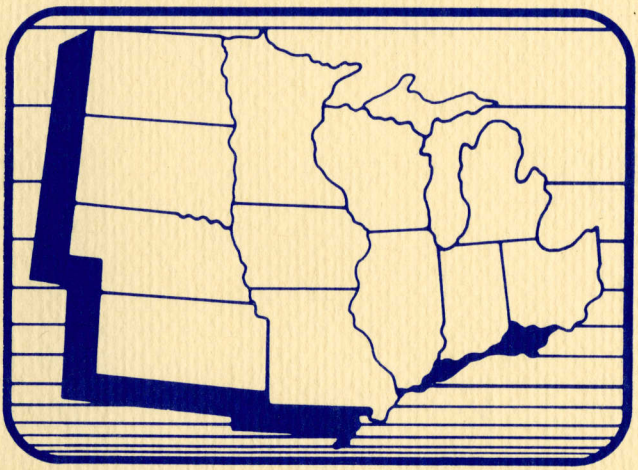
The Midwestern Archivist



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ARTICLES

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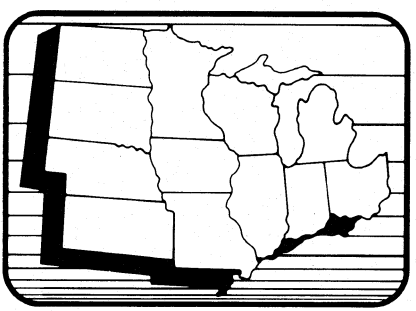

THE IMPACT OF THE MARC AMC FORMAT ON ARCHIVAL EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT DURING THE 1980S

DONALD L. DeWITT

ABSTRACT: During the 1980s, the development of the MARC AMC format allowed archives and manuscript repositories to take advantage of automation on an unprecedented scale. A review of archival position vacancies indicates the increasing extent to which knowledge of the MARC AMC format became a criterion for employment in the 1980s and that employers tended to prefer candidates with pre-appointment knowledge of the format. Most positions utilizing the MARC AMC format were at colleges and universities. A survey of archival education programs reveals that by the end of the decade these programs had made only a limited response in providing training in the MARC AMC format. On-the-job training was the most frequently cited source of training for successful candidates who came to a position with knowledge of the MARC AMC format.

A Machine-Readable Cataloging (MARC) format designed for cataloging books and serials first appeared in the 1960s. This early MARC format helped the Online College Library Center (OCLC) become a reality in 1967, and paved the way for the development and use of shared national bibliographic utilities.[1]

This early surge of library automation was driven by the desire to reduce costs by sharing the catalog record for a single title that might be held by many libraries. In archival and manuscripts repositories, however, "shared cataloging" did not apply; each unique body of material required original description and cataloging. Archival repositories had little use for the automated circulation and acquisition systems developed to support activities specific to libraries.[2]

The turnaround for archival automation came in 1977 when the Society of American Archivists authorized the formation of the National Information Systems Task Force (NISTF) and charged it to seek ways to develop a national database system that would allow archives and manuscript repositories to exchange information about their holdings. The end product of the NISTF was the MARC AMC (Archival and Manuscripts Control) format adopted by the Society of American Archivists and the Library of Congress in 1982.[3]

Concurrent with the work of the NISTF were significant technical advances in the computer field: the increased capability and decreased cost of microcomputers; the entry of International Business Machines (IBM) into the personal computer field and the subsequent dominance of MS-DOS as the standard operating system; and the availability of a high-capacity hard disk storage for microcomputers.[4]

In January 1984 several archives and manuscript repositories began converting descriptive data to the MARC AMC format and entering them into the Research Libraries Information Network (RLIN) database. OCLC began offering the AMC format in November 1984. The process has continued unabated. The availability of MicroMARC:amc, the stand-alone microcomputer software developed in 1986, helped to assure the acceptance and spread of the MARC AMC format in the United States. Prior to its development, use of the MARC AMC format was limited to members of one of the bibliographic utilities such as OCLC or RLIN. With MicroMARC:amc, however, any repository that could afford approximately $2,500 for both the IBM-compatible computer and the software was potentially able to produce a database that could be used online locally and that could be exchanged with other institutions.[5]

By 1989 records for over 165,000 individual archival and manuscript collections had been added to RLIN alone. The Library of Congress has begun adding its National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collection (NUCMC) citations. WLN, a bibliographic serving the Pacific Northwest, and UTLAS, based in Toronto and serving institutions primarily in Canada, also accept MARC AMC records. What began as a modest proposal in 1977 became a national phenomenon in the 1980s offering the potential for creating an international database for archives and manuscript holdings in the 1990s.[6]

Such a radical change in the way archives and manuscript repositories report and describe their holdings brought with it some far-reaching implications for the field of archives. The MARC AMC format has provided a framework in which archivists can discuss and teach descriptive practices; allowed the integration of archival and manuscript holdings into the automated public catalogs of the major research libraries, thereby creating opportunities for closer professional bonds between archivists and librarians; provided archives and manuscript repositories with a means to continually update their holdings and maintain better administrative control over their accession records; and provided researchers with an opportunity to retrieve information about the content of archival and manuscript holdings on a scale previously unattainable.[7]

The MARC AMC format also noticeably affected the qualifications for archivists and manuscript librarians. It created a need for archivists who understood the format and who knew how descriptive information could be used within the format's structure. To take advantage of the automation possibilities that became available, the profession had to train its practitioners rapidly. Acceptance of the format meant that midway through the decade of the 1980s a new technical requirement had been added to the criteria for selected archival and manuscript librarian positions.

During the 1980s two surveys examined the relationships among archival education, recruitment, and qualifications. David Bearman briefly reported the findings of his review of archival vacancies appearing in the *SAA Newsletter* during 1985 and 1986.[8] His results indicated that employers were seeking appli-

cants with knowledge of the MARC AMC format, and that the number of positions asking for automation competence increased between 1985 and 1986. In 1988 Constance B. Schultz published the findings of her survey which examined how well archival education met the needs for state archives. While noting that employers frequently mentioned the need for more technical training for archivists, her survey did not specifically address training and use of automation.[9]

This survey, conducted during the fall of 1989 and spring of 1990, builds upon Bearman's analysis by providing similar data over a longer span of time and expands on Schultz's study by focusing on archival education in one area of automation. This survey fills an informational gap by assessing the impact of the MARC AMC format on archival employment and on the training of archivists. It attempts to answer three basic questions.

1. To what extent has knowledge of the MARC AMC format become a qualification for archival employment?
2. To what extent have archival education programs added MARC AMC format training to their curriculums?
3. To what extent have employers been able to recruit archivists with knowledge of the MARC AMC format?

Survey Methodology

Data for this paper was collected in three phases. The first phase consisted of a position-by-position review of all vacancy announcements appearing in the *SAA Newsletter* from 1980 through 1989. The *Newsletter* was chosen because of its reputation as a clearinghouse for the recruitment of archivists and manuscript librarians, and because it provided the most comprehensive listing of positions from the widest range of institutions.

The data collected during the review of positions included job title, the basic duties of the position, the type of institution advertising the vacancy, the year the position was available, and whether the position listed knowledge of the MARC AMC format as a qualification. It became apparent early in the position review process that one could not always determine whether MARC AMC format knowledge or other automation criteria were required or preferred. While some advertisements clearly distinguished required from preferred qualifications, many did not. Consequently, the survey could not maintain such a distinction. It merely identifies position announcements that ask for candidates with MARC AMC or automation knowledge or skills.

The review of positions excluded internships and research assistantships; positions outside the United States; clerical positions; photographic archives positions for which the technology of photography was the dominant element; senior administrative positions primarily responsible for finance, personnel, and budget in multifunctional agencies; librarian positions; museum curators; preservation specialists; education curators; records management positions; micrographic specialists; teaching positions in public history; oral history positions; sales positions; needs assessment and field survey positions; audiovisual/film librarians; and editorships. Positions for which the search was extended were counted only once. A position search that closed and subsequently was reopened, however, was counted as a new position.

A second data-gathering phase included a survey of fifty-six institutions that offered course work in archival administration or manuscript librarianship, based on a listing in the Society of American Archivists *Educational Directory.* This survey asked if the institution provided instruction in the MARC AMC format; if so, what type of instruction it provided; and when the institution began offering MARC AMC format training. Certain *Directory* listings were excluded: short workshops and institutes, programs at foreign institutions, records management programs, and those offering undergraduate courses only.

The third phase was a survey of the institutions that advertised positions asking for knowledge of archival automation applications and, specifically, knowledge of the MARC AMC format. The institutions and positions surveyed were identified during phase one of the research.

The objective of the third phase was to answer the following questions:

- Did the institution receive applications from candidates with knowledge of the MARC AMC format?
- If the institutions hired candidates with knowledge of the MARC AMC format, what was the source of their pre-appointment AMC format training?
- What was the source of post-appointment training?
- What degrees were held by appointees with AMC format knowledge?
- What types of institutions sought archivists with AMC format knowledge?

Data Analysis

Review of position announcements. The review of archival vacancy announcements in the *SAA Newsletter* from 1980 to 1989 yielded 884 positions for further study (exclusions mentioned above). One hundred eleven (13%) of these specifically asked for knowledge of the MARC AMC format. An additional 152 (17%) sought candidates with knowledge of archival automation applications, but did not specify the MARC AMC format. Thus, a total of 263 positions (30%) had an automation criterion in the position description.

Overall percentages may be misleading, however, because the number of positions asking for MARC AMC or automation knowledge increased dramatically in the second half of the decade. Between 1980 and 1984, only four positions mentioned the MARC format, no more than 3% of the total number of positions in any one year. One of these incorporated duties using the early OCLC format for cataloging manuscripts, another sought only searching capabilities on RLIN, a third recruited a candidate to work on the development of the MARC AMC format, and the fourth was a vacancy for the 1984 pilot MARC AMC conversion project at Cornell University. By 1986, however, 24% of all position vacancies requested knowledge of the MARC AMC format and the demand remained at 18-23% for the remainder of the decade. The number of positions requesting nonspecific archival computer or automation knowledge rose two years earlier in 1984. Many of these were, in all likelihood, positions using MARC AMC since 44% of them were at institutions using the MARC AMC format.

