

# *Using Descriptive Standards as a Basis for Cooperation: The British Columbia Archival Union List Project*

by **CHRISTOPHER HIVES** and **BLAIR TAYLOR\***

Increasingly, preserving archival documentation requires a more cooperative, inter-institutional approach. This has been made necessary by a number of factors, including shrinking cultural resources, the proliferation of recorded information and the general need to adopt more integrated and comprehensive acquisition policies. Consequently, the informal, ad hoc and idiosyncratic practices of the past should be abandoned in favour of more formalized systems of inter-institutional networks. As an initial step towards network development, archivists must move towards shared standards and a common language in order to establish a baseline for cooperative activities.

This paper considers briefly the development of the British Columbia Archival Union List (BCAUL) project, an undertaking made possible by the advent and adoption of descriptive standards in Canada. It discusses the educational and advocacy roles of the project in the areas of descriptive standards, and suggests that the importance of adopting such standards extends far beyond the exchange of information about archival holdings to helping facilitate research. It outlines first the goals and assumptions underlying the project and then discusses the means adopted to achieve these goals, including its choice of data structure, data content and data value standards.

In 1991 the Archives Association of British Columbia (AABC) began to explore options for promoting the development of a more formal network of repositories and expediting the adoption of descriptive standards within the provincial archival community. The Association felt that this might be best accomplished through the development of a provincial union list of archival materials. Although efforts to provide an overview of archival materials across a large number of repositories at the national level through the National Archives *Union List of Manuscripts* have been suspended, the AABC felt that such an undertaking was possible, given a more restricted geographical focus and the Association's sponsorship of the project rather than that of a single institution.

The goals envisaged for the British Columbia project are more comprehensive than those of traditional union list projects. Programmes such as the *Union List of Manuscripts in Canadian Repositories* and the *National Union Catalogue of Manuscripts Collections* in the United States were designed simply to provide researchers with information about

manuscript holdings.<sup>1</sup> The goals of the British Columbia Archival Union List project extend beyond the simple dissemination of information about archival holdings to include facilitating provincial objectives in the areas of acquisition, conservation and education.

Like traditional union lists, the information when compiled (and available on-line as well as in hardcopy) will constitute a valuable research tool by providing an overview of all non-sponsorial records<sup>2</sup> in the province. This will in turn provide for the effective exploitation of the province's documentary heritage. The gathering of information about provincial holdings, however, can also serve as a springboard for more broadly defined objectives. In the future, this information will provide an administrative foundation for other inter-institutional archival undertakings. For instance, an understanding of holdings is crucial to the development of a province-wide acquisition strategy. By gaining a more comprehensive understanding of what is collected and where, repositories can begin to rationalize their archival acquisition programmes to avoid overlapping collecting practices. In addition, archivists will be able to ensure that material is not "falling through the cracks" in the provincial archival system.

Moreover, as the AABC develops its provincial conservation programme, the information yielded by the project will be vital in helping to assess requirements and prioritize commitments. A clear understanding of the province's archival holdings is necessary to decide what material warrants the expenditure of scarce resources.

The second major goal of the BCAUL project — which differentiates it from traditional union list models — is its educative role, specifically in disseminating information about descriptive standards. This represents something of a "chicken-and-egg" situation. The evolution of descriptive standards in Canada through the *Rules for Archival Description (RAD)* has made possible the development of a framework within which to carry out the union list project. At the same time the project is being used as a vehicle by which information about descriptive standards might be communicated to archivists working in repositories throughout the province.

Participation in the Canadian and American national union lists required individual repositories to complete forms which were returned to the then Public Archives of Canada and the Library of Congress, respectively, for editing. In the BCAUL project, however, there is considerably more interaction between project personnel and archivists in participating repositories. The presence of the project archivist on-site will help to introduce an element of standardization to what have hitherto been ad hoc and inconsistent archival practices across the province. Archivists will be given guidance to help them describe their holdings in a consistent manner using a standardized structure and vocabulary. It is also hoped that this approach will expedite the general adoption and implementation of descriptive standards and, specifically, the implementation of *RAD* by repositories in the province.

