalities are by definition, single tier.

For almost a quarter of a century, the City’s administrative and departmental structure was based on the model for governance put in place in 1972 with the amalgamation of “Unicity.” Consisting of a four-person Board of Commissioners, this structure was initially established to administer twenty-four civic departments. After a reallocation of Board responsibilities by Council in 1986, a fifth Commissioner was added. In 1994, the City embarked on a cost-savings initiative that resulted in a radical reshaping of this administrative organization. On April 27, 1994, Council approved “A New Direction for Civic Administration,” which resulted in the elimination of the Commissioner of Finance and Administration with the Chief Commissioner assuming responsibility for finance matters and restructuring of the organization which reduced the total number of city departments by almost one-third to seventeen departments. A Chief Financial Officer was added to the Board in 1996.

Aside from the tremendous effort that was put forth by both the city government and its citizens to save Winnipeg from the “Flood of the Century,” 1997 was also a milestone year for further civic government reform. In an effort to achieve even more affordable municipal government and reflecting an emerging trend that saw business models being adapted to public administration, in March of that year, Council adopted,

17 The Board consisted of the Chief Commissioner, Commissioner of Environment, Commissioner of Works and Operations and Commissioner of Finance.
18 The Board then consisted of the Chief Commissioner and the Commissioners of Planning and Community Services, Work and Operations, Finance and Administration, and Protection, Parks and Culture.
19 See David Osborne and Ted Gaebler, Reinventing Government: How the Entrepreneurial Spirit is Transforming the Public Sector, (Penguin, New York, 1992). David Bearman and Margaret Hedstrom have noted that, “Osborne and Gabler propose that governments rethink their service delivery options, define areas of strength, shift performance measures from outputs to outcomes, separate direction and oversight from service delivery, ... [and] encourage entrepreneurship and action by others, and they urge experiments with a host of new methods in order to create governments that are more effective, efficient, responsive and equitable,” cited by Sue McKemmish, “Understanding Electronic Recordkeeping Systems, Understanding Ourselves,” review of “Understanding Electronic Information Systems” presented by David Bearman of Archives and Museum Informatics at Monash University, 21-22 June 1993.
“Reshaping our Civic Government – Executive Policy Committee’s Strategic Direction for City Government.” This new policy identified alternate service delivery (ASD) options as a key tool in this effort, including the creation of Special Operating Agencies, contracting out, creating public/private partnerships and even getting out of the delivery of some civic services.20

Council had also commissioned an independent consultant to conduct an organizational review and assessment of the City’s administration. The “Cuff Report”21 provided recommendations for streamlining bureaucracy and integrating services, as well as an implementation plan for adopting a new model of administrative governance. Cuff’s findings highlighted a lack of vision, an absence of accountability and performance measures, and other problems that are often associated with an established bureaucracy where there is a “silhouette mentality” focusing excessively inwards.22 Cuff’s overall recommendation was that both Council and senior management needed to focus more on service, efficiency, and effectiveness, and less on self-preservation.23

On the basis of Cuff’s recommendations, amendments to the City of Winnipeg Act were made which restructured the City’s executive and functional organization. On October 29, 1997, Council passed the City Organization By-Law No. 7100/97, which established a new model of governance replacing the Board of Commissioners with a Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), who, as the administrative head of the entire civic

22 Ibid., 26.
23 Ibid., 61-62.
administrative organization, reports to the Executive Policy Committee.\textsuperscript{24} As Manitoba entered the twenty-first century, the provincial government recognized the mature relationship between the province and the city and continued with efforts to make city government simpler and more efficient through new legislation. Recognizing that certain provincial policies and programmes designed for province-wide application do not fit the needs or operations of a major urban area, the Province introduced new legislation to identify the City's unique responsibilities and needs by providing the City with greater flexibility and broader powers.

Commonly referred to as the "City of Winnipeg Charter," the \textit{City of Winnipeg Charter Act} was passed in 2002. This Act inaugurated a new relationship between the Province and the City which recognizes that "the City is responsible, accountable government" and which gives the City new tools to do its job more effectively.\textsuperscript{25} Drafted to be a more streamline, "citizen-friendly document," the Charter provides the City of Winnipeg with greater powers and flexibility, new tools to address community priorities and enhanced public accountability. Under the Charter, the City has greater municipal autonomy. Numerous requirements for Provincial approvals have been eliminated and new authorities have been given to the City to address community issues related to neighbourhood revitalization and housing, downtown development, economic growth and "better government," in the way of "less red tape, provision of services and greater equity.\textsuperscript{26}

\textsuperscript{24} As provided for under Section 30(1) of \textit{The City of Winnipeg Act}, the Executive Policy Committee is comprised of the mayor; the chairpersons of the standing committees established by Council and any other members of Council appointed by the mayor.
Also included in the Charter are consequential amendments to *The Ombudsman Act* whereby the Provincial Ombudsman’s jurisdiction is extended to include the City of Winnipeg. Effective January 1, 2003, the Provincial Ombudsman receives and investigates complaints against the City, thereby providing an independent means for citizens to resolve their concerns. This replaced the City Ombudsman’s Office, which had been established in 1994.

Coming into force on January 1, 2003, the present *City of Winnipeg Charter* validates the notion that aside from being one of Canada’s largest cities, the nature and the pattern of Winnipeg’s growth and development remains unique and its status continues to warrant special attention.

Once Canada’s third largest city, Winnipeg is now the seventh largest, its population not having changed significantly in more than a decade. Forty-two percent of the City’s revenue comes from property taxes, and as such, the tax base has not changed much despite an annual infrastructure deficit of over $180 million. Yet Winnipeg is still an incubator for innovative ideas concerning city government. In 2003, Mayor Glenn Murray proposed a radical shift in the tax burden. Rather than increasing taxes on existing properties and improvements, he proposed that these taxes could be replaced by new fees and levies tied to the actual cost of providing city services. True to Winnipeg’s tradition of consultative government, the Mayor’s so-called, “New Deal” was refined

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27 *The Ombudsman Act, CCSM, c. O45.*
after extensive of public consultation. Although Murray is no longer the Mayor of Winnipeg, and the “New Deal” plan developed during his term in office was never fully realized, it proved to be very influential. In January 2004, Murray led the way for eight other cities to call on federal and provincial governments to provide more revenue and legislative tools to assist cities in meeting the social, economic, and environmental challenges of modern big city government. Upon becoming the new Prime Minister in 2004, Paul Martin declared a “cities agenda” to be a top priority of the federal government.

Writing about urban growth and urban governance in Canada, noted Canadian geographer and planner, Larry S. Bourne makes a strong case for the notion that “urbanization and its attended ingredients – of modernization, industrialization and social change – represent the major transformation of the past century.” He argues that “the conundrum in urban governance is that social and territorial entities change more rapidly than institutions of governance.” As in the case of Winnipeg’s history of dramatic early growth, various amalgamations, and more recent marginal growth in population, Bourne observes that political norms, systems, and boundaries, once established, have made “inelastic” and outmoded systems of governing urban areas even more inadequate and some cases dysfunctional, such that, if they are ever changed, it is only with great

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30 Launched in September 2003, Winnipeg’s proposed New Deal was redrafted in 2004 to reflect community consultations in which more than 8,500 Winnipeeggers got involved, through letters, email, phone calls, seven public Town Hall meetings, two Internet Town Hall meetings, 68 community workshops, as well as meetings and delegations with the Mayor and City Council. The “New Deal” website: www.winnipeg.ca/newdeal, received more than 27,000 unique visitors.


difficulty. According to Bourne, in Canada, governments are “still trying to adapt structure, functions, boundaries and legal frameworks for local governments inherited from the nineteenth century to contemporary urban conditions, geographies and lifestyles.”

This view appears also to hold true for local government systems of recordkeeping and archival practices which, in the case of the City of Winnipeg, date back more than a century to the City’s incorporation. Despite Winnipeg’s rapid growth, many amalgamations, general responsiveness to citizen’s demands for change and experiments with structural innovations that do not conform to Bourne’s model and patterns of urban governance, the City’s recordkeeping regime has lagged behind. Remaining rooted in its nineteenth-century origins, it thus confirms Bourne’s assertion of urban dysfunctionality in the wake of change.

