"Archives, Postmodernism and the Internet: The Return to Historical Narrative in Archival Public Programming"

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This thesis argues that postmodernism and the Internet have begun to affect the nature and place of public programming in Canadian archives. The thesis maintains that they have prompted a return to historical narrative, a key feature of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century public programming in Canadian archives. This tradition was undermined in the late twentieth-century by the assertion of archivists of a distinct professional status apart from their former identity as historians. This thesis maintains that the understandable profession-building priorities of the new archival profession shifted attention and energy from public programming concerns and public programming based on historical narrative. The efforts of some archivists in the late 1980s to advocate for a higher priority for public programming reflect discontent with the often marginal status of public programming. The arrival in archival circles of postmodernism and the Internet in the 1990s has aided this effort considerable. This thesis maintains that as a result there is a detectable new commitment to making public programming (based on historical narrative information) a central feature of archival work.