Enhancing archivists' awareness and understanding of descriptive standards is a significant goal in itself. It is also perceived as the means by which the project might educate archivists more generally about the theoretical underpinnings of archival description on which the standards themselves have been built. *RAD*, for example, is built on a number of fundamental principles, i.e., the principle of *respect des fonds*, the principle that description follows arrangement and the principle that archival holdings are described in descending order from the general to the particular. Current descriptive practices do not always correspond to these principles. It is hoped that a better under-

standing of such principles, and their practical application to description, will over time result in a better harmonization of archival principles and descriptive practices. The two goals — providing a comprehensive and inclusive overview of archival holdings in the province, and using the project as a means by which to help implement descriptive standards — have shaped the choices made during the course of the project.

First, given the goals, it was necessary to devise a project which included all of the province's repositories. In the past, union list projects have tended to represent the holdings of the larger repositories. Such a bias in favour of listing "more important" records is often inherent in larger union list projects. In questioning the value of surveying the holdings of minor repositories for the Idaho Centennial Database Project, Richard Davis observed that with a few exceptions, the "materials in the smaller institutions are overwhelmingly of local pertinence and much of it trivial."<sup>3</sup> Smaller repositories themselves often felt that their holdings were too insignificant to be included in national union lists, and did not describe their records in a manner compatible with the format in which the information was requested for inclusion in the union lists. For the purposes of the BCAUL project, however, it was felt that the list should be as inclusive as possible in order to represent truly the nature and extent of archival holdings in the province for the benefit of researchers. A comprehensive listing will also be invaluable in laying the foundation for a provincial network of repositories. Institutions will come to view themselves as integral components of a larger archival infrastructure. In attempting to disseminate information about descriptive standards, the project must attempt to involve all repositories in the province.

Secondly, given the ambitious goals set for the project, it became obvious that project personnel would have to visit each repository — where they would explain the goals of the project, provide information about descriptive standards and compile the required documentation in consultation with local archivists. This was deemed necessary in recognition of the already heavy workload of archivists, and the lack of expertise necessary to compile the information in the required format.

Finally, in order to describe the holdings of all the provincial repositories within three years, it was decided to limit the scope of the union list to non-sponsorial records.

After developing these broad guidelines and principles, the Association hired a project archivist to conduct a detailed study<sup>4</sup> in which he was asked to explore the selection and definition of data elements; the selection of data structure; determination of access points; the use of a controlled vocabulary; the procedures for data-collecting and input; output options for data; and the hardware and software requirements. The study was then circulated to all members of the AABC for comment. After receiving the study and approving its recommendations, the Association commissioned a three-month pilot project after which it proceeded with the first phase of the British Columbia Archival Union List project.

The first year of what is scheduled to be a three-year project has now been completed. The project archivist has visited seventeen repositories, primarily in British Columbia's Lower Mainland, and has created approximately 1,500 fonds level descriptions. The records have been printed in a publication which lists the holdings alphabetically by repository and concludes with an integrated name index. In the spring of 1993 the records will be transferred to a special file created by the University of British Columbia Library, where it will be available on-line for those with access to the UBC Network. The final

version of the British Columbia Archival Union List will probably be distributed on microfiche or CD-ROM.

The BCAUL project has been supported through a three-way partnership. Funding has been provided by the Canadian Council of Archives Special Projects and the provincial government's Community Archives Assistance Programme. The AABC provides supervision, coordination and leadership for the project. The last point is particularly important in that it is often difficult to convince people to participate in a project sponsored or controlled by a single institution. It is easier to persuade repositories of the value of a project when it is coordinated by an organization in which they already have a role.

Having outlined the overarching goals of the BCAUL project, we can now discuss the means employed to achieve these goals. The following section will discuss the data content, data value and data structure standards which the union list follows. The various standards which are being followed will be identified, and then some of the major issues and concerns relating to the implementation of the standards will be discussed.