Recordkeeping and Archives in Winnipeg: An Evolving Urban Function

From the first, the responsibility for keeping the City’s records was assigned to the City Clerk. Much credit should thus be given to Winnipeg’s first City Clerk, A. M. Brown, who was appointed to administer the new city in 1874. As the “Keeper of the Record,” his professionalism and meticulous attention to detail is still evident in city records that bear numbered codes which link Committee papers and correspondence to Council minutes in accordance with a registry system that spans decades of local government administration, a system that, despite some modifications over time, has been

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34 Ibid.

35 On February 9, 1874, Council instructed Brown to “obtain a cupboard to contain the Corporation papers” and thus the City of Winnipeg Archives was born. The following year, Council authorized the City Clerk to “get two or more tin or steel iron boxes to hold papers and documents for the year 1874.” See City of Winnipeg Archives, City of Winnipeg Council Minutes, February 9, 1874 and January 18, 1875.
carried forward to the present day. Despite this admirable beginning of controlling and caring for the records of Council and its Committees, departmental records across the City were not brought under a centralized corporate records management programme and despite the rich accumulation of old and unused records, no public archives was established until more than a century after the City’s founding.

With the amalgamations of the City in the Metro and Unicity models of the 1960s and 1970s, the City Administration recognized the significance of an “ongoing records management and an archival function.” Initially, after amalgamation, the City Clerk’s office and other City staff took steps to provide for the storage and preservation of records from the former municipalities that, in comparison to other Canadian cities, contained a particularly rich collection of historical city records dating back more than a century. However, despite these good intentions, there were early indications that the “storage and expansion” of records and “archival materials” would prove to be problematic, as would the issue of not only how, but who would determine their value and make the final decision regarding their disposition.

As required under *The City of Winnipeg Act*, the City’s first Records Management By-law for the “permanent retention and safekeeping” of City documents and records was passed in 1975. It prohibited the destruction or removal of records

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37 Recognizing that finding sufficient storage space for City records was destined to be a long standing problem, the City architect recommended that “an archivist be assigned to prowl the dead storage files, document the materials and authorize the destruction or retain and catalogue valuable files. Again the semantics of valueless or invaluable is involved...at least a patrol and control over the inordinate build-up of useless material could be maintained...” See City of Winnipeg Archives, Documents Committee File 117.00 “Inter-office memo from A.W. Trimble” dated 1975.

38 *The City of Winnipeg Act*, S.M. 1971, c. 105, s. 658.

39 *City of Winnipeg By-law 937/75* “A By-law of the City of Winnipeg relating to the retention, safekeeping, and destruction of documents.”
without proper authority and provided for the deposit of valuable City historical records to the Archives and Public Records Branch of the Legislative Library of the Province of Manitoba. Prior to amalgamation, the former City of Winnipeg and The Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg established their own retention periods for documents relating to different functions and activities, while the various suburban municipalities had to follow the requirements of The Municipal Act. The sections of The Municipal Act that set out the retention periods for documents were written into The City of Winnipeg Act, and these schedules were incorporated into Records Management By-law 937/75. This By-law also provided for the establishment of a “Documents Committee,” consisting of the City Auditor, City Treasurer, City Clerk, Director of Civic Buildings, the Director of Purchasing and the City Solicitor, whose role was to advise the Mayor and the City Treasurer on matters concerning the By-law, including financial, audit and legal records retention requirements, microfilming services, and storage space requirements.

When measured up to Chris Hurley’s typology of archives legislation, the provisions of the legislation as expressed through the By-law are of the “first generation.” Unlike archives legislation pertaining to federal or provincial institutions, neither The City of Winnipeg Act nor City’s Records Management By-law provided for the establishment of an archival authority specifically charged with the responsibility of designating archival value and empowered to authorize records destruction based on archival appraisal decisions. Although the By-law authorized the deposit of certain “permanent” City records “for safekeeping with the Archives and Public Records Branch

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of the Legislative Library,” there is no mention of establishing a City archives as a place of long term-storage and preservation for records designated as valuable by the Documents Committee.41

Letting records creators (via the Documents Committee) be the arbitrators of value eventually resulted in a major crisis in civic accommodations. By 1977, the “build-up” of records that were stored within various City departments, in the basement City Hall42 and other buildings owned by the City, as well as other records management problems related to the amalgamation of municipalities and the formation of a unified City, had come to a head. Council authorized that a large portion of the Carnegie Library building located at 380 William Avenue be utilized as an “archive, records storage, and museum space.”43 The City Clerk’s department was viewed as having sufficient expertise to be responsible for maintaining, documenting, storing and displaying historical artifacts and records,44 and so the “archives and records retrieval” operation was thus established under the City Clerk’s department. The provisions of the By-law reflect make no real administrative distinction between libraries, archives, and museums, a common perception at this time.45

41 City of Winnipeg By-law 937/75, section 4.
42 Winnipeg’s first City Hall was erected in 1875. Since that time, Winnipeg has had three City Hall buildings. The current City Hall was opened on Oct. 5, 1964. A more detailed description is available at: http://www.winnipeg.ca/services/citylife/historyofwinnipeg/cityhall.stm (accessed 20 June 2005).
43 A description of the present City Archives at 380 William Avenue and its transformation from Winnipeg’s first public library to the City Archives is available on the City of Winnipeg website: http://www.winnipeg.ca/clerks/docs/archives/arch_his.stm (accessed 30 May 2005).
44 City of Winnipeg Archives and Records Control Branch, City of Winnipeg File GK-8 “Establishment of Records Centre and Archives Operation as a Branch of the City Clerk’s Department,” dated Nov. 15, 1979.
45 The Legislative Library Act, R.S.M. 1987, c L.120 s. 9(1). The Provincial Archives of Manitoba was established as a branch of the Legislative Library, as was the British Columbia Archives. In Nova Scotia, The Public Archives Act s. 2(b) defined “public archives” to include “all documents, records, structures, erections, monuments, objects, materials, articles or things of historic, artistic, scientific or traditional interests,” with a further section providing for the management of historic structures or monuments. Even the Public Archives of Canada maintained a large museum until the late 1960s.
That same year, Council approved a one-year pilot project under the direction of a Steering Committee that consisted of the City Clerk, the Chairman of the Documents Committee, and a representative from the Civic Properties Division of the Department of Works and Operations, as well as a representative from the City Libraries. The Steering Committee’s report to Council on the new centralized Archives and Records Centre operation reflected how the Jenkinsonian tradition endured, where records as evidence were entrusted to the guardianship of the “Keeper of the Record.” Moreover, the Committee found that in reviewing existing models for archives and records programmes, other than federal and provincial government institutions, there were no comparable models of city archives upon which it could draw in developing its recommendations:

Pure Archives departments (such as Manitoba’s Provincial Archives) are staffed by university graduates with post-graduate training in identification, evaluation, and preservation of historical documents. . . pure Records Storage departments (such as the Federal Regional Public Archives) are staffed by senior clerical staff. . . While it is the City’s intent to preserve and display archival material. . . the present priority is the establishment of a Records Storage Centre, for which sufficient expertise appears to be available in the present staff of the City Clerk’s department . . . The answer to questions regarding the numbers of staff required and the necessary level of expertise can best be learned through experience.46

Winnipeg was not unique in facing this dilemma. In Canada, with few exceptions,47 archival expertise has been foreign to local government. For the most part, it has only been within the last thirty years that Canadian municipalities have assumed

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47 Stemming from provisions in provincial legislation, municipal archives in Quebec are the exception. The City of Montréal established la division des Archives in 1913. The Quebec City Archives was opened in 1924. The City of Vancouver may be an exception in English Canada where, as the result of a crusading citizen volunteer, it officially established a city archives in 1932.
full responsibility for the municipal public archives function. Prior to this, where there were established municipal public archives, these were usually the product of a cooperative trustee arrangement between the municipal government and other institutions. When compared to federal, provincial and state government archives programmes, as well as private archival repositories, the “faltering of municipal archives” reflected general uncertainty about their role and place in North America.

In 1984, the City of Winnipeg Act Review Committee prepared a brief summarizing those aspects of the City’s legislation that were identified as either inappropriate or failing to meet the City’s need for clear definition of roles and responsibilities. In terms of the management of its records, the brief stated:

The existing City of Winnipeg Act provides no definition of city records. No part of the City administration (excepting the City Clerk by inference only) is charged with overall responsibility for the management of record and information. Access to record and information has hitherto been dealt with only by policy or by-law and remains quite outside the records management context. Retention periods for records are provided unsystematically in three class groupings (permanent, 12 years, and 6 years) and disposition of records is in effect left permissively to the judgment of the Provincial Archivist.

