SCHELLENBERG, T. R. (THEODORE R.)
(1903, KANSAS, USA – 1970, VIRGINIA, USA)
PARENTS: SARAH SCHROEDER SCHELLENBERG and
ABRAHAM LAWRENCE SCHELLENBERG
NATIONALITY: AMERICAN
COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE: UNITED STATES

EDUCATION
• Hillsboro High School, Hillsboro, Kansas, 1916-1918
• Tabor Academy, Hillsboro, Kansas, 1919-1922
• University of Kansas: B.A. in history, Lawrence, Kansas, 1928
• University of Kansas: M.A. in history, Lawrence, Kansas, 1930
• University of Pennsylvania: Ph.D. in history, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1934

AREAS OF ARCHIVAL SPECIALIZATION
Appraisal; government records; archival principles; records management

ACHIEVEMENTS IN ARCHIVAL FIELD
Schellenberg made significant contributions to the development of archival standards and appraisal methods for government records in his work with the National Archives in Australia and the United States. He wrote The Appraisal of Modern Public Records, a classic text of archival principles in the United States.

CAREER HISTORY
• Executive Secretary of the Joint Committee on Materials for Research, American Council for Learned Societies and Social Science Research, 1934-1935
• Deputy Examiner, National Archives, U. S., 1935-1938
• History Assistant, National Parks Service, U. S., ca. 1935
• Associate National Director, Survey of Public Records, U. S., 1936
• Chief of the Agricultural Department Archives, National Archives, U. S., 1938-1945
• Fulbright Lecturer in Australia and New Zealand, 1954
• Assistant Archivist of the United States, 1956-1963

HISTORICAL BIOGRAPHY
Theodore Schellenberg was born in 1903 in Garden Township, Kentucky. His parents were German Mennonites who immigrated to America from Russia in 1879. After completing his Ph.D. in 1934, Schellenberg was employed by the federal government as Executive Secretary of the Joint Committee on Materials for Research for the American Council for Learned Societies and Social Science Research.
He continued working for the federal government throughout his long career in archives. During his tenure as Director of Archival Management at the National Archives of the United States in the early 1950’s, Schellenberg oversaw an extensive reappraisal initiative to de-accession old records and select new records for retention. While working on this project he broke away from traditional European archival principles to design a new appraisal system that, in his view, could be applied consistently. During this period he was awarded a Fulbright lectureship in Australia and New Zealand, where he made significant changes to Australia’s national archives program and wrote a series of pamphlets that laid the groundwork for his influential publication, *Modern Archives: Principles and Techniques*. In order to address the overwhelming volume of modern records, Schellenberg’s work diverged significantly from many archival principles championed in Sir Hilary Jenkinson’s *Manual of Archival Administration*. In contrast to Jenkinson’s focus on “quality” in appraisal, Schellenberg argued that appraisal should be based on the primary value (administrative or operational value) and/or secondary value (evidential or informational value) of records. Following the success of his book, Schellenberg was appointed Assistant Archivist of the United States, a position he held until 1963. After his retirement he taught university courses in archival administration and preservation. He died in 1970 in Arlington, Virginia.

**PARTIAL BIBLIOGRAPHY listing BOOKS AND then ARTICLES**

- (With Clinton Block) *Archives of Trinidad and Tobago*. Port of Spain, Trinidad: Government Publishing Office, 1958
- “Modern Archival Buildings” in Archivum No. 6, 1956

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**AUTHOR OF BIOGRAPHICAL entry / DATE OF SUBMISSION**

ICA-SUV WHO'S WHO IN ARCHIVES GLOBALLY

http://www.library.illinois.edu/ica-suv/index.php
Molly Bruce, September 2013

SECONDARY SOURCES FOR BIOGRAPHY


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