### *Data Content Standards*

The data content standard which the union list follows is the draft version of *RAD*. For a description to be included in the union list, it has to be a fonds or a collection as defined by *RAD*. A fonds is considered to be

the whole of the records, regardless of form or medium, automatically and organically created and/or accumulated and used by a particular individual, family, or corporate body in the course of that creator's activities or functions.<sup>5</sup>

A collection is considered to be

an artificial accumulation of documents of any provenance brought together on the basis of some common characteristic, e.g., way of acquisition, subject, language, medium, type of document, name of collector, to be treated for description purposes as a descriptive unit under a common title.<sup>6</sup>

Single items are considered to be fonds if they meet the following criteria: whether the item is all that remains of the fonds, whether the item covers a span of years and whether there is evidence of an accumulation.

Descriptions of collections are included in the union list because a significant amount of important material would be omitted if they were to be excluded. The preliminary survey determined that many archives had collections consisting of material which had been removed from fonds and treated separately as part of a collection. The most common example of this was photographic collections which were created by removing photographs from several different fonds and reorganizing them according to a particular subject. In many cases, the material cannot be reintegrated into the original fonds, so the only way it can be included in the union list is to describe it as a collection.

Duplicate records are described only when the material is germane to the institution's acquisition policy. Deciding what duplicate material is included is done on a case-by-case basis. For example, if an entire fonds has been copied, and the whereabouts of the original material is no longer known, then a description of the duplicate fonds is

included. On the other hand, if material has been received by the archives as part of a routine diffusion programme then it is not included in the union list.

Only non-sponsorial records are represented in the union list. If records that would normally be considered sponsorial records are in the custody of another repository, however, then they are included. For example, the municipal records of the District of Burnaby and the City of Port Coquitlam are kept at Simon Fraser University Archives. Because their location would not be obvious to researchers, they are included in the union list. In some cases, a corporate body may be affiliated with a sponsorial body, but is not an official part of the organization. For instance, the University of British Columbia Alumni Association is loosely affiliated with the University, but it is not part of the official university administration. Fonds such as these are included in the union list because they are considered to be non-sponsorial records. Determining which fonds are represented in the union list is done on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with the archivist at the repository.

As of September 1992, approximately 1,500 fonds and collection descriptions had been gathered in the first phase of the project. The main concern so far has been the difficulty in identifying fonds and collection descriptions in the repositories. Material has been described in various ways, often deviating from the principles upon which *RAD* has been built; for example, series have been described without a description of the fonds, in violation of the *RAD* principle that one describes downward from the general to the particular. In addition, the various media components of the fonds, such as the cartographic and textual records, have been described separately with no linkages among the parts; fonds have been described as a number of separate accession units with no connection among the individual accession descriptive records; fonds have been described as collections; and so on. Faced with such diverse descriptive practices, constructing appropriate descriptions has been challenging. Thus far, the descriptions which have been excluded on the grounds that they do not represent fonds or collections have tended to be single items, collections of unrelated items, and published material.

The descriptions in the union list consist of slightly more than the minimum level of detail of description required by *RAD* [Figure 1]. A few qualifications or interpretations of the rules were necessary; they include the following:

#### *Dates of Creation*

If more than half the fonds have been reproduced, then the dates of reproduction are given as the dates of creation, and the dates of the original material are given as other title information.<sup>7</sup>

#### *Biographical Sketch/Administrative History*

Descriptions are limited to approximately 150 words to keep them brief.

#### *Custodial History*

Information on custodial history is provided only if ownership of the material has been transferred. If the material has remained in the custody of the original creator, then no information is provided in this area.

### *Scope and Content Note*

The scope and content note is limited to approximately 150 words to keep it brief. Information on the arrangement of the fonds is not included in this area (information on the arrangement of the fonds is not provided in descriptions in the union list).

