

CORRESPONDENCE

Archives in Australia

I am not sure whether 'the reviewed' has any right of reply to 'the reviewer', but I feel that I should and must comment on Peter Orlovich's review of my *Archives in Australia*, 1978. References in this letter are to the paragraphs of the review contained in *Archives and Manuscripts* 7(5): 281-283, November 1979.

In paragraph four (4), Orlovich mentions Frank Evans' bibliography, the 1975 edition of which was published by the Society of American Archivists and was entitled *Modern Archives and Manuscripts: a select bibliography*. None of the editions (dating from 1965 not 1970) of this work has contained very many Australian references; certainly the 1975 edition has very few references specifically Australian.

Again in paragraph four (4) Orlovich mentions the *Basic International Bibliography of Archive Administration* which was published in 1979 (about mid-year) as volume 25 of *Archivum* (published by I.C.A.). This, of course, came out after *Archives in Australia* and contains virtually no references to Australia at all (see the index of that *Archivum*).

The two items by Gerald Fischer and the item on Pitt are recorded in *Archives in Australia*, albeit not in the 'Acknowledgements'.

Orlovich, in his paragraph seven (7), refers to the use on the title page of Volume Three of a variant title, namely *Archives in Australia: a Bibliography*. The variant was used as an *abbreviation* for the full title which is on the cover.

In his paragraph eight (8), Orlovich describes volume four. The reason for keeping this material separate was that it was compiled some three years after the material in volumes one and/or two.

It is implied in Orlovich's comment on volume five (in paragraph ten (10)) that the numbering of the parts (subdivisions) of the work is erratic/peculiar/erroneous. In fact this is not the case: the complete *Archives in Australia* contains 26 bibliographies, 4 biobibliographies, 1 reference paper, and 1 index. The grouping of these into the volumes is not accidental. Each separate item is available also.

It is quite apparent in his paragraph eleven (11) that Orlovich has not looked carefully enough at the paper in volume six which is entitled: 'Fifty Years of Inertia: 1927-1977, part one; Australian Archival History: a First Foray: The Commonwealth Situation'.

The first part of the title, 'Fifty Years of Inertia: 1927-1977' is used as a running heading at the top of each page of the paper. Orlovich's comments on the structure of the paper are incorrect; the contents page of the paper is quite clear.

The second part of volume six elicits from Orlovich in his paragraph twelve (12) some remarks about the use of the term 'guides'. If he chooses to give the term a preciseness of meaning that I did not, that does not invalidate what I was trying to do. We are merely using the term in different ways: both are valid in the right context.

Orlovich in paragraph 13 suggests that the compiler has claimed a coherence for volume seven, which the compiler did not and does not claim. The collection of the group of papers into a volume and the collective title were (are) simply convenient ways of gathering some slightly loose ends together.

Orlovich makes a number of points in his paragraph 14. I thank him for pointing out the error in the index to the Supplement 1 in Volume Three: all the page references given in the index should be increased by one (i.e. an index reference to page 10 should be to page 11) However, I query his blanket accidulated remarks such as 'typographical errors. . . . are conspicuous throughout'. Several people have been through the work and shown me errors, but not as many as Orlovich's comments imply. If errors are present I am keen to know of them: an errata list could be produced. I flatly reject Orlovich's objection to the 'Introduction' to the item 'CURABA: Current Archives Bibliography Australia: Newspaper and Parliamentary Comment'. I quote the entire four-sentence, six-line passage:

The entries herein include most mentions of the Australian Archives both in Parliament and in the Press between 1974 and 1977. In one sense this material is ephemeral. However the material exemplifies the non-political nature of Archives because the fate of Archives is a non-contentious, non-political issue. The lack of national legislation in Australia is a political disgrace.

I stand by the comments and point out that they still apply.

I refrain from further challenging of the points raised by Orlovich in his paragraph fourteen (14) but I nonetheless remain bemused by the progression from paragraph 14 to paragraph 15.

I am grateful for constructive comment, the pointing out of errors, and the less caustic remarks of other reviewers. If all bibliographical works received such reviews most would never be attempted.

Finally, I point out that I have 'footed the bill' for producing this work, that there is nothing else in the subject field that is specifically Australian and that with a few rare exceptions the degree of support received from Australian archival practitioners was minimal.

My parting 'shot' (you will have to excuse the fatuousness) is to suggest that reviewers reviewing bibliographies should be careful to cite sources accurately, especially when displaying marked signs of inclination towards savagery.

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