

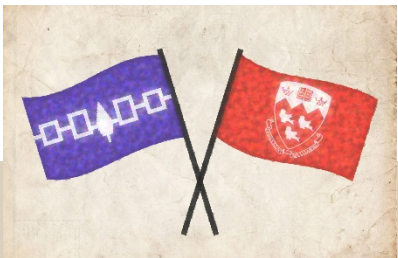
How To [re]Appraise Institutional Records



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Wednesday, July 3, 2019

[re]Appraisal of Institutional Records

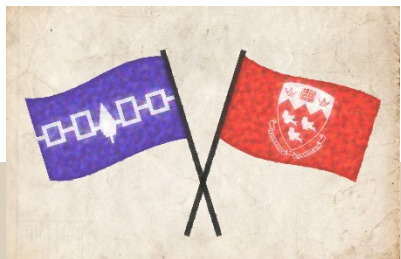
- McGill University and McGill University Archives
- Literature review and trends
- A pragmatic Approach to [re]appraisal
 - Organisational Culture and Context
 - Components of a Records Management Programme
- Conclusion





[re]Appraisal of Institutional Records

McGill University is located on land which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst Indigenous peoples, including the Haudenosaunee and Anishinabeg nations.

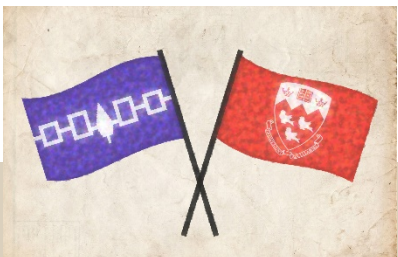
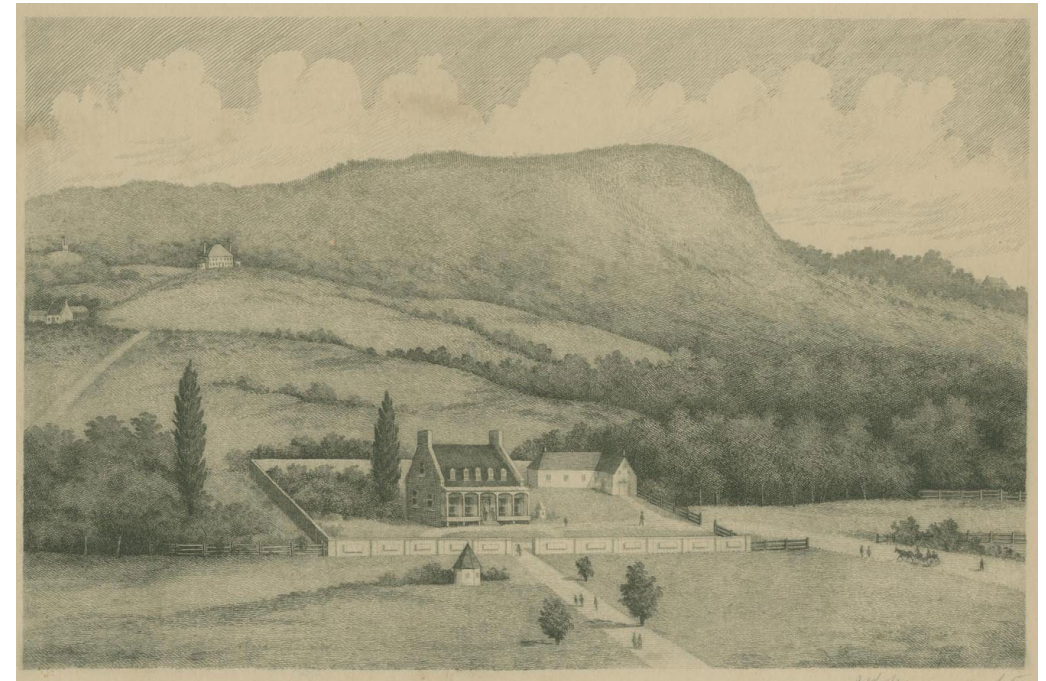




James McGill

□ James McGill (1744-1813)