### *Source of Supplied Title Proper/Variations in Title Proper*

If the title has been changed to accord with *RAD*, then the title of the fonds as it exists in the repository is indicated following the source of the supplied title.<sup>8</sup>

### *Restrictions Note*

Only restrictions on access are provided in this area. Restrictions on use, reproduction and publication are not indicated.

There are some general concerns with using *RAD* as a data content standard. First, the rules are incomplete. Certain chapters are not yet available, such as the chapters prescribing rules for the description of cartographic, electronic and architectural records, and microforms. This makes it difficult to describe such material. The rules may be available only in draft form, moreover, so changes may be necessary if certain rules are revised. Another concern is that *RAD* does not provide rules for describing collections. Essentially, collections are described according to the same rules, except that the title and the biographical sketch/administrative history are created differently. The title consists of the name of the collector followed by the designation "collection" — or if the collection is identified by subject rather than by collector, then that is used instead. In the biographical sketch/administrative history element, information about the collector and the reasons for accumulating the material is provided. Information about the creator(s) of the material represented in the collection is not included.

The completion of the first twelve-month phase of the project has allowed some time for reflection on how the implementation of *RAD* has proceeded. In archives visited so far, only four out of seventeen were using *RAD* to describe their records. Of approximately 1,500 descriptions gathered, only 80 followed *RAD*. Consequently, almost every entry in the union list has been retrospectively redescribed.

Retrospective redescription has involved reformatting descriptive records, that is, changing the order of the data elements, adding punctuation and gathering missing information. In many cases, supplying missing information was the result of *RAD* requiring new descriptive information to be supplied. For example, the source of a supplied title proper and specific material designation are elements generally not found in descriptions created before *RAD*. Obtaining the missing information was easy in some cases and difficult in others. Where it proved too difficult to locate missing information, compromises were sometimes made. For instance, if the source of a supplied title proper was neither indicated in nor apparent from the description, then it was assumed that the title was based on the contents of the fonds. In other instances, where data was missing and it was too difficult to obtain precise information, a reasonable estimate was given. This was particularly useful in dealing with large numbers of photographs and maps.

Retrospective redescription has also involved expressing information in terms consistent with *RAD*. For instance, the descriptions in one repository consistently identified the donor in the title area. Since *RAD* requires the creator to be indicated in the title, all the descriptions had to be changed. In another archives, the descriptions consistently stated that there was “No record of provenance.” The project archivist determined that the archivists had used the term “provenance” to mean “donor” rather than “creator” — which is the sense in which the term is used in *RAD*. In another repository, when a description indicated “Custodial history unknown,” it meant that the donor [immediate prior custodian] of the material was unknown.

There are some concerns with the retrospective application of *RAD*. Sometimes the description in the union list appears unrelated to the one found in the repository. As a result, a researcher consulting the union list may have difficulty reconciling the two descriptions when visiting the repository. To help overcome this problem, the record number of the fonds or collection is included in the description in the union list [Figure 2].

Record numbers are also included in descriptions in order to help overcome the problem of identification when a single description in the union list exists as a number of separate descriptions in the repository (e.g., when only individual accession descriptive records exist, or when different media are split off and described separately). In such cases, the record numbers of all the descriptions in the repository which represent the fonds or collection are included in the union list description [Figure 3].

Where descriptions are lacking too much information and it is impossible for the project archivist to locate it, the option exists to consider the material unprocessed. This has not happened yet, but was considered in a number of instances. The aim of the project is to gather descriptions and reformat them, not to describe unprocessed material.

Of the descriptions that were created according to *RAD*, most required minor alterations to conform to the application of *RAD*. For instance, one archives elected to use the specific material designations “photograph prints,” “photograph negatives,” “photograph copy prints,” and “photograph copy negatives.” To be consistent with applying *RAD*, all of the above specific material designations were expressed as ‘photographs’. Also, many of the *RAD* descriptions included information about the donor in the custodial history note. According to the rules, however, this information must be given in an immediate source of acquisition note, so the mistake had to be corrected.