There has been a steady annual increase in the percentage of archival positions with an automation criterion, from 1% in 1980 to 58% in 1989. Knowledge of automation applications undoubtedly became a significant qualification for archivists and manuscript librarians seeking employment.

Survey of educational programs. The second phase of research sought to determine if the institutions offering archival education had responded to these new automation requirements by incorporating MARC AMC format instruction in their curricula. Of the 56 institutions contacted, 42 (75%) responded. Two institutions indicated that they no longer offered archival education, leaving 40 usable responses.

At the close of the decade, only 22 (55%) of the responding institutions offered MARC AMC format training as part of their curricula. Eleven of these archival education programs were based in history departments, seven were offered through library schools, and four reported being jointly based in history departments and library/information science schools.

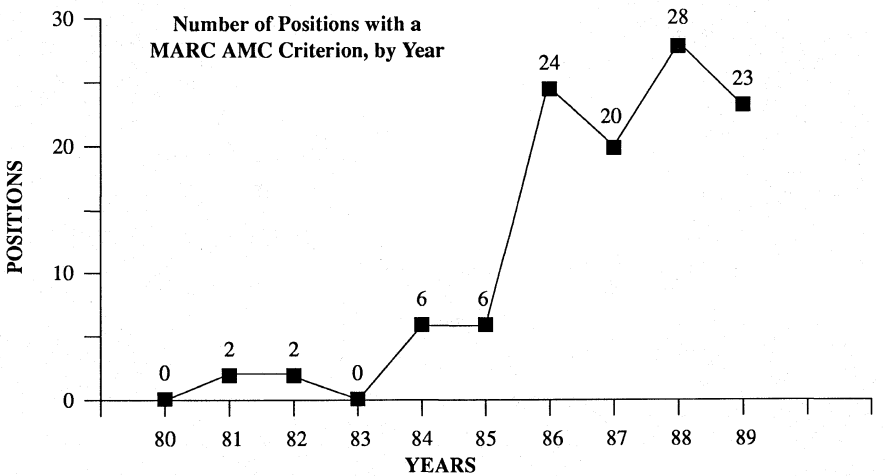

Figure 1

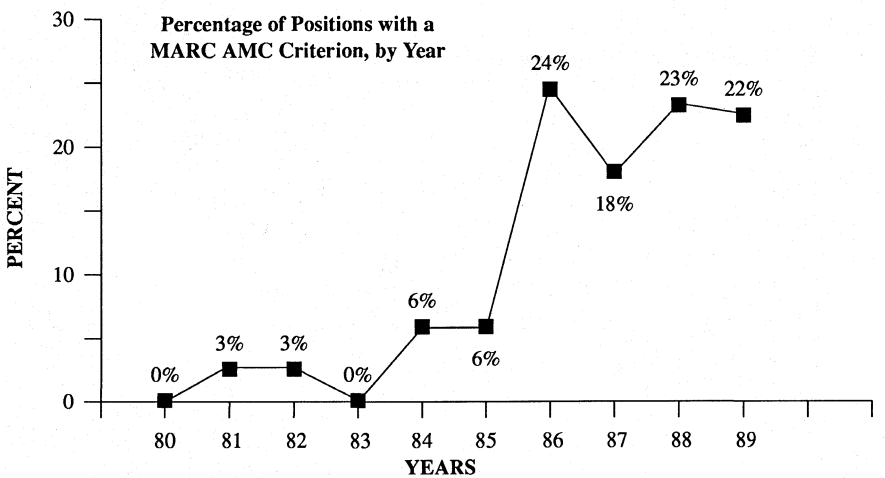

Figure 2

The survey did not attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of MARC AMC format training, but it did ask how the training was accomplished and what automated system was used, if any. One program offered lectures and readings only, five programs offered lectures, readings, and demonstrations, and sixteen programs offered lectures, readings, and hands-on training. The most widely used automated system for AMC format training was OCLC, followed by RLIN and MicroMARC:amc. Other responses included MARCON and library online catalog systems such as NOTIS. Some institutions replied that they used more than one automated system for training, usually OCLC or RLIN along with MicroMARC:amc or MARCON. MicroMARC:amc and similar microcomputer packages were not used extensively in archival education settings.

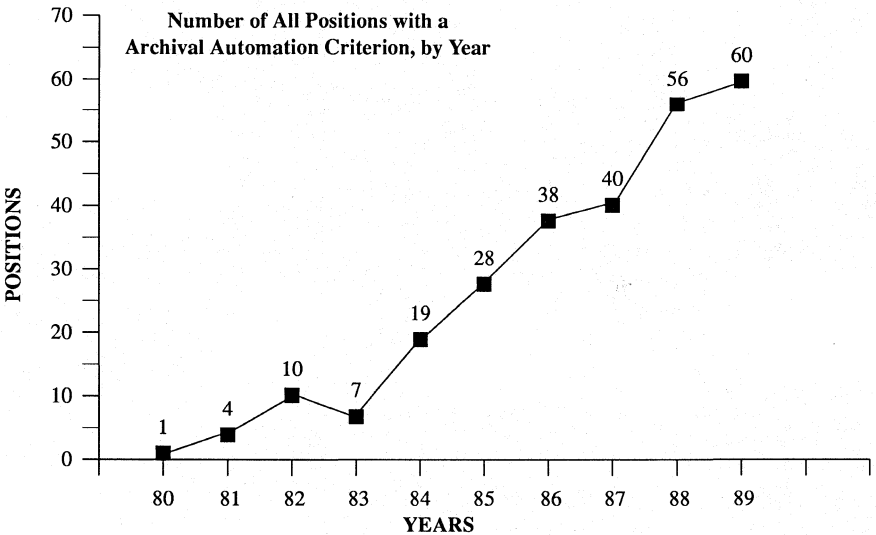

Figure 3

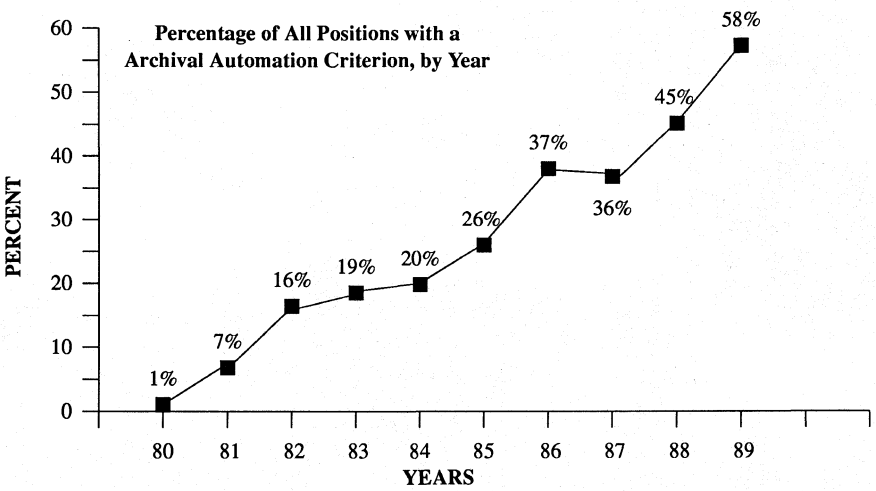

Figure 4

The survey also asked when MARC AMC format instruction was first offered. The earliest offering began in 1985, two began in 1986, six in 1987, and four each in 1988 and 1989. One program projected an offering in 1990 and four programs did not respond to this question. The incorporation of MARC AMC format instruction into archival educational curriculums parallels the increase in the number of archival positions having an AMC format criterion (see figures 1 and 2). It seems that archival education programs attempted to respond to new technical qualifications.

It should be noted, however, that at the close of the decade 45% (18) of the responding programs did not offer any type of MARC AMC format training. Ten of these were based in history departments and seven were in library/information science schools. One program not offering MARC AMC training reported that it was based in the university library. All the programs jointly based in history departments and library/information science schools reported that they offered instruction and training in the MARC AMC format.

Survey of hiring institutions. Further insights on the sources of training appeared as a result of the survey of the institutions that announced archival vacancies. For this survey, 263 questionnaires (one for each position announced) were sent to 190 institutions. One hundred thirty-nine institutions (73%) returned 179 questionnaires (68%). Twelve questionnaires were unusable, leaving a net of 167 positions (63% of the total announced). Of these, 77 were for positions asking specifically for knowledge of the MARC AMC format and 90 were for positions asking for generically described knowledge of archival computer applications. Forty of the 90 were at institutions using the MARC AMC format.

Out of the 167 positions available, 111 (66%) attracted candidates with knowledge of the MARC AMC format. Eighty (48%) of the 167 positions were filled by candidates having pre-appointment knowledge of the MARC AMC format. As illustrated in figure 5, in 1986 there was a significant increase in the number of appointees with pre-appointment knowledge of MARC AMC. For those positions specifically requesting knowledge of the MARC AMC format,

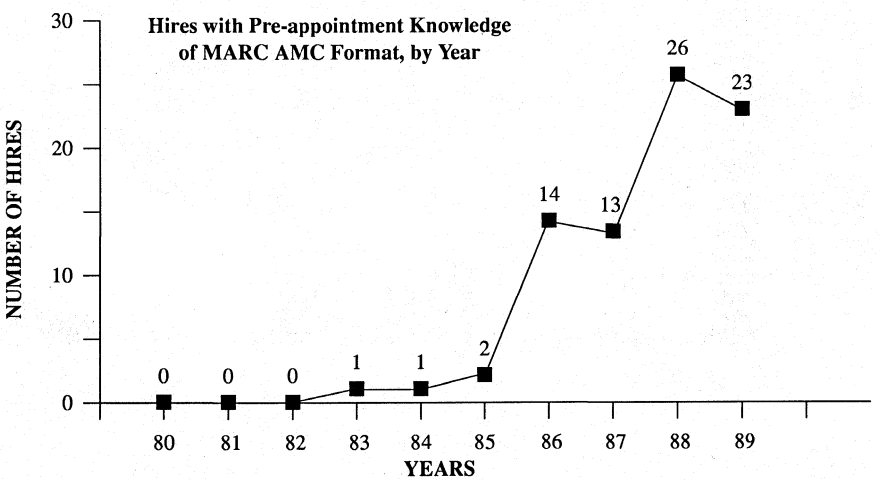

Figure 5

72% of the applicants claimed that knowledge. Employers filled 59% of the positions with candidates having pre-appointment knowledge of the AMC format. While many other factors obviously affected the actual selection of successful candidates, it appeared that applicants with pre-appointment knowledge of the AMC format were available and were selected for a majority of the positions with a specific MARC AMC criterion.

