

Responsible Research in and for an Information Science Revolution

Following the Second World War an explosion in the quantity of documentation led to a dramatic change in Archiving, or the profession referred to as records managers/records management and archivists/archives. Starting in the 1980s, however, archivists in Quebec began to make great progress by changing their approach and looking at the entire documentary cycle from current to definitive information. Carol Couture and Jean- Yves Rousseau made a crucial contribution towards the understanding of the Three Age Theory that viewed Archiving as an integrated discipline centered on a structural understanding of archives. In 1994, their work *Les Fondements de la Discipline Archivistique*, presented a new interpretation of Theodore Schellenberg's Three Age Theory. They called attention to the fact that the three phases of archival documents are not separate but, on the contrary, integrated. They argued that these three stages can even be looked at in a segmented way, provided the union between them is ensured. Their great innovation relative to Schellenberg's work lay, precisely, in critiquing the division and separation between the three ages of archival documents. Couture and Rousseau thereby brought together all the phases of the lifecycle of records, from production to dissemination, in opposition to the sterile distinction advocated by traditional archivists and document managers. In my opinion, however, the best approach to integrating information management is known as records continuum, which place archives in a post-custodial, informational, and scientific paradigm. This Australian concept arose in the 1990s amid the huge explosion of information, communication technologies and new media. This context forced Information Science to redefine its object of study. Records continuum is closely related to the integrated management model of Couture and Rousseau, while it carries their innovation further, perfecting it and replacing it with systemic dynamics and providing continuity between archives. In fact, records continuum means, literally, continuous management. It looks at the whole process from the production of records to their final archiving. Otherwise, we cannot speak of continuous management. That is why, when we speak of rigid archives – current, intermediate, and definitive, this approach is more theoretical than practical. There is, in fact, no separation between these phases, even less so from the point of view of the value of documents. The traditional distinction between information with probative and historical value ceases to exist. The information is simultaneous and is, in fact, the same.