Where changes were made to the descriptions, the project archivist explained the reasons for them, and how *RAD* was applied, to the archivist in the repository. Archivists not yet using *RAD*, moreover, were encouraged to do so.

### *Data Value Standards*

The descriptions in the union list can be searched and retrieved by name (as creator or subject), topic, form, function, occupation and repository [Figure 4]. In the on-line version of the database, names as creators and names as subjects are searchable separately, while topics, forms, functions and occupations are all searchable under the single heading “subject.”

Name access points (personal, corporate and geographic) are created according to the rules in Part II of *RAD*. All names are also checked against a standard range of sources

to ensure that only authorized forms of the names are used. Two national authority files are consulted, *Library of Congress Name Authorities* and *Canadiana Authorities*. Additionally an institutional authority file is consulted; the University of British Columbia's name authority file, however, is not so detailed as the others. When a name is checked, if it is not found to exist in one of the above sources, then it is assumed that the name has been derived from a primary or reference source, and the heading is simply checked to ensure that it has been created according to the rules in *RAD*. If the name has not been created according to *RAD*, then appropriate corrections are made. Currently, the project archivist is responsible for verifying that all names used as access points have been created properly.

Name authority records which document the authorized form of each name, as well as any tracings, should be created as part of the union list project. Unfortunately, to research each name and create authority records in the manner suggested by Elizabeth Black in *Authority Control: A Manual for Archivists* (1992) is beyond the scope of this project. Authority records are nevertheless created under a few circumstances. If the name exists in one of the national authority files, then an authority record is created, simply to indicate that the heading has been found in an authorized source and to document the *see* and *see also* references. If there is a conflict between two forms of a name (e.g., Hastings Sawmill Company and Hastings Saw Mill Company), moreover, then a single authorized form of the name is established, and an authority record is created documenting its source. In such cases, primary or secondary reference sources may be consulted in order to establish the correct form of the name.

The main concern with name authority work has been that sometimes the heading created by the archivist in the repository is incorrect according to the authorized sources. If the heading is changed to its authorized form in the union list, but remains unchanged in the archives, this inconsistency can be misleading for the researcher, because the name under which the description is indexed in the union list differs from that found in the repository. In most cases, the changes are minor, but sometimes the heading can change dramatically. For example, in one archives, the authorized form of the name "Lady Aberdeen" was "Ishbel Gordon, Marchioness of Aberdeen and Temair, 1857-1939."

Another concern is that in some instances, the heading assigned by the archivist seems to be incorrect, but because the heading does not appear in one of the authorized sources, it is nevertheless assumed to be correct. This is unfortunate, because if the name is incorrect, then it will be difficult for researchers to find the description when searching under the authorized form of the name. When researchers browse under the name, moreover, other related names may not file with the name in that particular form. Generally, archivists are being encouraged to include name authority work as part of their regular descriptive activities, so that fewer unauthorized forms of names will be found and subsequently have to be corrected.

Descriptors such as topics, forms, functions and occupations which are used as index terms are all derived from a single vocabulary, the *Art and Architecture Thesaurus (AAT)*. The *AAT* is a controlled vocabulary, with a faceted classification of terms in separate hierarchies.<sup>9</sup> It was designed for the description of material commonly found in art libraries, museums and archives.<sup>10</sup>

The *AAT* was selected over the *Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH)* and the locally created *British Columbia Thesaurus*, for it was determined to be the best



vocabulary for the purposes of the union list project because of its inclusivity. The *AAT* includes terms for form, function, occupation, document types, genre and so on, transcending traditional “topic”-oriented vocabularies such as *LCSH* which have always been of limited usefulness in an archival context. The *AAT* was also selected because it is an emerging national standard.<sup>11</sup> If other provincial union lists are developed using *AAT*, then there is the possibility that the descriptions can be combined into a national union list without having to be reindexed. This would not have been possible if a local vocabulary such as the *British Columbia Thesaurus* had been used. Finally, the *AAT* was selected because it is supported and updated by the Getty Art History Information Project and users are encouraged to submit new descriptors.