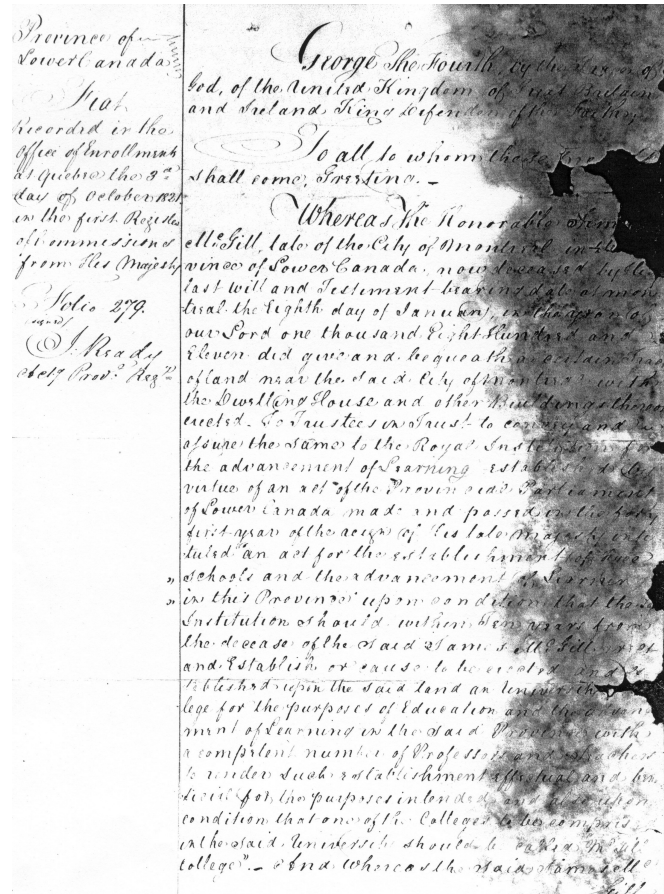
- Born in Glasgow, Scotland
- 1766, fur trade merchant
- 1775, establishes in Montréal
- Bequests £10,000, his land and cottage *Burnside* to create McGill University.



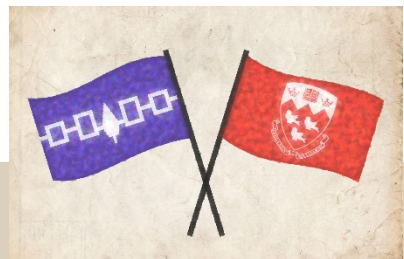
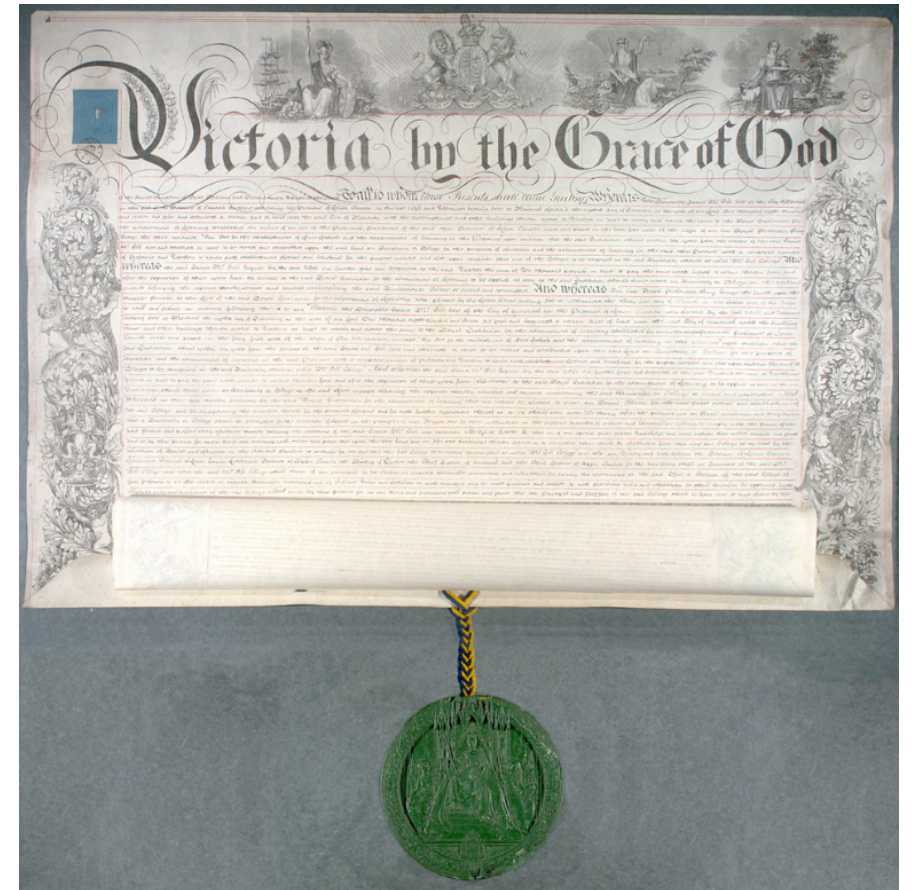