In 1990, the Provincial government amended The City of Winnipeg Act. Based on the recommendations of the City of Winnipeg Act Review Committee, the Bill include

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48 Marcel Caya, (ed.), Canadian Archives in 1992, (Ottawa: Canadian Council of Archives, 1992), 46. Based on a survey conducted by the Canadian Council of Archives, in 1980, there were only fourteen municipal archives in Canada. Manitoba was one of seven provinces that did not report any municipal archives even though it was reported that there were seven other archives in existence in the province.

49 Examples of such cooperative arrangements have been The City of Kingston and Queen’s University, the City of Calgary and the Glenbow-Alberta Institute, and until recently, the City of Saskatoon and the City of Regina and the Saskatchewan Archives Board. Like some other provincial government archives, the Manitoba Archives functions as a repository for municipal government records. See also, Kent Haworth, “Local Archives; Responsibilities and Challenges for Archivists,” Archivaria 3, (Winter 1976/77): 28-39.


three related amendments to the Act which provided for the adoption of an access to information by-law, the appointment of a City Ombudsman, and the implementation of a records management programme. It is notable that an entire section of the Review Committee’s 1986 report was dedicated to addressing the need “to improve the flow of information from the City to its residents,” related to resident involvement between elections which the Committee believed to be “an important aspect of municipal government.” One of Committee’s recommendations called for the establishment of a City Records Committee to be responsible for and report on the management and condition of records keeping and information handling, and to determine suitable retention and disposal authority and procedures for all City records.52

Acting upon these recommendations, in 1989, the provincial government included three related amendments to the City of Winnipeg Act. Specifically the amendments included provisions for each of the following programmes: Records Management, Access to Information, and a City Ombudsman. At the City’s request, amendments pertaining to Records Management and Access to Information were not proclaimed at this time. Although the Archives and Records Control Branch continued to operate the Records Storage centre at 380 William Avenue, the Documents Committee had not been in operation for several years and the decisions that had been made by the Committee were never adequately acknowledged or incorporated as amendments to the By-law, and thus remained de facto unimplemented.

The City’s first Ombudsman, also the first such municipal ombudsman in Canada, was Virginia Menzies, appointed by Council on May 9, 1994. With a mandate

to investigate and respond to citizens’ complaints against decisions and actions of City departments, the Office of the Ombudsman was opened for business in September 1994. Although the Ombudsman had not direct authority over City Council or the City Administration, under the provisions of the legislation, the Ombudsman possessed the power to investigate, recommend and publicize, as well as the power to criticize or commend. In addition to resolving complaints, the Ombudsman’s Office also acted as the final course of appeal under Winnipeg’s *Access to Information By-law 6520/94.*

The Ombudsman’s Office did not operate without controversy. On July 20, 1995, less than one year into the first term of office, the Executive Policy Committee voted to create a task force to review the Ombudsman’s Office.53 Earlier in the year, it was reported in the *Winnipeg Free Press* that the Ombudsman had found that files at city hall were in a mess, thus making the Ombudsman job of investigating citizen complaints a lot more difficult.54 Although Council could not fire or limit the Ombudsman’s power, they could ask the province to clarify her authority through an amendment to *The City of Winnipeg Act.* The City’s Chief Commissioner had informed city councillors that he was not happy about Menzies’ comments concerning the disorganized state of files in City departments. Subsequently, when asked to attend a closed-door meeting of Council, Menzies declined to attend, believing that the meeting was being held to discuss her comments to the *Free Press* concerning the sorry state of the City’s recordkeeping. According to Menzies, the corporate culture of the City’s administration was unaccustomed to city officials speaking out publicly about administrative shortcomings.55

Prior to coming under provincial legislation in 1998, access and privacy was administered in the City of Winnipeg according to the provisions of the *Access to Information By-law No. 6420/94*, which set out that every person had a right to access records held by the City, unless these had been declared as exempt under the By-law. Although less detailed, theses exceptions were similar to the provisions of *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA). The By-law also provided for an appeal process to the Chief Commissioner of the City and further appeal to the City of Winnipeg Ombudsman. This function was discontinued as of September 1, 1998, when the provincial FIPPA legislation was extended to include the City of Winnipeg. From that day forward, citizen complaints relating to the administration of FIPPA are directed to the Provincial Ombudsman.

These developments in access and privacy legislation had a direct impact on the City’s archival and records management functions. Subsequent to Council passing the *Access to Information By-law* at its meeting of September 27, 1995, Council directed the City Clerk to prepare a work plan for establishing a comprehensive Records Management and Archives programme. In 1995, the city’s Director of Personnel, Lea Frame conducted a review of the city’s archives and records management function. The present Archives and Records Control Branch of the City Clerk’s Department was created pursuant to Frame’s recommendation that the City establish a corporate Records Management and Archives programme that was to be led by the City Clerk’s Department in cooperation with departmental records programmes. Frame recommended that the City Records Committee be reactivated to review *Records Management By-law 937/75*.

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56 City of Winnipeg, “Records Management and Archives in the City of Winnipeg,” (Winnipeg: 1995), internal report.
and to develop records management policies and procedures. Noting that “access and retrieval of records, such as would be required under an Access to Information By-law would be difficult, time consuming and labour intensive,” she also recommended that each City department be required to assign a staff person to be accountable for implementing records management functions within the department and that plans be developed and implemented to refit the William Avenue facility as the City’s Public Archives to enable public access to records for research, restoration and conservation of records and artefacts, and the implementation of public educational programmes promoting the history of Winnipeg.

By this time, “Unicity” had been in existence for more than two decades. Despite the City Clerk’s long tradition of recordkeeping, the City’s archives and records management function had not moved much beyond how it was perceived in 1876, when Council passed the motion for the City Clerk to purchase more containers for records storage. This was confirmed by Frame who reported that while the William Avenue facility housed some “valuable historical records” to which limited access was sometimes given for academic research, City departments were largely providing their own access and retrieval services of even very old records. Despite good intentions and some commendable individual efforts, the City Archives, at this point, was essentially a warehouse storage facility or “self-service” records centre.

Yet change was in the works. In December 1994, Marc Lemoine was appointed as the City’s first Records Manager and Archivist and following Frame’s recommendations, by 1998, the Archives staff complement was brought up to seven.

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57 City of Winnipeg, “Records Management and Archives in the City of Winnipeg.”
58 Ibid.
59 Lemoine was later appointed as the Deputy City Clerk in 2001.
More change was to occur, once again in response to issues related to the administration of citizen’s information rights and the evolution of access and privacy legislation in Manitoba.

Manitoba has the distinction of being among one of the first provinces in Canada to pass a Freedom of Information Act.\(^6^0\) However, although the Act was passed in 1985, it was not proclaimed until 1988, due to the need to ensure that government departments would be able to establish an adequate level of control over their own records to meet the requirements of the Act. These include publishing an “Access Guide” to government records to enable citizens to understand the organization of government and to locate relevant government records that meet their interests.\(^6^1\)

Similar to this provincial model, a provision of the City’s Access to Information By-law called for the creation of an Access Guide to City Records to assist individuals making requests. The 1998 Access Guide to City Records was compiled by the Archives and Records Branch.\(^6^2\) It was based upon an intensive study and compilation of the records inventory listings of City departments. In addition to providing detailed listing of record types created by each department, the Guide also mapped the associated Records Management By-Law retention periods to the record “types” that were identified in the guide. Although intended to assist the public in locating City records, the Guide was used by City staff itself primarily as a reference for applying the By-law records retention schedules. This had the unfortunate result of further diluting and confusing the authority for appraisal and disposal of government records with the provisions of access and

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\(^6^0\) The Freedom of Information Act, S.M.1985-86, c.6. In Manitoba, personal information privacy as a legal right did not come about until the passage of The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) and The Personal Health Information Act (PHIA) that were passed in June 1997 and proclaimed on December 11, 1997 and May 4, 1998 respectively.

\(^6^1\) The Freedom of Information Act and Protection of Privacy Act, S.M. 1997, c.50-520, s. 75.

privacy legislation. In Manitoba, although these provisions are certainly related, access and privacy legislation is distinct from the archives and recordkeeping legislation which establishes the authority to legally dispose of government records.

