The "Trunk and Branches" Method

This method attempts, to the extent practical, to identify duplicate copies of records and review them together. The "trunk" is the file that the analyst is reviewing in serial-number sequence (back-to-front or front-to-back). The "branches" are the identified duplicate copies of particular serials in the trunk file. At this time, the trunk file will be the HQ file for Lee Harvey Oswald (105-82555), for Ruby's murder of Oswald (44-24016) or for the investigation of President Kennedy's assassination (62-109060).

This method involves the following steps:

1) Find the Branch RIFs: In the FBI database, run a search for "SEE [file number of the trunk file]" in the Comments field. For example, to find the branches for the Ruby HQ file, run a search for "SEE 44-24016" in the Comments field. This will yield the "branches" for that trunk file. Print the RIFs you have found.

2) Match the Branch RIFs with the Trunk RIFs: Soon we should be able to print the branch RIFs out in order of the trunk file serial numbers referenced in the Comments field. Until then, we have to sort the RIFs by hand. Staple each branch RIF to the RIF for the corresponding trunk serial, with the RIFfor the trunk serial on top. There may be more than one branch RIF for one trunk RIF.

3) Review Trunk and Branches Together: When you are reviewing documents and come across a trunk RIF stapled to one or more branch RIFs, you should:

> a) Pull the brown-out packages for the trunk serial and each branch serial, and make sure that the redactions are consistent in each. If they are not, note the fact that there are inconsistencies on the review sheet for each serial.
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> b) Pull the postponement packages for the trunk serial and each branch serial, and make sure that the postponement package for each trunk and branch serial is consistent with the redactions marked in the new brown-out package for that serial. If there is an inconsistency, check the "master" inventory sheet in the file cabinet near the windows, show the inconsistency to the team leader, and note the inconsistency on the appropriate review sheet.
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> c) Prepare a review sheet for the trunk serial as you would ordinarily, but note the agency file numbers of each branch serial as duplicates. Prepare a "dummy" review sheet for each branch serial by filling out the top portion of the sheet (including QC lines) and writing (if applicable): "DUPLICATE WITH IDENTICAL REDACTIONS -- SEE ATTACHED FOR ANALYSIS."