Sources of training. The sources of pre-appointment AMC format training were varied (see fig. 6). Many replies indicated more than one source of AMC format training. On-the-job training led all other sources. A significant number of respondents, however, indicated they received their training in library schools. Surprisingly, only seven of the fourteen library schools with archival education programs listed in the 1986 *SAA Education Directory* reported providing AMC training. This would imply either that some library schools not listed in the *Education Directory* are now offering archival/manuscript specializations, or that the graduates of a few schools are repeatedly among the successful applicants for these positions. The large number of on-the-job training responses implies that institutions use experienced staff to train employees rather than enrolling them in formal programs, most likely off-site.

On-the-job training was also the most frequent source of postappointment training. Workshops, however, showed strongly in this area. Indeed, if OCLC-sponsored workshops, RLIN contract workshops, SAA workshops, and workshops sponsored by regional archival organizations were categorized as one source, the workshop would have been the leading source of postappointment training.

Degrees held prior to appointment. Degrees held by successful applicants with pre-appointment knowledge of the MARC AMC format confirmed the strong showing of library schools as an institutional training source. Of the 80 hires with pre-appointment knowledge of the MARC AMC format, 54 (67%)

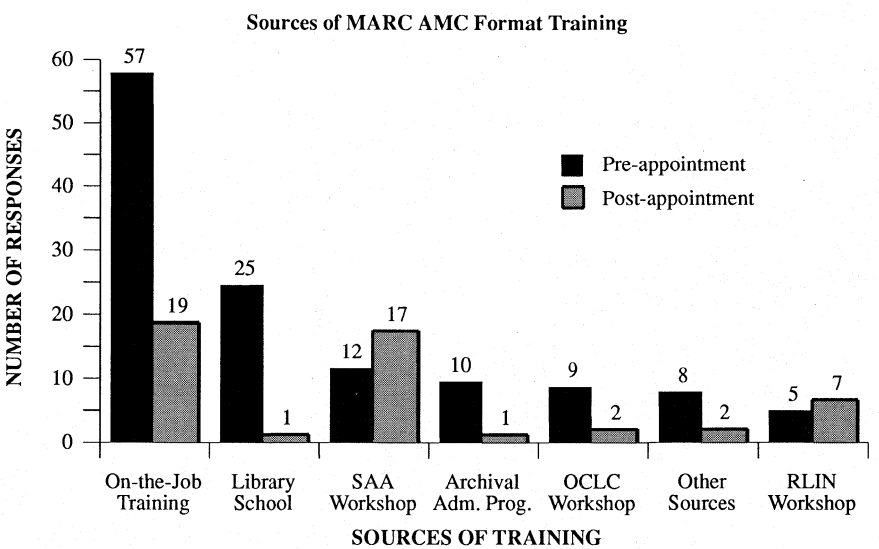

Figure 6

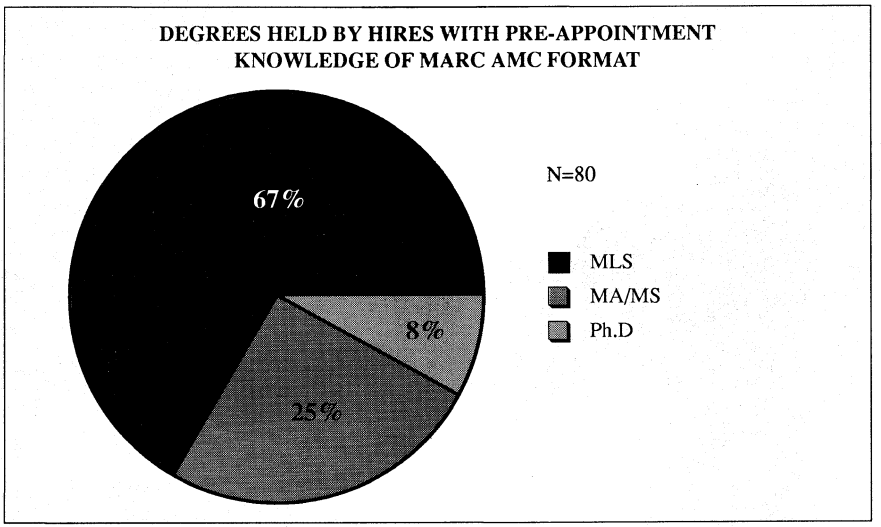

Figure 7

held the MLS degree. Twenty-four of the MLS holders had a second masters degree and two also held the Ph.D. Twenty successful candidates (25%) had an MA or MS only and six (8%) held the Ph.D only.

It is, of course, possible that some of those holding an MLS degree may have received their MARC AMC format training on-the-job. The survey instrument did not ask respondents to order their training chronologically when they indicated more than one source. Still, the source-of-training data collected reveals a predominant association of pre-appointment MARC AMC format knowledge with holders of an MLS degree.

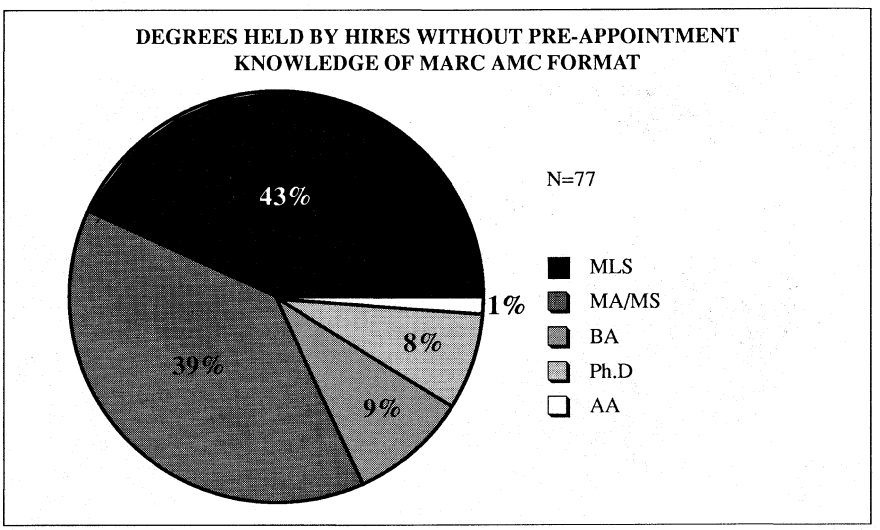

Figure 8

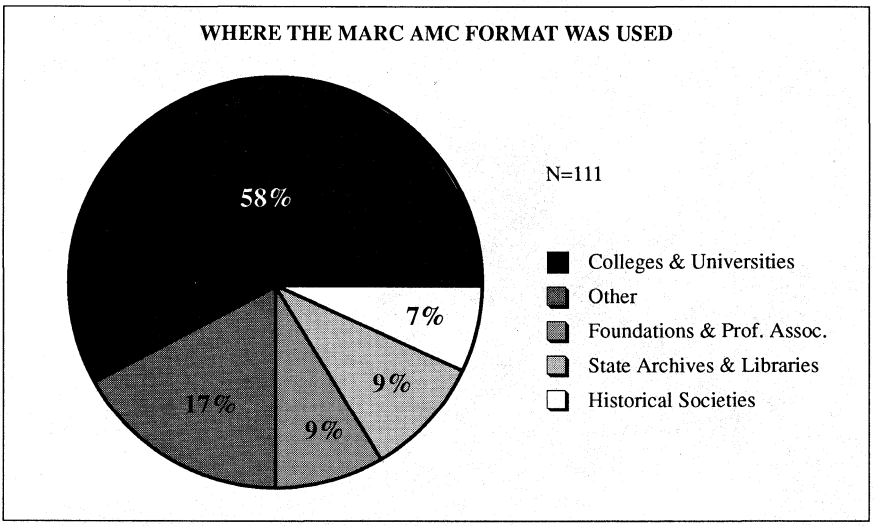

Figure 9

Types of institutions seeking candidates with knowledge of MARC AMC and/or automation in general. Colleges and universities accounted for more than half (58%) of the MARC AMC format positions. State archives and libraries tied with foundations and professional associations at 9%. Historical societies offered 7% of the MARC AMC positions and all others (federal agencies, museums, county/municipal archives, public libraries, religious denominations and private businesses) made up the remaining 17% (see fig. 9). The distribution of positions with a general automation criterion is relatively similar (see fig. 10).