On March 1, 1996, sections of the *City of Winnipeg Act* were proclaimed which included those Records Management requirements that directed the City to establish and administer a programme that would provide for the “management, retention, safekeeping, disposition and destruction of records,” as well as the appointment of a City Archivist and the establishment of a City Records Committee. Subsequently, a new *Records Management By-law no. 6875/96* was passed which established the Records Committee and replaced the previous *By-law no. 937/75* as the legal authority for the disposal of City records and for legal admissibility of microfilmed images of city documents as evidence in courts. The Records Committee was appointed by Council and composed of the City Archivist, who is the chairperson of the Committee, the City Clerk, the City Treasurer, the City Auditor and the City Solicitor or their designates and two citizen members. The Committee’s mandate was to report on the management and condition of recordkeeping and information handling, to determine suitable retention and disposal authority and procedures for all City records and to submit an annual report to Council.

Despite the clarification of the role of the City Archivist, the legislation did not advance archival authority beyond Hurley’s “first generation” of archival legislation. It designated responsibility and prescribed the duties of the City Archivist, which included “administering a system of records management,” and organizing and administering the

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63 *The City of Winnipeg Act*, S.M. 1989-90, c. 10, s. 80(1) to s. 80(9).
65 *The City of Winnipeg Act*, S.M. 1989-90, c. 10, s. 80(6).
archives of the city to preserve records that were “designated by the Records Committee to be of enduring significance,” and the ubiquitous task of listing records, or as it is set out in the legislation, “to prepare, publish, and maintain a guide and index to records.” The Archivist was now responsible for the discharge of these duties, but lacked the authority to make unilateral appraisal and disposition decisions, which were still the purview of the Records Committee. The By-law also continued to provide for the possibility of the deposit of City records with the provincial government or federal government archives.  

In 1998, the Records Committee commissioned a strategic analysis of the City’s Archives and Records Management functions. This study was done by Terry Cook who, after leaving his position as the director responsible for the appraisal and disposal of government records at the National Archives of Canada, had become Visiting Professor in the Master’s Programme in Archival Studies in the Department of History at the University of Manitoba and an archival consultant.

The findings of the 1999 “Cook Report” were not surprising. While recognizing the efforts and improvements that had been made since Frame’s report, Cook found the City’s records management systems and its archival heritage to be at risk if the status quo were to continue. Although Cook asserted that “building an effective and accountable records management infrastructure” was the most pressing priority, he was careful to emphasize that it was important to view the archival programme as an integrated whole,

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66 The City of Winnipeg Act, S.M. 1989-90, c. 10, s. 80(4).
67 City of Winnipeg Archives and Records Control Branch, Archives and Records Control File No. GK-8, “Submission to the Executive Policy Committee by the Records Committee, December 23, 1999.”
and essential to the success of the overall strategy.\textsuperscript{68} These recommendations are consistent with the Canadian tradition of “total archives,” where public and private records are considered to be complementary components of the archival heritage, each offering a distinctive image of the urban experience.

By taking on the “New Directions” initiative in 1994, and then in 1997, the recommendations of the Cuff Report to implement the “Reshaping Civic Government” initiative, the City had undergone two major reorganizations within the space of four years. The impact of these reforms measured in “real terms” was that, by 1999, 28 departments with 13,000 employees had been dismantled and amalgamated into 18 departments (and some additional administrative entities), and City staff reduced to 9,000 employees, with further cuts pending. By 2004, the City’s workforce was considerably diminished, consisting of 7,500 employees in 16 departments and administrative offices. The negative impact of such radical organizational change on the City’s recordkeeping capacity proved to be significant, and protracted over time. Cook observed that:

New bigger, merged departments do not yet have in most cases the infrastructure scaled up from the former local records units to cope with the immense volume of current records or backlog reduction or a planned scheduling and disposition initiative. There is little internal or external direction and no effective accountability for the records management function. There is little culture of compliance with City-wide standards ... and no effective way at present to enforce compliance.\textsuperscript{69}

This situation was further aggravated by inadequate levels of trust. Despite having a clear mandate since Council passed the City’s first Records Management By-law in 1975, over the years, the decisions were made to prioritize the securing of a

\textsuperscript{68} Terry Cook, \textit{In the Public Trust: A Strategic Plan for the Archives and Records Management Services in the City of Winnipeg} (Gloucester: Clio Consulting, 1999), 1-2 (hence forth cited as \textit{In the Public Trust}).

\textsuperscript{69} Ibid., 34.
dedicated Records Storage facility over the establishment of a City Archives programme and to delay hiring trained professional staff. The resulting atmosphere seems to have taken its toll in eroding the trust and confidence of City Departments in the ability of the Archives and Records Control Branch to fulfill its function as a City archives and records management programme. In his report, Cook noted that

since the City Archives in the 1970s and early 1980s annoyed several departments by an allegedly lackadaisical approach that has been summarized as “if in doubt, destroy,” there is still reluctance … to transfer valuable older pockets of records … for fear that the Archives will destroy them … or at the very least will not value them and bury them out of sight from departmental officials who may, from time to time, wish to consult the records.\(^7\)

The Cook Report included 71 recommendations and a strategic plan consisting of three phases to be carried out in over a cycle of eight years. Each phase addressed both records management and archival issues.

Beginning in 2000, the City Clerk’s department was directed to implement “Phase I” of the plan which focused upon strengthening the records management infrastructure, the restructuring and professional staffing of Archives and Records Control branch, start operations to facilitate Archives involvement in appraisal and disposition, addressing archival description and preservation concerns, and the testing of new approaches to management and disposition of records as well as the revision of the Access Guide to City Records, which was now a legal requirement under The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA).\(^7\)

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\(^7\) Ibid., 34-35.
\(^7\) The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy and Consequential Amendments Act, S.M. 1997, c.50.
In “Phase II” of the plan, scheduled to begin in 2002 for completion in 2005, the emphasis was on implementing macroappraisal by establishing “multi-year disposition” plans with some City departments, initiating the management of electronic records, and expanding Archives activities to include acquisition of historical records of current City departments, in all media, and some private sector records.

“Phase III” was scheduled to begin in 2005, for completion in 2008, and emphasized completing the implementation of disposition plans with the City departments, instituting recordkeeping audits, and extending the “Archives reach to the full extent of its mandate with private records,” more aggressive public programming and educational outreach and resolution of the “museum issue.” At the time of Cook’s report and to this day, the 380 William Avenue facility houses a large accumulation of City museum materials.

Cook’s report was adopted by the City’s Executive Policy Committee at its meeting of March 10, 1999 and subsequently tabled by City Council at its meeting of January 26, 2000. Beginning in 2001, the City Clerk’s Department began to act on the recommendations of the Report with the addition of staff for the Archives and Records Control Branch, so that by 2002, four new professional staff had been hired, three of whom had previous experience working at the Provincial Archives of Manitoba, including the Senior Records Manager who is the author of this thesis, the Senior Archivist, and the new City Archivist, Gerry Berkowski, who was appointed in 2001, after Lemoine was promoted to Deputy City Clerk.

The first priority for the new Archives and Records Control team was to develop a strategic implementation plan based on the Cook Report. The strategic plan, which
serves as the foundation for developing the recordkeeping infrastructure, was completed in 2002 with the drafting of the “Recordkeeping Blueprint for the City of Winnipeg,” a policy framework which establishes the guiding recordkeeping principles, key elements of the infrastructure, and areas of responsibility, as well as a high-level action plan. In that same year, a Records Management Forum was established, comprised of departmental managers responsible for records management, to address and implement new records management strategies, share best practices, and develop cost-effective solutions on an ongoing basis. Starting with the “Cook Report,” the City Records Committee has also published its annual report, which is also available on the City of Winnipeg website.

The coming into force on January 1, 2003, of The City of Winnipeg Charter was the first of several events in 2003 that in concert would have a significant impact on the further development of the City’s recordkeeping framework. Like many other sections of the Charter, those addressing the City’s record management requirements were revised in order to be much less prescriptive and specific in terms of how these requirements were to be met, thus providing for increased flexibility and authority for City Council in terms of a broader “sphere of authority.”