McGill University

1821 – Royal sanction and Charter by King George IV



1852 – Royal sanction and Charter by Queen Victoria

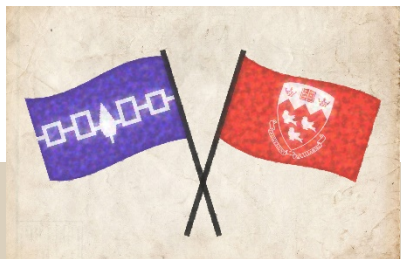




McGill University

□ Today

- 40 000 students
- 1689 tenured and tenure-streamed faculty
- 11 Faculties
- 14 Schools and academic units
- 300 programmes
- 3 campus
- 6 affiliated teaching hospitals
- 250 000 worldwide active alumni



McGill



McGill University Archives

❑ **Created in 1962**

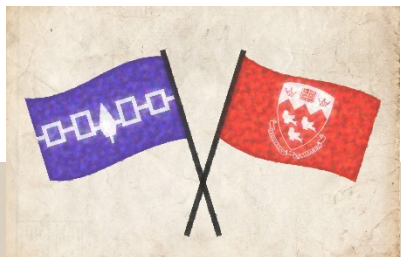
❑ **Structure and composition**

- McGill University Library and Archives
- Report to Dean of Libraries and to Secretary General
- ROAAr (Rare Books, Osler, Arts and Archives)

❑ **Mission**

❑ **MUA Team**

- 2 Archivists Records Management Officers
- 1 Archivist, Historical Archives
- 1 Assistant archivist, reference inquiries and research
- 1 records management technician (special project)
- 1 Records and Archives Clerk
- 1 Director and University Archivist



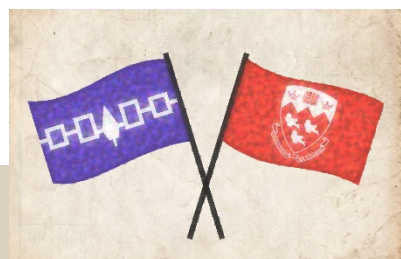


McGill University Archives

- 46 000 c.f. boxes ... 9 linear mi (15 Km)
- Almost double of Mount Everest !!!
- Accruals of around .03 mi (0,6 km) per year

9,4 mi (15.180 m)

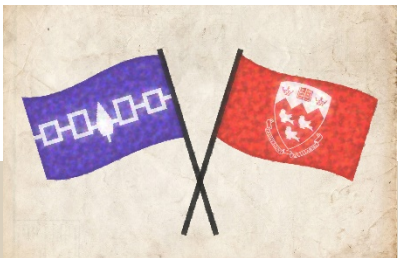
5,4 mi (8,848 m)





McGill University Archives

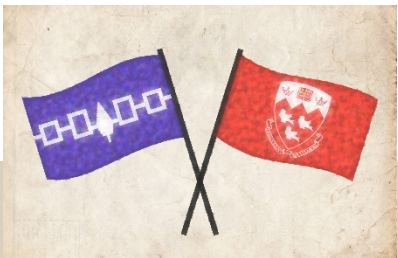
How do you climb Mount Everest and [re]appraise 36 K cubic feet boxes?



[re]Appraisal of Institutional Records

□ Selective literature

- **Leonard Rapport**, No Grandfather Clause: Reappraising Accessioned Records. 1981
- **Karen Benedict**. Invitation to a Bonfire: Reappraisal and Deaccessioning of Records as Collection Management Tools in an Archives—A Reply to Leonard Rapport. *American Archivist*, 47-1, 1984.
- **Laura Uglean Jackson** et al. Guidelines for Reappraisal and Deaccessioning Draft, 2011.
- **Courtney Buehn**. The Importance of Reappraisal and Deaccessioning in Collegiate Archives in the Pacific Northwest. *Journal of Western Archives*, vol 4-1, 2013.
- **James Gerencser**. Reappraisal and Deaccessioning. *Building for the Future by Removing Some of the Past*. In *Kate Theimer ed., Appraisal_and_Acquisition_Innovative_Practices_for Archives and Special Collections*. 2015.