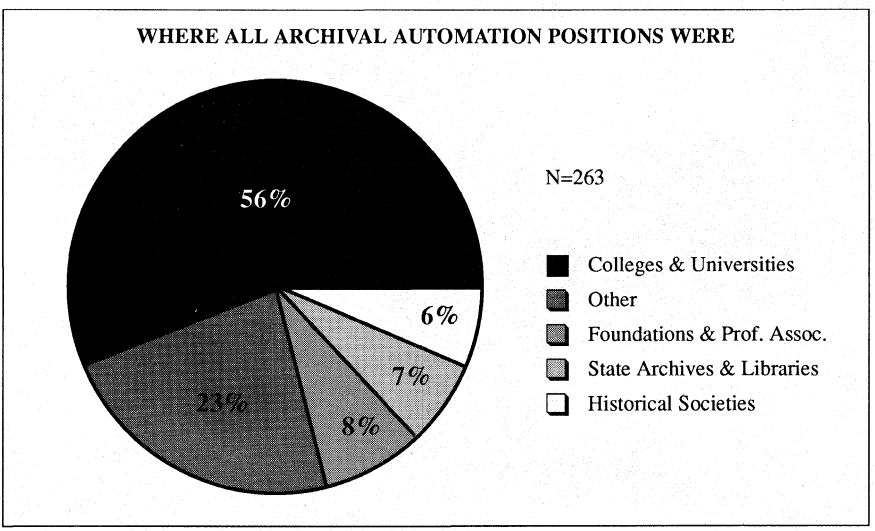

Figure 10

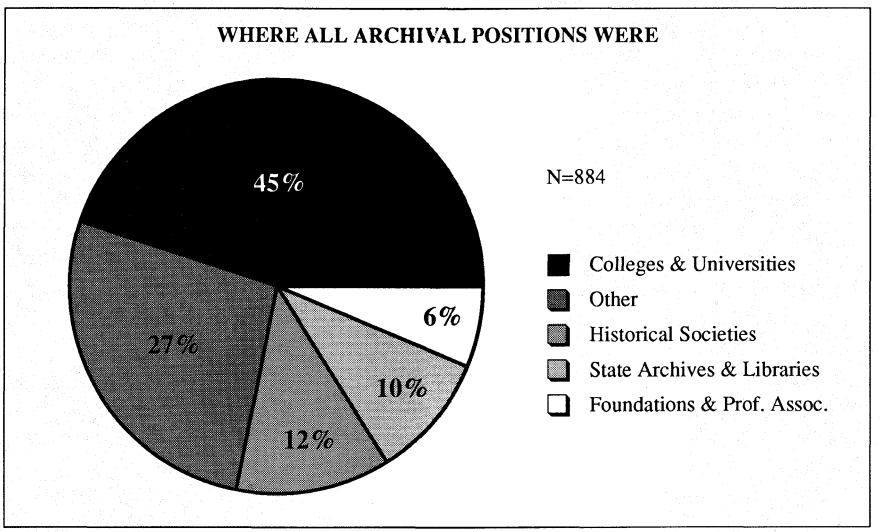

Figure 11

For comparative purposes, 45% of the 884 archival positions reviewed for this survey were at colleges and universities (see figure 11); 12% were at historical societies; 10% at state archives and libraries; 6% at foundations and professional associations; and the remaining 27% percent were at other institutions employing archivists.

Conclusions

The 1980s saw a widespread increase in the demand for knowledge of automation applications in archival settings. By the end of the decade, at least 58% of all archival positions advertised required or preferred archival automation skills, and the proportion was still increasing.

Archival training programs in academic institutions have responded to the need to train graduates in the use of the MARC AMC format. That response, however, has been limited. Only 55% of the programs offered training in the MARC AMC format, and only 40% offered hands-on training using an online cataloging tool. Respondents most frequently cited library schools as the institutional source of pre-appointment training for the MARC AMC format. On-the-job training, however, was prevalent. Workshops and on-the-job training constituted the most common sources for postappointment training. Few institutions used stand-alone software programs such as MicroMARC:amc and MARCON for instructional purposes.

A majority of the positions using the MARC AMC format were at colleges and universities. Candidates with pre-appointment knowledge of the MARC AMC format were readily available for those positions. Employers with positions having a MARC AMC format criterion chose applicants with pre-appointment knowledge of the MARC AMC format in 59% of the cases and tended to hire candidates with the MLS degree.

If we assume that one of the objectives of an archival educational program is to prepare its graduates for employment in the archival profession, it follows that incorporating MARC AMC format training in the curriculum is necessary. Not to do so may limit a graduate's competitiveness in many of the positions available. Graduates of archival administration programs that do not offer MARC AMC format training might find that completing a MARC AMC workshop would increase their competitiveness. Such additional training would be especially helpful to those lacking the MLS degree and seeking employment in a college or university setting.

If the preponderance of successful applicants have both the MLS and preappointment knowledge of the MARC AMC format, and if the majority of advertised archival positions are at colleges and universities, what kinds of generalizations can be made about the education of archivists? What is the appropriate degree to have? What type of institution is best suited to provide automation training? The survey cannot really answer those questions, although one could speculate.

Survey respondents identified library/information science schools as the leading institutional source of MARC AMC format training. One might conclude that library/information science schools are most likely to have the faculty and facilities for automation training. But survey results also indicate that programs based in history departments outnumber library/information science schools in offering MARC AMC format training. Archival administration programs jointly based in history departments and library/information science departments consistently offer MARC AMC format instruction and flexibility in degree choice as well. The available data does suggest that archival administration program graduates with dual MLS/MA degrees and knowledge of the MARC AMC format would be highly competitive in the archival employment market.

The survey data more clearly reveals that acceptance of the MARC AMC format by the archival community has added a technical requirement to archival employment that was not there in 1980. On-the-job training and workshops undoubtedly will continue as postemployment and postgraduate sources of MARC AMC format training. It remains an obligation of the archival education programs, however, to produce graduates able to meet the qualifications of entry-level employment. The need to meet the automation requirements of the 1980s has added a challenge to archival education for the 1990s.

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NOTES

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2. Ibid., 521.
3. Lisa B. Weber, "Educating Archivists for Automation," *Library Trends* 36 (Winter 1988): 504; and Richard H. Lytle, "An Analysis of the Work of the National Information Systems Task Force," *American Archivist* 47 (Fall 1984): 358-63.
4. Gilliland, "Archival Systems," 519-22; and Frederick L. Honhart, "MicroMARC:amc," *OCLC Micro* 3 (June 1987): 14-16.
5. Gilliland, "Archival Systems," 519-22; Honhart, "MicroMARC:amc," 14-16; "RLIN AMC at the Five-Year Mark," *The Research Libraries Group News* 18 (Winter 1989): 4-7; and H. Thomas Hickerson, "Archival Information Exchange and the Role of Bibliographic Networks," *Library Trends* 36 (Winter 1988): 559-60.
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9. "Analysis of the Marketplace for Educated Archivists: State Archives as a Case Study," *American Archivist* 51 (Summer 1988): 320-25.

SOAP AND EDUCATION: ARCHIVAL TRAINING, PUBLIC SERVICE AND THE PROFESSION—AN ESSAY

ELSIE T. FREEMAN

Abstract: Although archival training programs have proliferated in the past ten years, a fundamental concept has been left out of them, namely, that of service to the client. Because service has been removed from training, it less and less appears in archival work. Professional recognition and support will be enhanced greatly if service to all of the profession's clients becomes a foundation of archival training programs and, therefore, archival work.

Soap and education, said Mark Twain, are not as sudden as a massacre, but they are more deadly. That's a mischievous view in America, where education is one of our socially acceptable addictions. I suspect that Mark Twain had in mind bad education, the kind that limits, rather than enlightens its victim, that aims at conforming the behavior of children to the convenience of adults, that seeks to diminish the perils of free ranging thought. We know that educational comstockery is alive and well in America today: in a nation where education is seen as the means to civic virtue, the nature of virtue can be anyone's to define.

But it is also the case that we try to train our children to become the kinds of adults we most value. This hope is at the heart of American public education; it also is the basis of our disappointment in it. Professional education, including archival education, born in its shadow, makes the same assumption. No matter where the archivist is trained or for how long, he or she assumes that what one learns is what one's work is, often in the same proportion and order. What is taught in our training programs becomes the core of archival work—in the light reflected by this content is seen the model archivist. What I am taught, I do. What I do, I am.

Let me comment on my own experience with archival education. I have taught in continuing education and degree programs for archivists, written about what should be included in archival training curricula, and developed courses about archives for the public. I now teach a workshop session in the Modern Archives Institute on the management of public programs. I have never taken an archival administration course. I came to this field 24 years ago when only a few short courses of any merit existed—and no degree programs.[1] No one

offered to send me to any of them, so I read Schellenberg like a novel and started running a university manuscript division. Although I am an educator by training and choice, my lack of formal archival training has left me with no loyalty to any particular program. I also have the prejudices of the self-educated. Having made that confession, let me make some observations about the training of archivists.

Some things don't change. Archival training, wherever it is found, is heavily skewed toward increasingly standardized skills of arrangement and description —a standardization aimed, I think, more at the convenience of archivists than of researchers and other clients. Lately one finds in these programs more emphasis on the management of newer record types, electronic records in particular, and on pouring old descriptive methods into the new bottles of computerized formulae. Other archival training preoccupations include management techniques and planning.

The length, frequency, and mobility of archival training programs have also increased. Archivists are expert workshop presenters—put your finger on the map of America at midday of any weekday, and you will find an archivist planning, presenting, or cleaning up after a workshop. Our professional meetings are flanked, fore and aft, by workshops. Workshop presenters are constantly on the road—expect to see emerging a generation of archives babies who spent their infancy like stage children, tucked up in dresser drawers for the night, later to join mom and dad in the act. Archival organizations, regional and national, reflect our belief in the efficacy of education, and also reveal the schisms of specialization. We have roundtables for everyone, a sign of our astonishing and recently acknowledged diversity: hackers, planners, describers, women, religious; archivists from the bureaucracies of government, libraries, universities, and business; archivists organized on the basis of color or sexual preference. And each is probably planning a workshop. Archival training is mobile, computer wise, energetic, invigorating, and ingenuous in its faith in the miracle of shared information.

What then is my concern? What's wrong with faster, more intense, more stylish education of the kind archivists have developed in the past few years? Just this: that the archivist who is being shaped by this training still looks inward. I see, in spite of changed times and needs, an archivist who avoids asking who uses our records, how they use them, and, most important, why they use them. I see an archivist who focuses on organizational rationality and not client needs; who still assumes that all researchers are, or ought to be, trained as he or she is trained, either with equivalent academic degrees or, lacking these, with extraordinary insight into how archives are organized and how archivists think; whose activities still reflect a preoccupation with records as objects, not as information developed in the context of time.

Taken one by one, the skills we teach in our archival training programs are useful and necessary, at least as basic instruction. Taken altogether, as a curriculum, as a design for shaping the model archivist, they are wanting. They reveal the outlines not of a well rounded professional but of a high class technician. The new natural sciences teach us that change and innovation can break out anywhere, at any point in the long crawl through time. So it is with education. I am not berating the inclusion of new topics and new skills. But no one appears to be asking the classic, lifegiving, first questions the educator must ask: Who is

the archivist we seek to develop? What impact upon society do we want the archivist to have? And, most important, do our educational programs produce this person? Only when we have considered these questions can we—the archivists who teach and those who are taught—decide what to teach and how to teach it.