In the same year, the City’s CAO issued a corporate Administrative Directive on Recordkeeping that is a statement of principles, and that also sets out the City’s official policy on records management, specifying roles and responsibilities for recordkeeping

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72 City of Winnipeg, Archives and Records Control Branch, Archives and Records Control, “Recordkeeping Blueprint for the City of Winnipeg,” 2002, internal report.
74 The City of Winnipeg Charter Act, S.M. 2002, c. 39, s.109, s.110 (1), s.110 (2), s.111, s.112.
with cross references to related administrative policies and procedures. In compliance with the requirement under FIPPA, a new “directory of records” was prepared by the Archives and Records Control Branch for publication in 2003. The 2003 Directory of City Records supersedes the 1998 Access Guide to City Records that had been produced under the previous Access to Information By-law. It describes the organization of the City of Winnipeg, its functions and information holdings, and is available to citizens in Winnipeg Public Libraries and on the City’s website.\(^7\)

On December 17, 2003 City Council enacted a new Records Management By-law 166/2003, which came into effect on January 1, 2004. The By-law defines the scope and content of the City’s records management programme, provides for the retention and disposition of all City records, and establishes the legal authority of the City Archives related to the attribution of archival value and for the Archives to assume legal custody and full control of both private and government records that are deemed to have archival value under the By-law. In analyzing the new Records Management By-law against the characteristics of Hurley’s typology of public archives legislation, Winnipeg’s By-law is judged to be halfway between first and second generation legislation. While the By-law provides for the City Archives to have a greater capacity to “intrude on the business of government,” and to regulate records management activities, it does not require the transfer of records to the custody of the City Archives after a prescribe period, nor does it establish public rights of access to archival records after a specified lapse of time, elements which Hurley’s suggests are features of mature “second generation” legislation. However given that policy directs that recordkeeping is the responsibility of City departments rather than the exclusive business of the City Archives and Records Control

\(^7\) City of Winnipeg, City Clerk’s Department, 2003 Directory of City Records, (Winnipeg, 2003).
Branch, the By-law could be viewed as being closer in conception to Hurley’s third generation of legislation, where the archival authority is responsible for setting down the principles for recordkeeping but in itself is not a service provider or delivery organization.

**Macroappraisal as a Catalyst of Urban Renewal**

In his 1999 report, Cook had concluded that

Winnipeg is still very much in a “catch-up mode” for 104 years (1874-1978,) there was no archival programme; while wonders have been done in twenty years since by a couple of dedicated individuals, a large backlog remains before the archival house is put in order... the merging of 13 traditions of record-keeping with Unicity has created significant additional pressures in terms of researching the context and processing records...

Much like the situation of Canada’s cities and their demand for empowerment and recognition as autonomous governments amid the plight of municipalities regarded as a “junior level” of government, city archives are generally regarded as a “junior level” of archival institutions within Canada. A 1984 brief submitted by the City to the City of Winnipeg Act Review Committee noted the inappropriateness of applying a recordkeeping model that was intended to meet the needs of small municipalities to the situation of a large urban area like Winnipeg:

The City of Winnipeg is treated rather like a small provincial municipality where provision for records keeping is of very much smaller proportions and where protection of permanent records can most usefully and economically be offered by the Provincial Archives. Indeed, the records of The Municipal Act were applied directly to The City of Winnipeg Act,

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78 Cook, In the Public Trust. 98.
first (in 1971) by reference only and later (in a 1975 amendment) through
direct specification in section 658 (1-7).79

Drawing again on Ursula Franklin’s argument for reviewing the appropriateness
of technology as mindset, the cumulative situation of the City of Winnipeg’s archives and
records appraisal and disposition programme by the end of century was clearly a case that
stood to benefit from the application of “redemptive technology.” In retrospect, the City
of Winnipeg has never succeeded in establishing a functioning records management
programme in the tradition of the production-oriented life-cycle model, nor did it ever
have a fully operative appraisal and disposition programme that followed Schellenberg’s
use-based criteria of value. The City Archives has only recently met what is generally
recognized as minimum criteria or requirements for an archives institution, including a
legislated mandate, defined reporting structure, dedicated budget, qualified staff, public
access, professional archival practice, and appropriate facilities.80

Much like the conundrum of urban governance, poor archives and recordkeeping
practice in local government often stems from the application of inappropriate models or
processes which, in changing or different contexts, are no longer valid or helpful. Robert
L Bish, a Professor of Public Administration and Economics and co-founder of the Local
Government Institute, suggests that disjuncture is related to the persistence of “an
intellectual fashion of the nineteenth century” that holds an “unshakable faith in
monolithic organizations” and a traditionalist rationale of professional bureaucracy.

80 G. Mark Walsh, (ed.), Resource Guide and Directory to Municipal Archives in Ontario, (Toronto:
According to Bish, both are unsuited to the rapid chance and institutional adaptability that characterizes the early twenty-first century.\(^81\)

Bish strikes another familiar chord from Franklin and from macroappraisal theory when he points out that "the primary responsibility of local governments is governance, not production." He argues that within the context of local government, governance is "finding ways in which citizens can express their wishes and work with councillors to make decisions on regulations, what services to provide, and what their quantity and quality should be, and how they are to be produced and finance." As seen in the last chapter, this view resonates with the theoretical underpinning of macroappraisal, in that both reflect an endeavour that contributes to sustaining democratic civil society in an age of globalization in other areas.\(^82\) Not surprisingly, Cook's 1999 report for the City is infused with its author's well-known championing of macroappraisal, both as democratic underpinning and methodological recommendations, shorn of their federal-government origins and adapted to local government circumstances. The City's "Recordkeeping Blueprint" explicitly makes reference to how it incorporates ideals drawn from the City's present governance structure, business planning, and service delivery strategies. In this way, macroappraisal (following Franklin) is "redemptive technology" in facilitating new thinking about the functionality of government and governance and how they are connected through recordkeeping and archiving.

In terms of functionality, Richard Brown has observed that "nothing in the archival world appears to be less understood or professionally 'settled' than the idea of

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\(^82\) Ibid., 27.
functional analysis.” He also notes that, despite general acceptance of macroappraisal as a valid practice, there is a tendency for macroappraisal and functional analysis to be regarded as a “panacea for the problems and failures associated with appraisal and acquisition founded on the administrative principles of bureaucratic structure.”

Functional analysis places function, activities, and transaction into a meaningful structural hierarchy. While archivists have found inspiration from functional analysis of the records-creating processes and from contemporary social theory, there still remains the problem of how to best utilize this approach within current organizational structures and existing programmes. More importantly, as numerous practitioners have pointed out, in practice it is often difficult to articulate the links between the organizational structure, business functions, and those records that present the sharpest image of governance. It has always been recognized that

The statutory responsibilities of city government are very different from those of a Province. The City experiences interfaces with the public that are more frequent and varied, impacting upon individual properties and neighbourhoods. Consequently, the types of documents regularly produced present a different challenge in terms of information access as well as management and archive of records. . .

When Cook drafted his report in 1999, the City Archives programme was still essentially cast in the nineteenth-century world of “Keeper of the Record,” serving administrative needs to efficiently manage and preserve records as evidence. The

Records Management By-law served to authorize the destruction of City records. Set out

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84 City of Winnipeg Archives, Documents Committee File no.17.31, “Re: Implementation of Sections 77 and 78 of the Amended City of Winnipeg Act,” (Archives, Access to Information and Records Management) dated 2 March 1990.
according to two classifications of prescribed disposition, either "Temporary" or "Permanent," the recordkeeping regime was a production-oriented instrument whereby relative values are expressed by means of listing document types and their associated disposition, without any reference to "externalities" or a broader context of records creation and use. Thus records were not associated with recordkeeping systems, organizational units or physical locations, let alone business functions or citizen interactions with the city. The By-law reflects what might be regarded as an aspect of "arrested development" of local government structure and administrative systems. Although there was a centralized records storage facility and some common filing systems existing within various city departments and divisions, unlike federal and provincial government institutions that have applied macroappraisal and functional analysis, the City of Winnipeg did not have a corporate records management programme in place, nor has there ever been a corporate-wide records classification or filing system in place, let alone an archives-driven theory and practice, (mind-set) prior to introducing macroappraisal.

This figured significantly in Cook’s recommendations of how the City could proceed with a planned approach to records disposition, modeled on the National Archives multi-year disposition plan could be followed. The strategy that was adopted did not precisely follow the recommendations, although as Cook had suggested, attention was certainly given to strengthening the City’s records management infrastructure. It was decided to attempt to shift the organizational culture from inherited nineteenth-century practice, in order as far as possible to avoid imposing a programme cast in the prescriptive production mode of Schellenbergian records management, and move directly
towards building a continuum-oriented framework that would support not only an appraisal and disposition programme that incorporated the principles of macroappraisal, but also the “nurturing” of a holistic culture of recordkeeping and archives.

As such, the ultimate purpose of adopting a macroappraisal approach was to effectively support, if not drive efforts to establish this new framework. Like the National Archives, the City Archives undertook to establish a whole new relationship with City departments. But instead of efforts being primarily focused on testing appraisal hypothesis and refining appraisal decisions, the City’s first undertaking of macroappraisal and functional analysis emphasized building strong working relationships between archivist and record creators, and using macroappraisal and functional analysis to knit recordkeeping and archival requirements together with organizational culture and business functions.