[re]Appraisal of Institutional Records





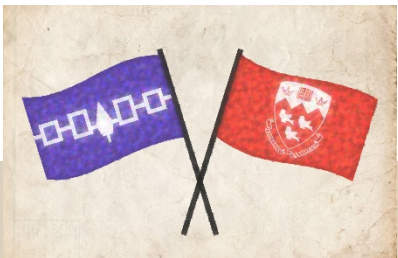
[re]Appraisal of Institutional Records

- **Rapport - No Grandfather Clause: Reappraising Accessioned Record**
 - Controversial at the time.
 - Focused on archives, assuming some are kept without specific reason or should not have been kept.
 - Proposes to reappraise and deaccession on a regular basis.

- **Benedict - Invitation to a Bonfire**
 - Reply to Leonard Rapport.
 - Does not believe this to be the best approach.

- **Proposes broad-scale approach**
 - Rapport's argument is most persuasive when he speaks of scheduling reappraisal in order to find those materials that were wrongly accessioned in the first place—those without archival value. This should be done with extreme caution.

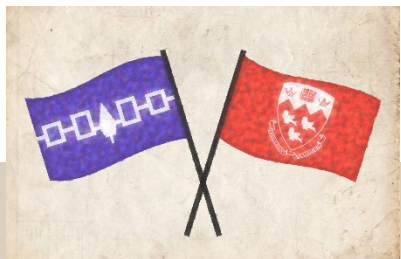
 - Basically saying, when in doubt, keep it.





[re]Appraisal of Institutional Records

- **Use of the records**, he believes, should be the main criterion in determining value.
- He suggests that during the intervals between reappraisal—perhaps twenty, twenty-five, or thirty years—the Archivist could "analyze what uses, if any, are made of the records."
- Reappraisal = Crisis Management solution. If, as is frequently the case, the archives is short of stack space and the bulk of holdings are in hard copy format, then **microfilming of the records** is a desirable solution. (Benedict)
- **Media Transfer – Microfilming (Digitization)**, but does not hint on subsequent disposal.





[re]Appraisal of Institutional Records

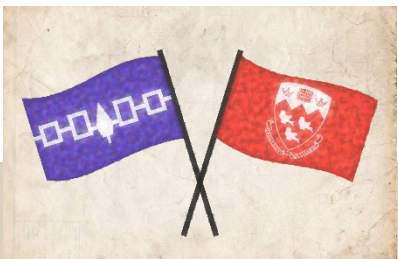
□ How

- Suggests methodologies
- Manuals, procedures, guidelines, recipes
- Looking at peers' footsteps

■ Short Literature Review

- Mostly focuses on historical records
- Records Management literature on reappraisal or retroactive appraisal

■ How also suggests to return to basics.

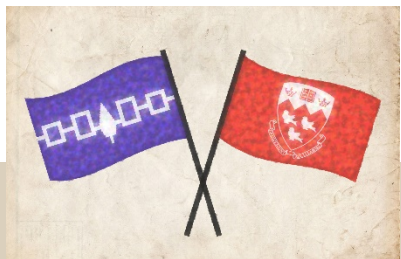




[re]Appraisal of Institutional Records

□ How do archivists appraise?

- Proactive multi-institutional documentation strategy
- **Macro-appraisal and functional analysis (top-down)**
- Pragmatic focused acquisition strategy – Minnesota Method
- **Record-based analysis (bottom-up)**
- Appraisal policies and guidelines