We make scattered efforts to develop archivists who reach for the public; several of our regional archival organizations have appointed public relations officers, and public relations workshops are offered regularly in our national and regional conferences. One also finds some interest lately in studies of the users of records. This is a fifty-year-old profession, however, one that has surely had time to develop outreach programs. Yet these efforts are so few they almost literally can be counted on one's fingers, and they exist because a few people, working in relative isolation, have persisted in them.

There is evidence all around us of our disinterest in looking outward. Note the near absence in archival literature of articles on reference techniques, on studies of our clientele, or on public outreach programs, particularly as compared to articles on description, acquisition programs, or records management. (When the Academy of Certified Archivists was developing its testing program, I was asked to suggest questions on public programs, partly because the test developers, who were archivists, were unclear about the content of such questions and partly because too few articles existed, other than my own, to cite.) There are other clues to suggest that our eyes are not on the public. Recent surveys suggest that among regional archives the most popular form of outreach is the education of other archivists, not programs for the public. *Inreach,* to coin a new word; service to ourselves, not the public. According to the report of SAA's Committee on Goals and Priorities, completed in 1990, Goal III, The Availability and Use of Records of Enduring Value, generated the least activity of the three goals.[2] There are other signs, directly related to training. At its 1990 meeting in Seattle, the Society of American Archivists offered a preconference workshop on reference techniques. Only two people responded, the workshop was canceled, and although it has been made available regionally during 1991, no one has requested it. There has never been an SAA workshop on the management of public programs.[3]

I am not only suggesting that we add such training to our already rich training menu. There is a larger question, one that archivists can address wherever they gather. It is not that training in arrangement and description are unnecessary; of course they are necessary, at least for one's first job. The question is not so much what we include in our archival training but what we leave out. The question is one of emphasis. And what we leave out, what is not emphasized, indeed, often not even mentioned, is the client—the person upon whom our hope for recognition and continuation exists.

Looked at most critically, I would have to say that archival training is self-serving, not client-serving; records oriented, not information oriented; tradition and task oriented, not market oriented. By and large, archival training produces archivists who are mainly concerned with internal efficiency, not effectiveness with clientele; who supply only what they already produce, not produce what clients may need or want; who assume that clients turn up, like leaves blown by the wind, not that clients must be found. Generally speaking, the archivists we produce believe that their clientele must be content with the product they

offer—the body of records in the box accompanied by the standardized description, for example—not that they must have the skills to learn what the client needs and how to satisfy that need.

I use the term "market oriented," knowing that although it is increasingly used by archivists, it still offends many. There is another word, which we have almost ceased to use. That word is *service,* and service is a *déclassé* term these days. Service connotes powerlessness, and a sense of powerlessness lives only a pinprick away from the first layer of our archival skin. Service is what we get at McDonalds and Wendy's, at laundromats and car washes. It is provided by people who clean our houses or serve our fast food, by dropout teenagers, genteelly poor pensioners, and underemployed immigrants a minimum wage away from the welfare counter. Tom Peters and other management experts use the word continually, but I don't hear it among archivists. I am not aware of a single documentation strategy specialist or automation specialist or, for that matter, public programs specialist who talks about service. In ceasing to use the term, we may have lost the concept. And that loss affects archival training; for all our trendy specialties, I think we may be training ourselves away from service, and thus farther away than ever we have been from our clientele.

As a group, archivists seek recognition. Beyond the wish that not one more bank clerk will ask us what an archivist is or how to spell it is the need to be seen as socially necessary because we are useful. That need is not limited to recognition by other professions; we want the *public* to recognize us. Recognition comes in large part from quality performance. But the public perception of quality performance by both our research public and those with whom we may have more marginal contact will not be based on our expertise with computerized description of records (especially expertise that arises from ignorance of who uses those records and why they use them), or on the elaborateness of our acquisition strategies, or on the length of our planning documents. These are internal matters, and they do not affect the public except as they expedite use. Too often they are ends in themselves; process for the sake of process, not for the sake of a product.

Recognition will come from service, the partnership created between the user of records and the archivist acting not as a servant but as a collaborator, occasionally in pursuit of personal and cultural memory but more often seeking the answers to pressing, immediate, professional and personal questions. Recognition will come to the archivist or institution, for example, who offers the user descriptions of records that are convenient for him or her to use, possibly at his or her own desk, as well as in the archives;[4] who knows how to conduct a reference interview tailored to the needs of a particular user, one which leaves that user with a research strategy he or she did not have before coming to the archives; who supplies products and services to those groups who can use records but who are not necessarily researchers themselves, such as teachers or businessmen. Recognition will come to the archivist who seeks out clients, then provides them what they need.

Later in this essay I will suggest some training that might produce this kind of archivist, the archivist we are not now producing. But I would first like to pursue the question of service and recognition to another step, namely, its connection with a question that has vexed us for many years, our status as a profession. Admittedly, the question troubles us less than it once did, or perhaps

it has taken a new form. In recent years, the nature of professionalism, and what behavior characterizes a profession, has come under exquisite scrutiny by writers in our field and others. Gilbert and Sullivan's limited list of professions—the law, the Church and the Army—are long since out of date. Every group that organizes itself claims to be a profession, usually by the fact of having organized in the first place, and a few may indeed be professions. The result is widespread anxiety about status—again, as Gilbert and Sullivan put it, if everyone is somebody, then no one's anybody. The analyses I have read are interesting, but I am always reminded of the characteristics listed in 1915 by sociologist Abraham Flexner when he addressed the question of whether social work was a profession.[5] At the top of his list, his notion of the highest civic virtue for the professional and the unique characteristic of a profession, was altruism, which he described as the ability of a group to look beyond institutional and personal loyalties to the needs of the public and even to the society at large. This included not only keeping abreast of developments in one's field so as to provide correct information or judicious help to clients of the field, consonant with the Hippocratic injunction to "do no harm," but also actively reaching out to one's clientele. Altruism suggests service to others, not only to ourselves. When we consider other groups' claims to professionalism, we think first of the quality and significance of their service, not of their credentials. It is against this value, for example, that we have weighed lawyers as professionals and often found them wanting, no matter what their credentials. Our complaints about the medical profession bear increasingly on its overspecialization and lack of concern about the whole patient, its increasing attention to technology and profit at the price of service. Our dismay at the declining stature of legislators, presidential candidates and incumbents, and civil servants, arises from a sense that they focus on personal and parochial interests, not on universal service.

I suggest that until we are willing to focus our educational and, therefore, our workplace activities on our clientele, not on the sophistication of our computers or the elegance of our bureaucracies or the unassailability of traditional practices, we have not arrived as professionals. If public service is not a principal element in the training programs that shape the archivist, then we are not taking public service seriously. And if we do not take public service seriously, we are not a profession.

How we now define ourselves as archivists gives us a clue to how we might better define ourselves. Asked what archivists do, most of us say that we preserve records and make them available, sometimes adding "for use." First, that definition focuses on records and records skills only, entirely omitting people and purpose. It is an operational definition of technical work, not professional work. Second, it is almost entirely passive. One has a vision of well-preserved records lying on a table, like a fish at a smorgasbord, in a totally empty room. Third, it reveals no priorities; preservation in this definition is parallel to use rather than a precondition of it. A more purposeful, goal-oriented statement might be that archivists arrange, describe and preserve records so that they will be used. [6]

But if we were interested in a definition that focuses on the impact of archivists and archives on people and the social environment, a definition not in terms of records, but of changes that can be effected on people, we might consider something like this: Through the use of records, archivists help people

answer personal and professional questions. One might add for grandeur's sake: And, by learning about the past, inform the present. Now, working with that description or one with similar elements, how do we train an archivist who sees his or her work in these active, collaborative, result oriented, client oriented terms, and who can build an archival program based on these concepts?

I have written elsewhere about the kinds of training I would like to see archivists offered, so what I suggest here will be selective.[7] What follows are examples only; once one grasps the concept of client and product oriented training strategies for innovative curriculum development suggest themselves. Underlying these examples is the intention of changing the present focus of archival training from records and records skills to the needs of clients. Central to this new focus would be training that gives the archivist methods for learning about the many and varied uses of records, and the skills, habits, and perceptions of users of records. These include not only those clients who come into the research room and the exhibit area, but those who use records elsewhere or would use them if they were made available in convenient form.

The service-oriented professional archivist would learn how to analyze who his or her clientele is, how to obtain information from researchers and other clients—we love to give information but we almost never seek it—and how to structure an archival program with researchers and other clients in mind.

Let's consider some of the traditional archival functions, keeping in mind that training need not necessarily be organized functionally, that this is done largely out of tradition and habit, and that doing so tends to atomize, rather than connect, those functions.

First, the assumptions and the implications of provenance as they affect researchers would be examined. Appraisal standards and techniques, and documentation strategies would be examined and reordered in the light of information from a wide range of users. These would include not only the small percentage of historians and other academics who crowd our thinking but not our reference rooms, but also other professionals and avocationists.

Sessions on the reference process would be based on analysis of both successful and unsuccessful interviews and would focus on gathering and patterning information from the client, asking and hearing questions accurately, and helping the client to develop a research strategy.[8] Ideally, both archival trainees and clients would participate in this activity, and the trainee would be evaluated not on the basis of a written examination alone, but on his or her adeptness during increasingly complicated reference negotiations.

Training in descriptive techniques would distinguish between descriptions useful to the archivist and those useful to the client, since these differ. The archivist needs tools for retrieval and collection analysis; a spiral bound, traditional repository guide is useful to the archivist, for example. It is seldom useful to the client, who infrequently uses it outside the archives, either as a tool to draw him or her to the archives or to learn about particular collections. If used at all, it is as an index to a collection. The client needs descriptions that supply information about subject areas for which a given collection is useful, about collections useful in his or her subject area, and about links to other collections. Beyond these, clients need something to draw them to the archives in the first place. Training in descriptive techniques, then, might include formats that bring the client to the archives, such as inexpensive brochures and simple checklists

aimed either at specialized interest groups or at various levels of users within one interest group; exhibit catalogs and lists of archives products; formats that guide the researcher through collections appropriate to his or her interests; and products that help the client use records outside the archives, such as teaching packages for classrooms or genealogical groups, or catalogs of slides or images for publishers. Advice on the content, format, and distribution of these descriptions should come from users, and users should be asked to review them for clarity, direction, and convenience.