Currently, in British Columbia, a wide variety of controlled vocabularies are in use. Archivists are using *LCSH*, the *British Columbia Thesaurus* and various in-house vocabularies. This requires that all descriptions have to be reindexed by the project archivist, using the *Art and Architecture Thesaurus*. The experience of creating an inter-institutional listing of holdings has highlighted the importance of adopting a single subject vocabulary.

### ***Data Structure Standards***

The data elements are structured and coded in the union list according to the *Canadian MARC Communication Format: Bibliographic Data* (CAN/MARC), the Canadian standard for encoding bibliographic information. It can accommodate all the archival data elements required for the union list [Figure 5]. Following CAN/MARC ensures that the union list records will be transportable to other databases possessing the same structure.

There are some concerns, however, with implementing CAN/MARC. *RAD* and CAN/MARC differ in a number of areas; making the descriptive information fit the data structure can be awkward in some instances. For example, some of the note fields in *RAD*, such as source of supplied title proper and physical description, do not have corresponding fields in CAN/MARC. In these cases, the general note field (500) is used where a specific note would be preferable. Another example is that the extent field (300) in CAN/MARC does not have a specific subfield for indicating the specific material designation.<sup>13</sup>

Another concern with CAN/MARC is that some of the terminology differs from *RAD*. For instance, the provenance note (561) in CAN/MARC is equivalent to the custodial history note in *RAD*. For the sake of clarity, it would be better if the terminology in CAN/MARC and *RAD* were consistent.

Despite these minor concerns, CAN/MARC is the best way to format the information in the union list for exchange purposes. In the areas where CAN/MARC and *RAD* differ, it is hoped that changes will be made to CAN/MARC to reflect current archival practice.

An alternative to CAN/MARC, which is currently under construction, is the *Common Communications Format* (CCF) for archival material. Sponsored by Unesco, the CCF for archival material will be an international data structure standard based on the General International Standard Archival Description [ISAD(G)]. The CCF, in general, contains a number of improvements over the MARC structure. While this data structure will not be available for use for a number of years, it may be useful to consider in the future.

To summarize, standards in all areas — data content, data value and data structure — are crucial to the success of the union list. The aim has been to follow the standards as closely as possible while at the same time realizing that there must be some measure of flexibility in applying these standards in varied archival settings.

This article has briefly explored the development of a union list project in British Columbia which has benefited from the advent of descriptive standards and which, in turn, will facilitate the implementation of those standards within the provincial archival community. From the outset, the project's goals have extended far beyond those of past union list models. The information about holdings, combined with the education and advocacy roles of the project, will help facilitate further inter-institutional cooperation. The project, therefore, should be considered as something other than a simple listing of provincial archival records. More broadly, the project should be viewed as a first step towards the development of an integrated and functional archival network in British Columbia. As common concerns are identified and addressed cooperatively, institutions will cease to consider themselves as isolated repositories struggling alone to preserve archival records. Instead, they will begin to view themselves as part of a larger system of archives — in which they share a common language, pursue similar goals and work cooperatively to realize these goals in a more effective and efficient manner.

The British Columbia Archival Union List may provide a useful model on which to develop other regional or provincial union lists. The existence of provincial councils of archives provides the infrastructure necessary to plan and implement similar projects. Ultimately, moreover, networks which begin to emerge on the regional or provincial level may be merged to form a national union list.