The project-based management tools that were developed for managing this first appraisal initiative are still being refined and improved, as are the appraisal decisions that were the outcome of this first phase of macroappraisal. Space limitations here do not permit a detailed account of the performance of methodological procedures and specific findings; however, the emphasis of this case study is on the outcome, which is, in this instance, the ultimate benefit of adopting a macroappraisal approach as an agent of change and enabler of reform. This may be summarized in noting it allowed for a comprehensive first-level appraisal of current City departments, and of their functions and related records, to be completed within a relatively short period of time for a project that was enterprise-wide in scope. It also allowed for organizational units, functions and records to be identified and mapped to organizational structure and specific appraisal
decisions related to final disposition. Simply put, adopting a macroappraisal approach liberated appraisal from the traditional “listing” of records, not only from having to rely upon these to provide an empirical view of the records but also from associating archival value with disposal action as it is expressed in conventional Schellenbergian production-oriented records retention “schedules,” the very model that other institutions with established records management programmes that have undertaken macroappraisal are wanting to reform.85

Using macroappraisal and functional analysis also brought to light the prominence of “place” or more specifically the numerous points of citizen-state interaction with the built environment that figure uniquely in determining the functional and structural “hot spots” to locate records that are likely to have high archival value. It is often said that local government is the level of government that touches citizens the most often and the most directly. Local government is also the focus of most fiscal management and efficiency concerns, since citizens are able to “see” how their tax dollars are being spent most concretely at the local government level. The preponderance of city records related to aspects of real property and the built environment, such as building plans and permits, sub-division layouts, zoning and development applications, development agreements, property tax assessment rolls, maps and zoning atlas sheets, survey field books, public works drawings, street system records, recreation and parks inventories, and underground infrastructure records, all attest to this and are a distinct feature of local government and city archives.

In *Why Cities Matter*, a report for the Canadian Policy Research Network, political scientist, Neil Bradford makes the observation that

Contrary to the predictions of the 'locationless' effects of virtual communications and the death of distance in a weightless economy, urban centers have become more -- not less -- important as places where people live, work and play.86

Bradford’s findings have important implications for macroappraisal within the context of local government. He argues that “cities are the places where today’s major economic, social and environmental challenges most visibly intersect.”87 Moreover Bradford suggests that with respect to governance and decision making, it is simply not just knowing that place matters more today, but equally what is required for cities to be able to enhance their quality of place or what becomes a valued source of identity for citizens.88

Inspired by a paper by Julie Luckevich on her work for the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto, which suggested that a business enterprise model might be directly integrated to create a thesaurus designed for public and classification structure,89 the City’s Archives and Records programme, in developing both the City’s *Directory of Records* to comply with *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA) and a new *Records Management By-law* with revised retention schedules, linked these central components by the use of a records classification scheme that is based on

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87 Ibid., iv-v.

88 Ibid., 7.

the functions and services that are laid out in *Plan Winnipeg*, City Council’s long-range policy plan adopted in 2001. *Plan Winnipeg* not only provided a ready-made model of the City functions and services, it also made it possible to map these to the organizational structure serving as the foundation of the City’s business planning model. Unlike Helen Samuels’ more abstract model of functional analysis, Winnipeg’s Archives and Records Branch follows Cook by linking its analysis of virtual provenance to the actual, articulated functions of the City as assigned to City departments that are legally accountable for carrying out these function through the delivery of public services and goods to citizens.\(^\text{90}\)

Unlike other Manitoba municipalities, Winnipeg’s planning legislation comes under the *City of Winnipeg Act*.\(^\text{91}\) The *Greater Winnipeg Development Plan*, commonly referred to as "Plan Winnipeg," was first released in 1981 and initially approved by the Province and adopted by Council in 1986. Following a major review of the plan in 1992, it was readopted in 1993 as *Plan Winnipeg... toward 2010*.\(^\text{92}\) After undergoing another major review, which included public forums and hearings, *Plan Winnipeg 2020 Vision* was adopted on December 12, 2001.

*Plan Winnipeg 2020 Vision* is the City’s long-range policy plan and, as such, it is the most important document prepared by the City of Winnipeg.\(^\text{93}\) It provides the foundation for all civic activity and all documents, budgets, public works, programs, or

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\(^{90}\) City of Winnipeg, *City Organization By-law 7100/97*.

\(^{91}\) See the *City of Winnipeg Act* S. 569(f) “Greater Winnipeg development plan” means a statement of the city’s policy and general proposals in respect of the development or use of the land in the city and the additional zone, set out in texts, maps or illustrations, and measures for the improvement of the physical, social and economic environment and transportation.

\(^{92}\) City of Winnipeg, *By-law no. 5915/9, Plan Winnipeg... toward 2010*.

developments must be consistent with this Plan. To maintain currency and relevance, the Plan is reviewed and updated in five-year increments. More importantly, the current Plan, which is intended to set out the components for a renewed City vision and indicators for measuring the City’s “quality of life” over time, was developed with significant public input.

This ongoing commitment to citizen participation and democratic government is reflected in the chapter and section headings of the Plan which pertain to the City’s responsibility for the delivery of various “public goods,” such as to “Provide sound municipal management,” “Commitment to citizen engagement,” and “Equitable access to facilities and service.” Under “Conserving Heritage Assets,” Plan Winnipeg confirms that city archives are perceived and valued by citizens as a “public good.” This further asserts recognition of the importance of public archives within a modern urban context:

The City shall protect its heritage resources by . . . developing an ongoing, city-wide management system which secures existing archives and identifies and retains essential contemporary documents and databases for future reference and research.

In his report, Cook had noted that the kind of functional analysis required to do macroappraisal (and thus records appraisal and scheduling) was complimentary to the CAO’s intention to restructure City government around common business processes and common service delivery functions. He suggested that the results of such functional

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95 In late 1998, more than 400 city-wide and community-based organizations were invited to participate in a series of workshops held throughout November - covering 17 different topics deemed to be components of "quality of life," topics such as economic development, infrastructure, good government, municipal finance, and community safety. In December, a major public forum was held to present 41 different vision statements arising from the November workshops to a larger public audience. The public forum was designed to validate, clarify, and prioritize these vision statements, achieving consensus where possible, while identifying any gaps.
96 City of Winnipeg, Plan Winnipeg 2020 Vision, sections 2A-01; 2A02; 2B-04; 5D-04.
97 Ibid., section 5B-02 “Protect Heritage Resources,” iv.
research could be mutually beneficial to both restructuring and archival appraisal. These were prophetic words.

The City's business planning model is not only based on the functions and services identified in the chapters of *Plan Winnipeg*, but also designates principal responsibility within the organizational structure of City departments for each function and the delivery of its associated services, as well as identifying functions and services that are a shared responsibility or which are common to all City departments. So despite pressure from records managers and records creators to adopt the more traditional production-oriented format of life-cycle records retention schedules, the authority of *Plan Winnipeg* and the corporate business planning model made it more feasible to argue for expressing the disposition authority in functional terms. This functional perspective was also introduced in two stages to ease change and acceptance of this new approach among records creators and users of the records By-law.

The Directory of Records, which the City is required to publish under FIPPA, also provides a description of all City departments, again along with their respective functions and related records. A modified macroappraisal approach was used here as well, which went down only the fourth level of macroappraisal, whereby some but certainly not all of the appraisal hypothesis were tested with a review of existing records, relying primarily on the information provided by department records coordinators for the compilation of the Directory. This allowed for "fast tracking" the development, review and approval process that was involved both in preparing the Records Directory and in drafting disposition authorities (retention schedules) for inclusion in the By-law. It enabled the organization of both the descriptions of records in the Directory and the By-law retention

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98 Cook, *In the Public Trust*, 44.
and disposition authorities according to the administrative function or service that they support and their relationship to the City’s administrative organization. Contrary to Cook’s initial predictions about the time it would take, if not about the efficacy of functional analysis linked to business functions, the use of the “ready-made” functional analysis provided by Plan Winnipeg, and a significant amount of pre-knowledge and research that had already been undertaken, enabled the completion of a comprehensive macroappraisal effort. The result was that within two years of undertaking this project, the records of all sixteen current City departments and offices have been appraised for archival value such that the location and responsibility for the creation and retention of City records of potentially high archival value are identified under the authority of new By-law retention schedules.99

Completing this first level of appraisal and establishing authorities within the bylaw which identified sources of the archival record was crucial to establishing the credibility and authority of the City Archives and Records programme. At the same time, this whole process proved to be an effective means of promoting greater awareness of archives and recordkeeping issues, raising the visibility of the City archives and records management function as an integrated programme and forging long-lasting working relationships with City departments.