The purpose and management of public programs would be a major part of a new archival training curriculum, requiring the trainee to analyze his or her local situation in terms of institutional objectives, community needs, and time, money, and staff resources. Management sessions would center on ways to alter traditional archival functions to create the resources and the motivation to learn about users; to ascertain the cost, in terms of staff, time, and money, of greater and different service to users; to consider ways to reallocate staff, time, and money to achieve service; and to analyze staff talents in relation to a new focus. Fund-raising and public relations techniques—and why the archivist should undertake these—would also be included in this training.

Instructors for these sessions would not be archivists alone. They would include social scientists, educators, librarians (who know a great deal more than we about reference techniques and have written about them), management professionals, and public relations professionals. The archival prejudice that only archivists can teach other archivists, amounting to the view that no one can teach *us* anything, is insular and dangerous. It is particularly so in the decade of the 90s, when the capacity to change and to provide quality service will characterize those institutions and fields of interest that survive.

One can enjoy Mark Twain without agreeing with him. Cauliflower is not just cabbage with a college education. It has to be the *right education.* At present archival training is not, in my view, equipping us to understand and respond to client needs. Failing to do so renders us less than effective in the information field and less than professional in our own. Archives management is a small field in numbers of persons, but with enough men and women in it to bring change through reasonable discourse and experimentation. Both of these—discussion of innovative training and experiments in it—should happen soon.

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NOTES

1. In a stimulating article in the Summer 1990 issue of *American Archivist,* v. 53, no. 3, James M. O'Toole comments on the "workshop mentality" that characterizes archival training. This essay deals primarily with workshop training, which is the kind that most archivists receive and that to a large extent, as O'Toole notes, has shaped degree program content. Workshop agenda and degree-based programs reveal the same paucity of courses focused on use and client needs.
2. Report on Archival Activity in the United States Since Publication of *Planning for the Archival Profession,* June, 1990. Prepared by Victoria Irons Walch for SAA's Committee on Goals and Priorities. A narrative summary was transmitted to the council and executive committee 8 Feb. 1991 by Anne R. Kenney, chair.
3. Telephone conversation 22 April 1991 with Jane Kenamore, SAA's Education Officer.
4. One reviewer of this essay asked whether researchers want convenience. There have been a number of articles over the years on researchers' wants, but Margaret F. Steig in "The Information Needs of Historians," *College and Research Libraries* 42 (November 1981) reports that in her survey of 767 historians, half of whom responded, primary source formats were seen as the most inconvenient to use and were the least used for this reason. The same was true of the guides and other descriptions that the survey group did not use. The last is a well-known secret among archivists, but it has also been well documented in journal surveys and articles in the library field.
5. One of the most focused of these discussions in the archival field is Richard J. Cox, "Professionalism and Archivists in the United States," *American Archivist* 49:3 (Summer 1986): 229-47. Cox cites Abraham Flexner, "Is Social Work a Profession?" *School and Society* 1 (26 June 1915). Much earlier I had cited Flexner in "Women in Archives: The Status of Women in the Academic Professions," *American Archivist* 36:2 (April 1973): 183-201.
6. Timothy Ericson discusses more productive ways to think about what our work is in "Preoccupied with Our Own Gardens," to be published in *Archivaria* 31 (Winter 1990-1991), an article adapted from a paper presented 2 June 1990 at the Association of Canadian Archivists, Victoria, B.C. Ericson has also given a paper at the spring 1992 MARAC meeting, on the relation between archival training and archival needs, which is required reading for interested archivists.
7. See Elsie Freeman Freivogel, "In the Eye of the Beholder: Archives Administration from the User's Point of View," *American Archivist* 47:2 (Spring 1984): 111-123.
8. Paul Conway, National Archives and Records Administration, is completing what is probably the most comprehensive and systematic study of users ever done in an archival institution in the United States. His recommendations about finding aids and reference systems will be instructive to us all.

STORE WARS: SOME THOUGHTS ON THE STRATEGY AND TACTICS OF DOCUMENTING SMALL BUSINESSES

MARK A. GREENE

ABSTRACT: Most manuscript repositories and even many college and university archives collect the records of American businesses, and the archival literature has given much attention to this subject, but little has been said about documenting *small* businesses. Documentation strategy, as defined by Hackman and Blewett, provides a framework for considering this documentation area. "Small" business has been defined in terms of absolute numbers of employees and absolute dollar values of gross sales, but it may be more logical to define it relatively, within a particular class of business, narrowing the focus of a documentation strategy. "Documentation strategy" founders, both philosophically and practically, when it moves from defining documentation areas to assessing adequacy of existing documentation and advocating the *creation* of documentation.

Should we be documenting small businesses and if so, how? Interesting and, in these days of fascination with (or horror of) multi-billion-dollar mergers and venture capitalists, relevant questions for manuscript repositories. Just as interesting and relevant, perhaps, is how an archivist—at a given institution or generically—can structure his or her approach to answering those questions. This paper experiments with adopting "documentation strategy" as a framework for approaching the questions of whether and how we should be collecting small business records. Documentation strategy, with related terms coined by Larry Hackman and Joan Warnow-Blewett,[1] functions here as a model for "assessment" rather than necessarily for action. This assessment raised as many questions as it answered, both about documenting small businesses in particular and about documentation strategy in general.

Even to raise the possibility of a documentation strategy implies acceptance that the subject (or activity or person) is important and worth documenting. That granted, Hackman and Blewett expect that documentation strategy will take place within the context of a "documentation group," made up of archivists, subject matter specialists, and representatives of users and creators. They do allow, however, that "any of these [people] can define a documentation area and

begin preliminary analysis"; in this case, only a single archivist was "assembled," although he did attempt to gather information from other sources. Once the documentation group (or individual) is assembled, the first step is to define the "documentation area"; in this case to decide just what a small business is. The next step is "documentation strategy drafting," which includes among its considerations the examination of evidence about "present records practices"—how well small businesses have been documented to date—and a look at what the "past, present, and projected uses...of these records" might be. Once the strategy is drafted and refined, they suggest (among other aspects of documentation strategy implementation) intervening in the records-creation process to achieve "adequacy of documentation." So, how does all this apply, potentially, to the world of small business?

Why even worry about small businesses and how well they are documented? There certainly is no question about the importance of documenting "business." Since the 1930s archivists and historians have written over 60 articles citing the need to collect and preserve business records. The overwhelming concern of these authors was that repositories were ill-equipped (in terms of space, staff, and financial resources) to house the vast records of modern "functionally departmentalized" and "decentralized, multidivisional" corporations. Many articles urged the invigoration of corporate archives, others addressed issues of sampling, while still others were general calls for action, reaction, or proaction in the documentation of modern (read *big*) business. Fewer than ten percent of these articles have anything to say about small businesses.[2]

Some of those authors who do look beyond large corporations, however, have made strong cases for the potential use of small business records. Archivist Oliver Wendell Holmes, in the midst of a clarion call for the archival profession to give keen attention to the documentation of American business, paused to note that "there is also much to be learned about economic activity generally from small businesses, perhaps more than from the richer corporations, because, having smaller margins on which to make mistakes, they are more sensitive indicators of business conditions."[3] A decade later, historian Thomas D. Clark focused more intently on the records of small enterprises, arguing that "One of the best single sources for American *social* and economic history is the records of small-town or rural businesses. These institutions have had a vital place in the growth and expansion of the nation." They provide crucial information about the dietary habits, clothing, agricultural practices, and medicinal use of typical American families, Clark argued, as well as about "distribution of goods, of prices and of the intersectional relationships of the national economy."[4]

Today small businesses comprise somewhere between twenty and forty percent of business enterprise in the United States; by sheer numbers, then, it is hard to question the significance of these concerns. Moreover, the continuing importance of small businesses to policy makers and to the economy as a whole is attested to by the very existence of the United States Small Business Administration (USSBA) and by the Bureau of Census's continuing efforts to document the tiniest of enterprises.[5]

To accept that small businesses are important is, though, to beg the question of just what a small business is. Mention "small business" to most people, even to most archivists, and they think of a family-owned-and-operated grocery or hardware store, the kind that still extends credit to regular customers and

employs delivery boys. Such an image is charming and comforting, but also portentous; it carries a host of implications regarding just what a small business is and therefore why and how archivists should preserve evidence of its existence. The trouble is, the icon of the mom and pop corner retail establishment bears something of the same relationship to the actual universe of small businesses as the image of the sodbusting pioneer farmer to the actual universe of commercial agriculture. The family store has existed in various forms in the United States for three hundred years or so and continues to exist today; it is, however, hardly representative of small business. And it cannot therefore provide a sound basis upon which to build a collecting effort.

Defining the documentation area is crucial to the idea of documentation strategy and essential for any collecting policy, but it presents some clear problems in the case of the small business area. Economic historians generally seem to define small businesses (in the post-1880s economic era in the United States) as those with fewer than 100 employees.[6] The U.S. Census Bureau tends implicitly to define small businesses as those employing fewer than 20 people. By this measure there are roughly 140,000 small businesses in Minnesota alone, 85% of the total number of businesses. This 85% of enterprises employs only 25% of the state's business work force. Small businesses exist in every one of 80 major categories (and most of the approximately 500 subcategories) of business types listed by the census.[7]

The USSBA, the government agency most concerned with small businesses, itself balks at the very idea of providing a definition. The USSBA states flatly that "there is no standard size definition of a small business.... The definition used may depend on the policy issue or question being analyzed, or the industry being studied." The only requirement is that a small business cannot be "dominant" in its industry; small, therefore, is relative to the industry giants. For example, as far as the USSBA is concerned, a "small" manufacturer can have up to 1500 employees, depending upon what is being manufactured; a "small" retailer or farmer can have annual receipts of up to $13.5 million, depending upon what is being sold or grown. (And these definitions do not include the roughly 315,000 people in Minnesota considered self-employed, which is to say, people who operate businesses out of their homes or cars and do not have separate storefronts or manufacturing establishments.) In any event, at $13.5 million in receipts, mom and pop have got a pretty busy little corner grocery or hardware store. The USSBA sums up by stating that "the definitional issues concerning [small] business owners are...confused."[8] An eloquent understatement, to be sure.