**Figure 1:** *Descriptions in the union list consist of the preceding elements from RAD.*

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**Title and Statement of Responsibility Area**

Title Proper

**Dates of Creation, Including Distribution, Publication, etc., Area**

Dates of Creation

**Physical Description Area**

Extent of Descriptive Unit and Specific Material Designation

**Archival Description Area**

Administrative History/Biographical Sketch

Custodial History

Scope and Content

**Note Area**

Source of Supplied Title Proper/Variations in Title Proper

Physical Description

Language

Restrictions

Finding Aids

Record Number (General Note)

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**Figure 2:** *The record number of the description in the repository is added to facilitate the retrieval of the record. The record numbers are included only when the description in the union list has been redescribed. The description in this example appears as it would in the on-line version of the union list.*

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PROVENANCE:	D'Arcy, Basil Norman, b. 1874
TITLE:	Basil D'Arcy fonds. 1874-1913.
PHYSICAL DESC:	5 cm of textual records.
BIO/ADMIN HIST:	Basil Norman D'Arcy emigrated to Canada from England in 1909, worked in Calgary until 1911, when he came to Vernon and tried unsuccessfully to sell real estate. D'Arcy eventually returned to England.
CUSTODIAL HIST:	The papers were left in the custody of the Vernon Club when D'Arcy returned to England.
SCOPE/CONTENT:	The fonds consists of birth and baptism notices, 1874; personal correspondence, 1906-1913; business correspondence incoming, 1912-1913; business correspondence outgoing, 1912; real estate listings; letters of reference, 1897-1908; and other various personal records.
SOURCE OF TITLE:	Title based on the contents of the fonds.
RECORD NUMBER(S):	Record number(s): 99
REPOSITORY:	Greater Vernon Museum and Archives
SUBJECTS:	*Search these headings to find more records D'Arcy, Basil Norman, b. 1874 Vernon (B.C.) real estate

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**Figure 3:** *The fonds consists of a single description in the union list, while in the repository it exists as a number of separate descriptions. The record numbers of each of the descriptions in the repository are included in the single fonds description in the union list.*

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### Simon Fraser Student Society

Simon Fraser Student Society fonds. 1965-1992.

4.8 m textual records and other material.

Simon Fraser Student Society was created in 1965. The objectives of the Society are to promote, direct, administer and coordinate all student activities, and to promote cooperation among students and cooperation between the members of the Society and students within the province and elsewhere. The SFSS is responsible for approving and funding university clubs, and is responsible for the operation of the Ombudsoffice. The original constitution provided for fourteen elected officers, including a President and Vice-President. The structure of the Society changed in 1977, the number of at-large positions were decreased, and a student forum was created where each department and programme was represented.

The fonds consists of the records of the Simon Fraser Student Society. It includes constitutions, financial records, correspondence, agenda, minutes, papers, and publications relating to the president, the Student Society Executive and SFSS committees, sound recordings of SFSS meetings and SFSS posters. The records of a number of related clubs and organizations are also included in the fonds. The organizations represented include the Outdoor Club, Science Fiction Society, Student Unions, Used Bookstore, Cinema Simon Fraser, B.C. Public Interest Research Group, Snake Hill Food Co-op, and the Ombudsoffice. A variety of records exist for each of these organizations, including constitutions, publications, correspondence, minutes, newsletters, membership lists, briefs, reports and photographs.

Title based on legal records in the fonds.

Includes: 4.8 m textual records, 445 posters, 9 sound tape reels, ca. 200 photographs.

File list available.

Record number(s): RG 50, RG 99/1, RG 99/2, RG 7/13, RG 100/6

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**Figure 4:** *Access points under which the descriptions in the union list can be searched and retrieved.*

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Provenance

personal name

corporate name

conference or meeting name

Subject added entries

personal name

corporate name

conference or meeting name

geographic name

faceted topical heading

Index terms

genre/form

occupation

function

Added entries

personal name

corporate name

conference or meeting name

Repository

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**Figure 5:** *Fields in CAN/MARC used in the union list.*