By adopting a modified macroappraisal approach, the By-law provides for minimum retention requirements and authority to dispose of City records and, most importantly, the legal authority of the City Archives pertaining to the custody, control, preservation and disposition of archival records. The By-law is somewhat unique in that the schedule authorities for records disposition are hybrid constructions, which mix

99 City of Winnipeg Records Management By-law 166/2003, Schedules B and C.
expressions of the appraisal statement in functional terms with more tradition structuralist/life-cycle language (i.e., “destroy after 6 years”) and the assignment of shared responsibility for common functions through a “Standard Administrative Records” schedule\textsuperscript{100} and links primary responsibility for specific functions with organizational structure. In some cases, it was necessary to express appraisal decisions in structuralist terms, especially where responsibility for multiple functions of equal value converged under one administrative umbrella, such as “Fire & Paramedic Chief’s Files” which includes records related to multiple functions of fire suppression services and emergency medical care provided by the City of Winnipeg under The City of Winnipeg Charter and The Regional Health Authorities Act.\textsuperscript{101}

The City Archives continues to practice macroappraisal by retrospective appraisal of previously designated “permanent holdings,” along with the microappraisal of the ongoing transfers of archival records. Like the National Archives, further development of the tools of implementation is being considered, such as more fulsome appraisal reports and delivery of training and educational products for department records managers and other City staff about the process for caring for and disposing of records. This is especially germane as under the Bylaw records are now born “archival” as opposed to being appraised for archival value in the latter stage of their life cycle. Some progress has been made on this front, with regard to undertaking comprehensive macroappraisal of the records of defunct departments that have since disappeared as a result of the major reorganization of City governance in 1999.

\textsuperscript{100} City of Winnipeg By-Law 166/2003, Schedule B, “Standard Administrative Records Schedules.”

\textsuperscript{101} City of Winnipeg, By-law 166/2003, Schedule C, “Departmental Records Schedules, 70.02 Fire & Paramedic Chief’s Files.”
Applying Australian David Roberts' "whole of government" recordkeeping programme model, the Archives and Records Control Branch continues to work on all fronts -- from the top down and from the bottom up, with emphasis on being able to change focus as needed, but still staying the course with the strategic plan and available resources. In addition to continuing to implement the Records Management By-law which now provides for the archival authority to dispose of records based on microappraisal decisions, a new records management infrastructure includes a city-wide policy directive for record keeping which designates specific roles and responsibilities, records and information management training and educational opportunities for City staff, including a joint CUPE/City-funded career development placement programme and mentoring of City employees selected for records and information management career development internships.

From the perspective of the City of Winnipeg's experience, implementing macroappraisal has been a catalyst for reinventing the City Archives. At the very least, it has brought the archives out of the Jenkinsonian shadows of the tradition of Keeper of the Records into the "whole of government" framework for recordkeeping and archives. In short, these efforts were in essence powered by a macroappraisal research-driven strategy which enabled the start of a "cultural change" in thinking about the City Archives and records management programme, at least within the City's administration and to a more limited extent among members of the public.

In 1999, Cook noted that the most pressing problem for the City's archives and records programme was the records management infrastructure. In retrospect, it might be argued that the central issue was using the "right tools for the task," and correcting past
bad practice, which in this case was addressed by adopting the most appropriate form of appraisal technology, one which is holistic, rather than prescriptive in nature and thus more suited to the desired outcome of appraisal decisions that are informed by societal values.

With uncommon insight, during the urban boom and prosperity of North America during the postwar years, Jane Jacobs recognized the particular kind of "function" that is at once both unique and common to cities:

Functional identity...few people, unless they live in a world of paper maps, can identify with an abstraction called a district or care much about it. Most of us identify with a place in the city because we use it, and get to know it reasonably intimately. We take our two feet and move around in it and come to count on it. The only reason anyone does this much is that useful or interesting or convenient differences fairly near by exert an attraction. Almost nobody travels willingly from sameness to sameness and repetition to repetition, even if the physical discomfort required is trivial.  

Unlike appraisal within the context of federal government or provincial institutions, it is argued that the geography of growth (and decline) is central to the specific framework of City archives and the platform of archival appraisal of City records. Just as instances of citizen-state interaction are more pronounced at the level of local government, so are instances of citizen-state interactions related to the specificities of "place," or more specifically, where documentary evidence of citizen-state interaction is linked to the reality of the built and bureaucratic environment. That this is made very clear through the "urban lens" of macroappraisal and functional analysis demonstrates how the common values or the broader features of macroappraisal as might be meshed

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with the specific values that make cities - and the role and function of their archives - so unique.
CONCLUSION

"THE KIND OF PROBLEM A CITY IS..."

...one of the main things to know is what kind of problem cities pose, for all problems cannot be thought about in the same way. Which avenues of thinking are apt to be useful and to help yield the truth depends not on how we might prefer to think about a subject, but rather on the inherent nature of the subject itself.

-- Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*¹

Cities are now the daily living environment of the vast majority of Canadians. In 2001, over 80% of Canadians were reported as living in urban areas with 68% residing in metropolitan areas or large cities over 100,000 population. Canada’s seven largest metropolitan areas now account for almost 45% of the GDP. In 2003, Winnipeg accounted for more than half of the province’s population and the greater part of all goods and services produced in Manitoba.

Although city government affects citizens most directly and most immediately and concretely (rather than remotely or abstractly), it is also the level of government with the least amount of power. Recently, there has been greater attention given in public and political discourse to the relationship of cities to provinces and long-standing issues of

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inadequate financing, coordination of inter-governmental cooperation, the evolution of local government structures, and the need for improved management techniques.

In Canada, the traditional concept of an urban place is a statistical artifact developed by Statistics Canada. Classification as a city has thus depended upon the size and density of a population. It is thus possible, on a purely statistical basis, to make certain generalizations about the administrative environment and culture of local government. At the time of Canada’s centenary in 1967, it was widely recognized that Canadians are an urban people. To mark the occasion, historian Alan Artibise wrote that virtually all the fundamental issues of Canadian life are evident in the urban areas. Problems of growth and decline, of power allocation, of conflict between ethnic groups or classes are found in the cities. Indeed, these issues are often more visible and more clearly understood in the context of an urban area … By examining the economic development, the population, the cityscape and the cultural life of these cities, one can discover what values many Canadians share. In fact, given the widespread influence of these metropolitan centres, these values undoubtedly represent the mainstream of Canadian society. At the same time … cities provide ample evidence that the Canadian personality is open to change. Like successful cities elsewhere, Canadian cities are always changing from one kind of settlement to another. They do not merely struggle against the odds to go on doing the same thing but constantly reinvent themselves. Nevertheless, they share certain values that have a long and enduring tradition, and these values explain to no small degree the nature of the country itself.

Like Artibise, urban planning theorist Jane Jacobs suggests that “a city’s very wholeness in bringing together people with communities of interest is one of its greatest

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3 All major urban municipalities in Canada are commonly referred to as “cities”, however Statistics Canada defines a “census metropolitan area” (CMS) as an area with over 100,000 population.
assets, possibly the greatest.” Yet the study of local government is a relative new field, with the bulk of the literature written since the 1960s. It has only been recently that more attention has been given to the analysis of current issues. The situation regarding the “big cities” in Canada, among which Winnipeg is included, has in essence been succinctly summarized by Caroline Andrew, a Canadian political scientist who specializes in municipal government, local politics and urban development:

There needs to be greater recognition of the importance of local government...the major societal issues for Canadians – polarization and the management of social diversity – are being played out in the big cities and these issues are not being sufficiently discussed, managed and/or acted upon.”

Andrew’s comments apply equally well to the value and importance of the records of local government and thus of City archives. Even less has been written about the public records functions of municipal archives than about urban development generally. What does exist tends to be focused on the practice of records management and compliance with access and privacy legislation. As if City archives still continue to operate in the world of the 1898 Dutch manual of the passive nostrums of Sir Hillary Jenkinson, the literature is curiously silent on the appraisal and selection of the records of

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6 The ten largest cities in Canada are: Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Regina, Winnipeg, Ottawa, Montreal, Quebec City, Halifax, and Toronto.
municipal government records for preservation as archives. While a comparative study of municipal archives in Canada is beyond the scope of this thesis, it is possible to identify similarities and distinguish differences between the situation in the City of Winnipeg and the practice of archival appraisal within the general context of a City archives.