If nobody seems to know just what a small business is, some safe assertions may be made about what a small business is not. All family businesses are not small, but it is equally true that all small businesses are not family-owned. Indeed, a small business is not necessarily *privately* owned. A small business can issue stock, even publicly traded stock, and still be small. On the other hand, a small corporation may still be a family business. Gould P. Coleman notes that "archivists may encounter what amounts to disinformation in the guise of accepted knowledge: articles in the press, for instance, which dramatize the entry of corporations into farming while ignoring the fact that in over ninety per cent of these corporations the stockholders are members of the same family."[9] These family farm corporations are often worth millions of dollars. Are they small businesses?

Which leads to the obvious point that small businesses are *not* just retailers or farmers. In Minnesota there are businesses with fewer than 20 employees in industries as diverse as mining, forestry, carpet manufacturing, corrugated box production, steel milling, manufacturing of construction machinery, chemical wholesaling, banking, hotels, hospitals, and museums, to name a very few. This point is important, lest we implicitly and complacently define small businesses in terms that exclude not simply the bulk of business types but especially some kinds of business owners. For example, many minority-owned small businesses are found not in the traditional small retail trades, but in fields such as electronics assembling, electronics manufacturing, engineering, and information processing, printing, and other service industries.[10]

Finally, to return to an earlier point, small businesses are not necessarily "small" using a layperson's intuitive scale; they are small relative to other businesses in their industry, at least according to the USSBA. To complicate matters further, how does one categorize independently owned and operated franchises of gargantuan restaurant, hardware store, motel, and similar chains? Perhaps the idea of documenting "small businesses" per se is practically meaningless. Is it not more useful to speak of documenting "small retail grocers," "small transportation companies," "small grain mills," "small chemical manufacturers," or "the businesses in small rural towns" as part of a broader effort to adequately document those specific industries or communities? As Hackman and Blewett rightly note, a documentation strategy must begin with a rigorous attempt to define the project's scope. In this case the area of small business may be too amorphous to be embraced in a documentation strategy, perhaps leading usefully to a narrower and more workable scope for a collecting project. On the other hand, it may be that documentation strategy is too amorphous to usefully control and manage a collecting policy, but more on that below.

It is hard to tell whether the difficulty of defining small businesses is a cause or effect of the relative paucity in the archival literature of articles that discuss documenting these enterprises. The implicit assumption of many authors seemed to be either that 1) the records of small businesses, being more manageable in size and more familiar in content, were being taken care of in repositories; or, 2) that in the modern era small businesses were not important for documenting the history of the American economy. As to the first point, there is good evidence to suggest that, despite archivists' preoccupation in the literature with the records of big business over the past 60 years, small businesses were not neglected by repositories. Some of this evidence is in Nick Burckel's 1980 survey of university repositories, which discovered that more than half the respondents collected business records, and most major types of businesses were included. Most respondents, in fact, "indicated that their records reflected small companies—those with fewer than 100 employees. Slightly more reported that most of their records were of privately held companies, as opposed to publicly held, defined as firms issuing publicly traded stock."[11] (To give one example, the University of Kentucky, under the tutelage of professor Thomas Clark, self-consciously built a collection of small business records in the 1940s.) Nor is Burckel's the only evidence that small businesses have not been overlooked in the collecting policies of historical repositories.

At the Minnesota Historical Society, over one-third of the 560 business collections identified in its holdings in 1980 may be reasonably defined as

representing small concerns.[12] The documentation at MHS may be even richer when one considers that the records of large corporations often contain the records of small businesses, either because the corporation began as a little enterprise or because it purchased other companies and acquired their records.[13] Minnesota's regional research centers and county historical societies hold the records of more than 300 other small business firms, according to a 1979 survey.[14] The National Archives, too, documents small businesses. The NARA Great Lakes Region office noted recently that bankruptcy court files often contain final inventories of a firm's material assets, and sometimes also such things as ledgers and cashbooks, annual reports, and board minutes.[15] So, though the effort may not have been conscious, much less "adequate" (in the terms of Hackman and Blewett), there is undoubtedly substantial documentation of small businesses in the nation's historical repositories.

As to the second assumption, how important is the documentation of small businesses? In the terms of documentation strategy, what about the use to which this documentation can or has been put? Are small businesses—despite their numbers—so much at the margin of the U.S. economy that evidence of their activities is of little concern to scholars and policy makers? Clark encouraged archivists to preserve and historians to study the records of "the blacksmith shop, the sawmill, the grist and flour mills, stave and cooperage factories, cotton and woolen mills, distilleries, tobacco factories, blast furnaces, country stores, farm implement, wagon and carriage factories, boat yards, grain elevators, paper mills, metal factories, clock and lock works," and other small enterprises because he was convinced of the utility of those records for historical analysis.[16] Without doing a comprehensive survey of the scholarly literature in economics and history for the past couple of decades it is difficult to determine the extent to which scholars have used small business records, but there is evidence that Clark was not simply a voice in the wilderness. Some authors *have* argued that the economic landscape of the United States since 1890 has been defined by large corporations, rather than by small businesses. Following such reasoning, textbooks and classic monographs in the field of economic history appear in general to give short shrift to small businesses, beyond the obligatory and vague references to "petty capitalists" and "merchants."[17] But based on a survey of 1988-89 journal article titles published by *The Journal of American History*'s "Recent Scholarship" section under the heading Business and Economics, eighteen percent of research in the field may touch on post-1880 small business history.[18] The fact that about one-fifth of economic historians do research on small businesses suggests that, even though big business is the dominant player in the modern U.S. economy, there may still be good reason to worry about documenting smaller enterprises—if not generically, then within the context of their industries and/or their communities.

Which reintroduces the questions of definitions and of "adequacy of documentation" for small businesses. Although it may not be sensible to speak of small businesses as if they are a coherent group of firms with some definable similarity, Joanna Yates and Francis Blouin (in separate articles, both following, to some degree, economic historian Alfred D. Chandler) have, however, suggested one unifying characteristic of small businesses: the types of records they generate. In Yates's words:

> The small, owner-managed company (usually with fewer than 100 employees) was the standard form of American business enterprise before 1880 and still exists today. In this traditional firm, the owner(s) managed all of the firm's workings.... In a small company of this type, almost all internal communication was handled orally. The owner or foreman collected operating information (such as the production schedule and problems with machinery), made decisions, and gave orders in person.... The accounting records in these small companies served less as communications between individuals than as documentation of financial transactions for future reference. They were simple, descriptive records of monetary transactions....
>
> Internal communication in small firms has changed somewhat in recent times. The variety and, in some cases, amount of such correspondence have undoubtedly declined during this century as long-distance telephone service became universally available and relatively inexpensive.... Because of legal requirements, internal communication or documentation of other types in a modern small business are generally more extensive than in the past.... Communication and records, however, fulfill a relatively limited role in the small, traditional business of both periods.[19]

To some extent, Yates's observation is the refinement of a central archival tenet. Provenance derives from the principle that the records an office creates and the way it organizes them tells us something important about the structure and function of the office. In Lester Cappon's words, "fundamental in this concept of archives is the organic unity of the documents, expressing the life of the organization which created them."[20] In the case of small businesses, Yates argues, the life of the organization is such that few of the records usually regarded as historically substantive are created. At first glance, this typology of businesses presents a problem in terms of documentation. Small businesses generate fewer substantive records because of their particular size, structure, and activity. Therefore, by nature small businesses are more difficult to document traditionally.

From the point of view of documentation strategy, however, this is a challenge rather than a problem. Gould Coleman and Seymour Bassett have both suggested the necessity for archivists to actively enter into creating records to preserve the history of family farms and the tourist industry, respectively.[21] The Minnesota Historical Society has taken up this challenge, to some extent, in its Farm Economy Oral History Project, though for his part Coleman went farther than oral interviews and instituted the use of game theory to study how families made specific decisions. It is integral to Hackman's and Blewett's documentation strategy that archivists be prepared to go beyond oral history or making appraisal decisions early in the record-creation cycle. They suggest "a documentation group should persuade records creators to create certain types of records to meet needs of the group and those of others."[22]

It is possible, however, that archivists may here be faced with a paradox at best, and a serious epistemological quandary at worst. It has been a fundamental axiom of archival administration for at least 70 years that record keeping practices are an organic reflection of the structure and activity of a business. It is, in part, to capture this "evidential value" of records that archives exist. To quote Theodore Schellenberg:

> Records that are the product of organic activity have a value that derives from the way they were produced. Since they were created in consequence

> of the actions to which they relate, they often contain an unconscious and therefore impartial record of the action. Thus the evidence they contain of the actions they record has a peculiar value. It is the *quality* of this evidence that is our concern here.[23]

Though archivists might gain informational value by strictly following the suggestions of documentation strategy, would we not inevitably destroy evidential value? By asking small businesses to create more or different records are we altering the character of the very phenomenon we seek to document? Is it our business to change what records a business creates—that is, change the fundamental character and structure of its activities—for the righteous purpose of capturing documentation that a panel of experts has decided is important? To put it philosophically, would documentation strategy have us alter the object of our knowledge by trying to know it? And on a practical level, would a small business be *willing* to create additional records for a purpose unrelated to its own profitability?

At the risk of belaboring a point, I think we are a long way from being able to answer such questions—not only for small businesses but for any activity, person, or organization. Documentation strategy speaks of "adequacy of documentation" without giving much attention to what adequacy is supposed to mean. Adequate for whom? For what? (For the needs of the documentation group? But what are those needs and how is the adequate satisfaction of those needs to be measured?) Ultimately, this question goes back to a more fundamental one: What is the ultimate goal of archives? How are we really supposed to measure our success (surely it is not by our rewards from resource allocators alone)? Needless to say, this article is not the place for speculation on answers to these questions; I do think, though, that they deserve some serious attention from our profession's theorists.

