

# **Bottom – Up Appraisal**

## **ARCHIDIS 2011**

Professor Karen Anderson



# Bottom – Up Appraisal

Where does the idea come from?

- Sir Hilary Jenkinson
  - Influence still seen in the Grigg system
- T. Schellenberg
  - Influence still seen in NARA system
  - Visited Australia in 1950s and was a strong influence, but most Australian archival authorities have since adopted functional appraisal



# **TASK:**

**Go to the posters and decide (if you can)**

**Which countries follow  
bottom-up strategies?**



# Where is the archivist?

- Who makes the real appraisal decisions?
- How can professional archivists participate or intervene?
  - What powers and mandates are needed?
  - What strategies can be used?
- What models, tools, standards, examples are available or needed for bottom-up appraisal?



# State Records Office of Western Australia: an example

- Archives Act 2000 requires all State government agencies and local governments to have:
  - A Recordkeeping Plan
  - A Retention & Disposal Schedule
  - Both approved by the State Records Advisory Committee which is appointed by the State Records Commission.
    - 4 Commissioners: The Auditor General, The Information Commissioner, The Ombudsman + 1 person with recordkeeping experience from outside the State Government
- <http://www.sro.wa.gov.au/>



## Does it work well?

- Yes, but it could be better.
- There is no requirement for functional appraisal, nor any standard classification system
- Thus the same function may be treated differently in different agencies. Apart from memory and the minutes of SRAC, there is no easy way of checking.



# Private archives: business records

- Small/Medium Enterprises
  - Typically lack recordkeeping advice or expertise
  - Bottom–up is probably the default system
  - Often simply a failure to appraise and dispose
- Large organisations
  - The European Central Bank
  - Focus on records creation and capture
  - Did they have an appraisal policy or strategy?
  - Who is making the decisions?



# Private archives: personal archives

When archives wait for donations, the donor decides:

- Whether or not to deposit archives with an institution;
- Which institution; and
- What to deposit.





# The person on the Internet

- Is personal information put on the Internet by the person the same as bottom-up appraisal?
- What authenticity and reliability problems arise?
- Is this self-documentation likely to be as reliably comprehensive as an entire fonds of a person's 'archive'?
- What might this type of self-documentation via social media add to:
  - The person's archive?
  - The memory of society?



# Personal digital archives

- Should archivists try to educate the public about how to keep and preserve their digital records?
- What advice (if any) should they give about appraisal?
- How do they select who should be targeted for collection?
- How can archivists solicit and compete for these archives?
  - Are there any ethical issues that might arise?
- How can archivists work to develop donors' trust in the archival institution?
- The PARADIGM project is an example. Their handbook is available at: <http://www.paradigm.ac.uk/>



**Thank you**



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