Given that the average Canadian now lives and works in a large metropolitan environment, it follows that the interests and concerns of most Canadians are most visible and most easily discerned through the study of Canadian cities. In her groundbreaking 1961 book, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, that is acknowledged to have been at the forefront of thinking about cities, Jane Jacobs argues that modern city planners have consistently mistaken cities as problems of simplicity and of disorganized complexity, and have tried to analyze and treat them accordingly. For Jacobs, cities are problems in “organized complexity” because they present “situations in which half-dozen or even several dozen quantities are all varying simultaneously and in subtly interconnected ways.”

Jacobs observes that people are often blinded by the physicality of cities. Similar to Ursula Franklin’s view of the “real world” of technology being centred in mindsets and attitudes more than machinery, there is a similar sense in Jacobs’ work that the root of many present-day problems in cities is connected to such misunderstanding and misperceptions. Franklin seeks better understanding of the nature of technology as a system and the need for (and appeal of) “redemptive technology” to address serious

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11 Ibid., 439 (emphasis original).
“system” dysfunctions. For Jacobs, the misunderstanding is “about the very nature of cities” and the inappropriate application of the scientific method to solve the problems of modern urban life. Jacobs’ perception of the city is strikingly similar to Franklin’s categorization of the features that distinguish prescriptive from holistic technology and production from growth models and to Cook’s concept of macroappraisal which shifts the focus of appraisal from the physical record to the functional context in which the record is created – to its conceptual provenance.

According to Jacobs, once planners began to assimilate ideas developed by physical science, cities came to be regarded as problems in disorganized complexity, “understandable purely by statistical analysis and predictable by the application of probability mathematics and conversion into groups of averages.” Although the “complex interconnectedness” of citizens, city spaces, processes, and systems and their documentation was recognized, Jacobs suggests that city planning became mired in deep misunderstanding about the nature of the urban entity. In Jacobs’ recordkeeping metaphor this conception of a city as “a collection of separate file drawers” was carried to logical conclusions by planners “who reached – apparently with straight faces – the idea that almost any specific malfunctioning could be corrected by opening and filing a new file drawer.”

Jacobs contends that cities are “organisms that are replete with unexamined, but obviously intricately interconnected and surely understandable relationships.” Her ideas on urban reform are thus very compatible with the assumptions behind Franklin’s

12 Ibid., 438-39.
15 Ibid.
16 Ibid., 438.
call for adequate technologies of environmental and social accounting\textsuperscript{17} and the redemptive origins of Cook's macroappraisal technology, for she endeavors to "correct deep misunderstandings about the very nature of "the kind of problem a city is." As with archival technologies, erroneous mindsets and bad practice continue to endure and are difficult to change. Four decades after Jacob's initial observation, Robert Bish suggests that it is no longer useful to think of the ideal local government as a large integrated bureaucracy supervised by full-time politicians and run by professional bureaucrats.\textsuperscript{18}

Given the state of modern archival practice and the power entrusted to public archives to preserve the "broad spectrum of human activity," this thesis suggests that it is also no longer useful to think of macroappraisal as merely "functional analysis," but rather that it is an engaging technology that can be used to reflect and thus perpetuate society's values, and more specifically, used to identify the particular values, forces, and processes that are relevant to cities. Aside from specifics of geography, it is the quality of the citizen-state interaction or the nature of governance that distinguishes one city from another.\textsuperscript{19} Jacobs reminds us that just because cities experience the same kinds of problems, this does not mean they are the same problems,\textsuperscript{20} nor does this mean that because citizens value the urban environment and its lifestyle (including enjoyment of a city's public goods) that these are the same values.

\textsuperscript{17} Franklin, \textit{The Real World of Technology}, 132.
\textsuperscript{19} Cook, "’Macro-appraisal and Functional Analysis,’": 16.
\textsuperscript{20} Jacobs, \textit{The Death and Life of Great American Cities}, 439.
In 2002, the Conference Board of Canada declared that “cities are at the centre of our new economy, the cradle of innovation, and the venue for wealth creation.” Commenting on Winnipeg’s proposed “New Deal” initiative, former federal cabinet minister Lloyd Axworthy, who is now the President of the University of Winnipeg, has suggested introducing reform into other areas of urban governance and city government. Axworthy’s comments across a broad canvas are equally relevant to the question for reforming appraisal and disposition practices within the context of municipal archives:

Our cities are emerging as major spark-plugs of development and the best platforms for addressing a host of issues, ranging from climate change to security against natural disaster and political risk. It’s clear that the system of urban government inherited from the nineteenth century can’t cope with these changes... But why should the urban “new deal” be confined to just a reorganization of the tax system? While it is unquestionably a key component in refashioning the urban polity, it is by no means the only area worth of re-examination. Now that the debate is started, other reform possibilities should be considered.

Given the close physical interaction of people, and that the point of any city is innovation and the shaping and forcing of new ideas, surely the challenge for municipal archives is how to begin to consider the value of the documentary heritage of cities in a new way – by taking the long view through the lens of macroappraisal as an urban technology:

... people care about their place in history when their own past is valued. People take the long view when they perceive leaders as trustworthy... [They] take the long view when they believe the rules of the game are fair. They believe they will share equitably in the returns. [They] take the long

view when they have a deep understanding of system dynamics. They see the connections between actions in one place and consequences in another. They can therefore appreciate the need for indirect long-term investments (whether research and development, infrastructure repairs, or education.) People take the long view when they feel a commitment to those who come after them . . . They care about posterity, their children, other people’s children and therefore see the need for actions to benefit the distant future.24

In this context, it is the argument of this thesis that macroappraisal is more significant than offering an updated series of concepts, strategies, methodologies and criteria for conducting archival appraisal effectively and efficiently. In the case of Winnipeg, macroappraisal concepts and strategies, appropriately modified from their federal context, have unexpected relevance to public understanding of city services and programs, citizens’ rights to access to information and to reconceptualizing the City’s recordkeeping culture.

Beyond this, and of greater significance, the relevance of the central ideal of macroappraisal of documenting citizen-state governance is even stronger in an urban setting than at a national or provincial level. In cities, functions are less discrete, structural change is more dynamic, and the interaction of the citizen with the state is more intense, more immediate, and more concrete. As an example of Franklin’s redemptive technology, then, macroappraisal may be rethought, this thesis argues, as a liberating mindset to address the complexity of issues that is the modern city and the task of documenting the “broad spectrum” of urban activity.

If we are looking at cities in new ways, rather than continuing to portray cities as beleaguered “children of the province” that are habitually without adequate funds to carry out existing programs, we should realize that local government is now the most capable

level of delivering many public goods that federal and provincial governments have had responsibility for in the past, but have either failed to deliver them or refused to fund them at adequate levels for city residents. With respect to public archives, it is the collective memory of the personal and the local rather than the corporate and official that is most immediate and thus most valued, and which is most directly connected to the interaction of government, citizens and their immediate surroundings, and thus the quality of individual, family, neighbourhood and urban life. In the case of the City of Winnipeg, using macroappraisal has enabled archivists to shift appraisal from the sterile abstraction of bureaucratic structure to where appraisal decisions, as they are expressed in by-law, reflect values assigned to actual functions and instances of citizen-state interaction, and where the task of appraisal and the shaping and formation of the City’s archives becomes in itself, a site of citizen engagement and a real aspect of local governance.

As city governments are becoming more clear about the powers they should have to improve the quality of life for citizens and are taking steps to implement their pursuit of increased authority and effectiveness, it is argued that the existence of a city archives that has been shaped according to the macroappraisal ideal can help to sustain this momentum and contribute to efforts to realize the vision of a “vibrant, prosperous and healthy city which values diversity and provides all of its citizens opportunities for full participation in the economy and society.”

Following Jacobs, Axworthy, and others, if large cities are to be the engines of redefining Canada and Canadians in the twenty-first century, macroappraisal is an

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especially good fit in the urban environment, for records are the initiators, means, evidence and memory of actions, interactions, and transactions that collectively will make that new urban definition come alive. City archives using and spreading the macroappraisal ideal and application in this light are not only a cultural or historical service, but an animating partner in rethinking our cities' futures as much as their past.
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