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<i>Leader</i>		<i>Variable Data Fields</i>
Leader/00-04	Logical record length	040 Cataloguing source
Leader/05	Record status	041 Language code
Leader/06	Type of record	072 Subject category code
Leader/07	Level	090 Local call numbers
Leader/08-09	Undefined	100 Main entry — personal name
Leader/10	Indicator count	110 Main entry — corporate name
Leader/11	Subfield code count	111 Main entry — conference or meeting
Leader/12-16	Base address of data	245 Title statement
Leader/17	Encoding level	300 Physical description
Leader/18	Descriptive cataloguing form	500:1 General note (Source of supplied title)
Leader/19	Linked record code	500:2 General note (Physical description)
Leader/20	Length of the field	506 Restrictions on access note
Leader/21	Length of the starting character	520 Summary, annotation, scope, etc., note
Leader/22	Length of implementation defined	533 Reproduction note
Leader/23	Undefined entry map character	545 Biographical or historical note
		546 Language note
		555 Finding aids note
		561 Provenance note (Custodial history note)
		600 Subject added entry — personal name
		610 Subject added entry — corporate name
		611 Subject added entry — conference or meeting
		651 Subject added entry — geographic name
		654 Subject added entry — faceted topical heading
		655 Index term — genre/form heading
		656 Index term — occupation
		657 Index term — function
		700 Added entry — personal name
		710 Added entry — corporate name
		711 Added entry — conference or meeting
		851 Repository

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*Fixed Data Fields*

008/00-05 Date entered on file  
 008/06 Type of date code  
 008/07-10 Date 1  
 008/11-14 Date 2  
 008/15-17 Place of publication  
 008/18-22 Blank  
 008/23 Form of reproduction  
 008/24-34 Blank  
 008/35-37 Language  
 008/38 Modified record  
 008/39 Cataloguing source code

### Notes

- \* Paper presented at the 1992 Annual Conference of the Association of Canadian Archivists, Montréal, 12 September 1992; revised and edited for publication.
- 1 A recent example of a union list/bibliographic project is the Idaho Centennial Database. Designed to redress the lack of bibliographic access to archival holdings in Idaho, the survey identified and described archival material available for research. Following a preliminary survey, some sixty-nine institutions which reported archival holdings were sent collection level description forms with an illustrative sample form properly completed. Staff at participating repositories were responsible for completing the information about their holdings, and the records were then edited and entered into the database by project personnel. Only forty-seven of the sixty-nine repositories provided usable data: Richard Carter Davis, "Adventures with MicroMarc: A Report on Idaho's Centennial Database" (paper delivered at the Joint Conference of the Northwest Archivists and the Archives Association of British Columbia, Bellingham, Washington, 2 May 1992).
- 2 This project will not attempt to list the institutional records of sponsoring agencies. For example, in the first phase of this project, the corporate records of the City of Nanaimo or the University of British Columbia will not be included in the union list. Researchers interested in the records of the above-mentioned organizations can consult the *Directory of Archival Repositories in British Columbia* to determine the location of the material. The goal of the initial phase of the project is to provide information about records the location of which might not be so obvious.
- 3 Davis, "Adventures with MicroMarc," p. 12.
- 4 Blair Taylor, *The Archival Holdings in B.C. Project: Feasibility Study* (Vancouver, 1992).
- 5 *Rules for Archival Description* (Ottawa, 1990), p. D-3.
- 6 *Ibid.*, p. D-2.
- 7 This appears in the revised version of *RAD*.
- 8 Combining source of supplied title and the variations in title proper is done according to Rule 1.8A6 of *RAD*, which says, "When appropriate, combine two or more notes to make one note."
- 9 Toni Petersen, "Introduction," Toni Petersen and Pat Molholt, eds., *Beyond the Book: Extending MARC for Subject Access* (Boston, 1990), p. 3.
- 10 For a detailed description of the history, development and structure of the *Art and Architecture Thesaurus*, see the "History of the AAT," Toni Petersen, dir., *Art and Architecture Thesaurus* (New York, 1990), pp. 3-21.
- 11 Currently, the *AAT* is not used in Canada, but it is gaining popularity amongst archivists in the United States, according to the Getty Art History Information Project. In Canada, though, the *AAT* is being used by the Canadian Heritage Information Network (CHIN).
- 12 The materials specified indicator, \$3, is used to indicate specified material designations. For example, 30 cm of textual records would be expressed as 300 — \$a30 cm \$3 of textual records.