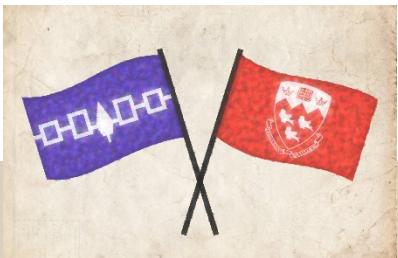




[re]Appraisal of Institutional Records

□ Macro Appraisal

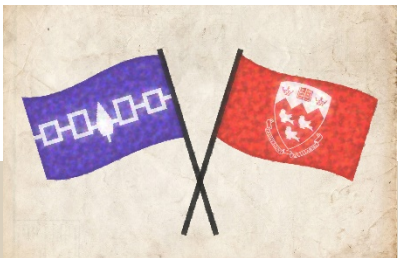
- **12 Functional Criteria (Cook 204).**
- **Assesses value of records at organizational level , department or unit, rather than at individual file or document level.**
- **Strategic approach; analyzing functions and identifying most significant records, supporting those functions**
- **Allows to document the relationship between three interrelated entities: creator of records, the functions and processes documented by the records; the citizens or clients upon whom the functions impinge and who in turn can influence the first two.**



[re]Appraisal of Institutional Records

□ Micro Appraisal

- Bottom-up
- Allows in-situ, hands-on identification and verification of records;
- Authentication and evidential and informational value; confirm content;
- Very efficient for homogenous content;
- Allows appropriate understanding of the context of the records' creation
- Allows to determine the overall quality of the collection and its constituent parts in terms of completeness, density of information contribution to knowledge and physical condition;
- Guidance in selection and “reappraisal” should be supplied by the retention schedule, appraisal checklists, and accession forms. (Williams)



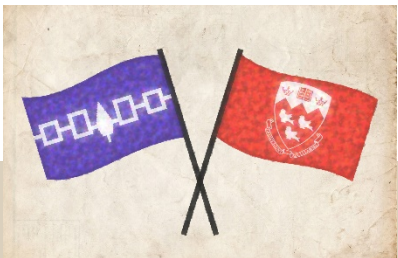


[re]Appraisal of Institutional Records

□ Organisational Culture and Context

Identifying Context

- It is only possible to make informed **appraisal decisions** once you understand the context in which the individual or organization whose records you are appraising operated. (Ham)

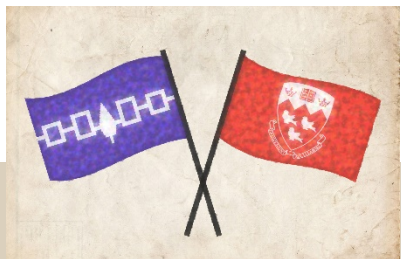




[re]Appraisal of Institutional Records

□ Context

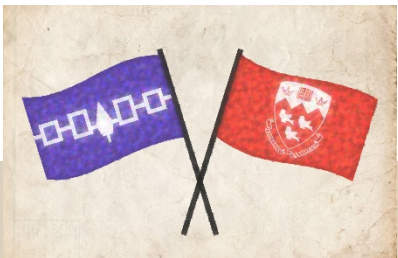
- Knowledge of the Institution **responsible** for creation and accumulation;
- Archivists need to have an excellent understanding of their institution's roles, **responsibilities and functions** in relationship to the creation of records
- Analysis and Determination of records value will occur at both administrative and operational levels.
- Use of a range of **functional categories** will help determine evidential and informational values; (Williams)
- Use of the Institutional **Classification Plan** can help categorize series or records;



[re]Appraisal of Institutional Records

□ Records Management as an Appraisal Tool (Dojka et Conneen)

- Identify Elements of a Programme
 - From Creation to Disposition through life cycle.
- Assuming records life cycle is identified.

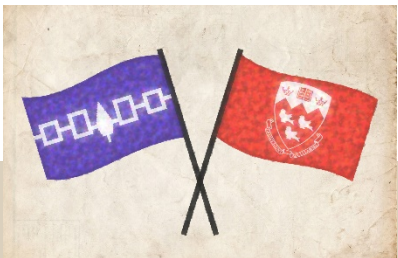




[re]Appraisal of Institutional Records

□ Components of a Records Management Programme

- Classification Plan
- Retention Schedules
- Sectorial Retention Guidelines
- Institutional Taxonomies
- Procedures
- Training Programme





[re]Appraisal of Institutional Records

□ Develop of a [re]appraisal Strategy

■ Macro appraisal and micro appraisal : A Question of Balance

- The Archivist and the Fisherman

■ Building the [re]appraisal matrix

Sustainable Methodology

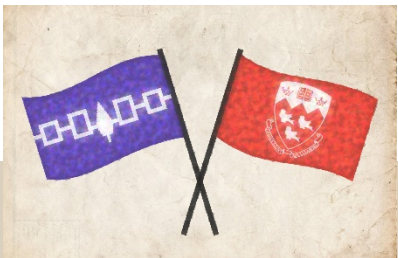
- Classification Plan

- Retention Schedules

- Sectorial Retention Guidelines (environnement)

- Taxonomy

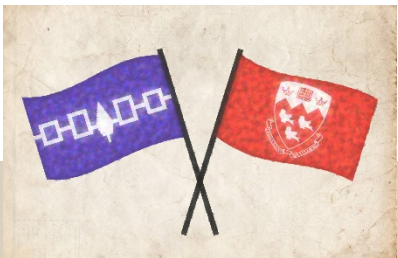
- Procedures



[re]Appraisal of Institutional Records

□ The Classification Plan and Retention Schedule

- Mission and Functions of the University
 - Reasons and objectives behind the production of the records
 - Link between mission and activities of the institution
 - Distinction between primary and secondary value
 - Identification of any legal requirements, laws and regulations?
-
- Determination of the **primary value** has to take into account the external environment. (Nahuet)
 - **Secondary value** has to take into account societal environment

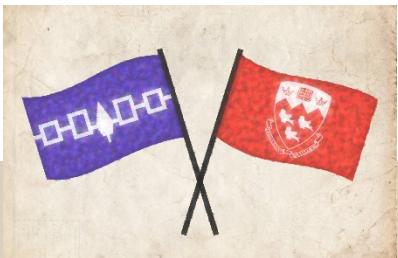




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□ The Classification Plan and Retention Schedule

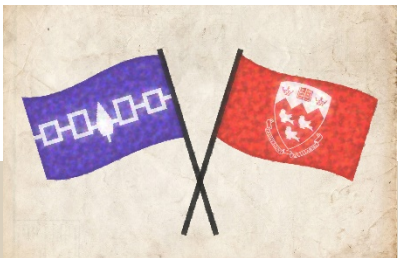
- Institutional Processes Functions and Activities
- Series of Records
- Limited to a maximum of four levels
- One retention rule per level, with possible exceptions
- Identification of primary responsibility
- Reviewed, Approved and Updated
- Sectorial Guidelines Review



[re]Appraisal of Institutional Records

□ Taxonomy

- Institutional structure
- Faculties, departments, units, schools, institutes
- Mission, role, mandate
- Administrative history
- Reviewed, Approved and Updated





[re]Appraisal of Institutional Records

Procedures and Guidelines

- Document Decision-Making

- Document of the re-appraisal process and methodology

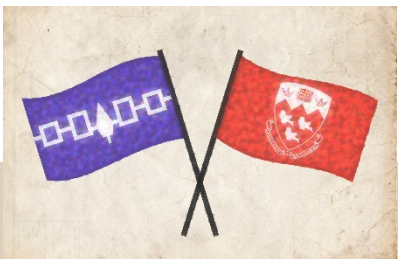
RM Matrix

- [re]appraisal

- Can serve for analog and digital environment

- Information Governance Tool

- Data Categorization

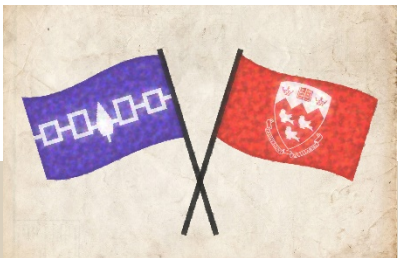




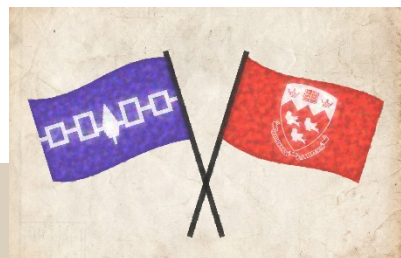
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□ Conclusion

- “There is no right way to appraisal.” (Williams)
- When in doubt, keep it!
- Re-Appraisal will and should be done periodically.
- Use sustainable tools and recognized standards.



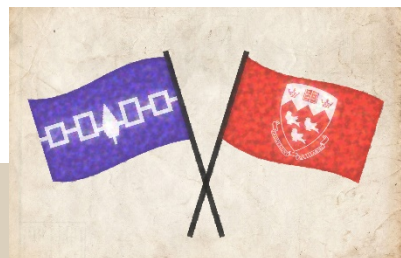
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[re]Appraisal of Institutional Records



Questions or Comments?





Thank You!