Documentation strategy may offer a useful framework for identifying and approaching some practical questions related to collecting the records of small businesses. It reminds us to begin by asking questions of definition: What is a small business? Is "smallness," itself, relevant apart from a particular industry? Is it the size of the business that interests us or the form of ownership? It demands that we ask questions about significance: Are modern small businesses important for understanding the economy and if so, at what level? Are small business records useful for purposes *beyond* economic history? And documentation strategy guides us toward important questions about the level of current documentation: How much is out there? Where is it? How good is it? In answering *these* questions—though not, perhaps, the thornier questions about adequacy of documentation and the legitimacy of intervening in the records creation process—a documentation group would be invaluable, *if* any of our archives or repositories have the resources to assemble and direct one. Where are we going to get the money and staff?[24] Well, maybe there is a way. When mom and pop turn enough of a profit on their $13.5 million gross to leverage a buyout of Joe's Corner Grocery, split their stock two for one, take advantage of the President's proposed reduction in capital gains taxes, and endow the Mom and Pop Foundation, we can always submit a grant proposal.

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NOTES

1. Larry J. Hackman and Joan Warnow-Blewett, "The Documentation Strategy Process: A Model and a Case Study," *American Archivist* 50:1 (Winter 1987): 13-47.
2. The count of articles is based on an excellent unpublished bibliography prepared in 1980 by Dennis Meissner, Minnesota Historical Society. Meissner surveyed both archival and economic history journals. I have brought the bibliography up to date only for *American Archivist* and *Midwestern Archivist.*

   Articles that pay any significant attention to small business records are:

   Thomas D. Clark, "The Archives of Small Business," *American Archivist* 12:1 (January 1948): 27-35.

   T.D. Clark, "Records of Little Businesses as Sources of Social and Economic History," *Bulletin of the Business Historical Society* 19:5 (Nov. 1945): 151-58.

   Reynold M. Wik, "Adventures in Business Records: The Vanishing Archives," *American Archivist* 14:3 (July 1951): 195-200, laments the dearth of records for agricultural implement dealers and farm machinery manufacturers.

   Jack King, "Collecting Business Records," *American Archivist* 27:3 (July 1964): 387-90, calls for more extensive collecting of the records of small and large businesses.

   Christopher Densmore, "Understanding and Using Early Nineteenth Century Account Books," *Midwestern Archivist*: 5:1 (1980): 5-19, focuses on use of existing records of small businesses.

   Nicholas Burckel, "Business Archives in a University Setting: Status and Prospect,"*College and Research Libraries* 41:3 (May 1980): 227-34, is based on a survey of whether university manuscripts repositories are collecting business records, and if so, what kind.

   Seymore Bassett, "Documenting Recreation and Tourism in New England," *American Archivist* 50:4 (Fall 1987): 550-69, is concerned mostly with documenting tourist activity rather than the resorts and small businesses themselves.

   Gould P. Coleman, "Documenting Agriculture and Rural Life," *Midwestern Archivist* 12:1 (1987): 21-27, discusses an innovative foray into documentation strategy of family farms.

   The quoted terms in this paragraph are from Joanna Yates, "Internal Communications Systems in American Business Structures: A Framework to Aid Appraisal," *American Archivist* 48:2 (Spring 1985): 145, 153.
3. Oliver Wendell Holmes, "The Evaluation and Preservation of Business Archives," *American Archivist* 1:4 (1938): 171-85.
4. Clark, "The Archives of Small Business," 27 (emphasis added); Clark, "Records of Little Businesses," 151.
5. U.S. Census Bureau, "The State—Employees, Payroll, and Establishments by Industry," *County Business Patterns: Minnesota, 1986* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1988), 3-14; *The State of Small Business: A Report of the President, Transmitted to Congress 1989* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1989). The spread of percentages is due to the problem of definition.
6. Following Harvard economics historian Alfred Chandler, Burckel, "Business Archives," 229, and Yates, "Internal Communications Systems," 144, both use the "fewer than 100 employees" definition of a small business.
7. U.S. Census Bureau, "The State—Employees, Payroll, and Establishments by Industry," *County Business Patterns: Minnesota, 1986* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1988), 3-14; Vic Spadaccini, ed., *Minnesota Pocket Data Book, 1985-86* (St. Paul: Minnesota State Planning Agency, 1985), 84.

8. *The State of Small Business: A Report of the President, Transmitted to Congress 1989* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1989), 17, 19, 20; telephone conversation 9 April 1990 with George Saumweber, Minneapolis office of the U.S. Small Business Administration. Not to be outdone in confusion, the Policy Analysis Division of the Minnesota Department of Energy (later Trade) and Economic Development changed its criteria for a "very small" business by a factor of ten between 1986 (*1986 Economic Profile of Minnesota,* St. Paul, Minn.: Policy Analysis Division, Minn. Dept. of Energy and Economic Development, [1986], p. 10) and 1988 (*Compare Minnesota: An Economic and Statistical Fact Book,* St. Paul, Minn.: Minn. Dept. of Trade and Economic Development, Policy Analysis Division, 1988, p. 26). In 1986 very small companies were those with less than $1,000 in gross sales, while in 1988 the same company could have up to $10,000 in gross sales and still be considered very small. Not surprisingly, the proportion of very small companies in the state jumped from 19.6 percent to 41 percent in two years.
9. Gould P. Coleman, "Documenting Agriculture and Rural Life," 22.
10. *County Business Patterns: Minnesota,* 3-14; National Minority Business Campaign, *Try Us '88: National Minority Business Directory* (Minneapolis: National Minority Business Campaign, 1988).
11. Burckel, "Business Archives," 229.
12. Unpublished "Summary of Manuscripts Collections Survey Results: Business," 15 March 1980. The survey lists 557 business collections, ranging from 5 inches to 15,000 cubic feet, dating from the eighteenth century to the present. Many traditional small family businesses are represented: general stores, small publishers, nurseries, drug stores, furriers, farms, and the like. There are also more modern examples of small businesses: consulting firms, theaters, agricultural cooperatives, and public relations firms.
13. In the Minnesota Historical Society, see, for example, the records of the Great Northern Railroad, T. B. Walker lumber company, and E. J. Longyear mining company.
14. *Historic Resources in Minnesota* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1979), 23.
15. Telephone conversation with Kellee Green, NARA Great Lakes Region office, 11 April 1990.
16. Clark, "The Archives of Small Business," 27; Clark, "Records of Little Businesses," 151. Clark was concerned primarily with nineteenth-century records, but many of his arguments regarding their social and economic history content apply equally to modern small businesses.
17. This admittedly impressionistic survey was based largely on the books assigned to me in two graduate courses, one on U.S. economic history and the other on twentieth-century U.S. history. See, for example, Sidney Ratner, et al, *The Evolution of the American Economy* (New York: Basic Books, 1979), and Samuel P. Hays, *The Response to Industrialism, 1885-1914* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957).
18. Based on a review of four issues December 1988-September 1989. Much is being written on small businesses in the colonial and ante-bellum periods, but in those years nearly all businesses were small by any modern definition.
19. Yates, "Internal Communications Systems," 144-45. See also Francis Blouin, "A New Perspective on the Appraisal of Business Records: A Review," *American Archivist* 42:3 (July 1979): 316-17. Clark would take issue with the argument that small business documentation is minimal and routine. He points out that some small businessmen became the "official confidants for their communities," and received intimate letters from customers detailing their lives. In addition he argues that the account books themselves, if read properly, are "socio-economic journal[s] of trade" ("Records of Little Businesses," 157), though this is probably less true for modern small businesses. But he does not contravene the general point that small businesses create fewer evidential records, even in proportion to their activity, than do larger firms.
20. Lester J. Cappon, "Historical Manuscripts as Archives: Some Definitions and Their Application," *American Archivist* 19:2 (April 1965): 102. See also Richard C. Berner, "Perspectives on the Record Group Concept," *Georgia Archives* 4:1 (Winter 1976): 50; Hilary Jenkinson, *A Manual of Archive Administration* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1922), 1-19; Theodore R. Schellenberg, "Archival Principles of Arrangement," *American Archivist* 24:1 (January 1961): 12-13; and Schellenberg, *Modern Archives: Principles and Techniques* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), 11-15, 18.
21. Bassett, "Documenting Recreation and Tourism," 564, suggests task forces of archivists and historians to persuade resort owners to create and preserve better records. Gould Coleman, in a more thoughtful and perceptive article, recounts the use of oral history and game playing to record the history of business decision making by farm families.
22. Hackman and Blewett, "The Documentation Strategy Process," 43; also 27, 24, 23.

23. Schellenberg, "Archival Principles of Arrangement," 12. Frank Boles and Julia Marks Young, "Exploring the Black Box: The Appraisal of University Administrative Records," American Archivist 48:2 (Spring 1985): 122-24, have taken issue with the adequacy of the evidential/informational dichotomy of archival value promulgated by Schellenberg. They argue that other values are equally important, but do not abandon (though they rename) evidential value as an important factor in appraisal. Leonard Rapport, "No Grandfather Clause: Reappraising Accessioned Records," *American Archivist* 44:2 (Spring 1981): 143-50, gives a more serious critique of evidential value as an appraisal criterion. Even Rapport, however, does not directly question the importance of evidential value, only the breadth of its application in appraisal decisions.
24. Hackman and Blewett, "The Documentation Strategy Process," 20, as well as other advocates of documentation strategy, argue that no additional archival resources are needed to mount one, even in a small repository. I believe, along with Frank Boles, "Mix Two Parts Interest to One Part Information and Appraise Until Done: Understanding Contemporary Record Selection Process," *American Archivist* 50:3 (Summer 1987): 365-66, that documentation strategy demands an enormous focus of staff time and funds. Although for the past six years every archival conference and every archival journal has included sessions and articles about the documentation strategy theory, I am aware of no more than half a dozen actual documentation strategies that have been put into practice. What can account for this dearth of implementation except an equal dearth of the necessary resources?

    For additional critiques of documentation strategy, see the undeservedly ignored commentaries by Frank Boles and Frank G. Burke on Richard J. Cox and Helen W. Samuels, "The Archivist's First Responsibility: A Research Agenda to Improve the Identification and Retention of Records of Enduring Value," *American Archivist* 51:1&2 (Winter and Spring 1988): 28-42, commentaries 43-51. Though each is as intent on championing his own agenda (Boles, refining appraisal methodology; Burke, creating archival theoreticians) as on analyzing documentation strategy on its own terms, each also points to several crucial—and otherwise virtually overlooked—weaknesses in documentation strategy as a practical tool.

COOPERATIVE COMPETITORS: LOCAL, STATE, AND NATIONAL ARCHIVAL ASSOCIATIONS

WILLIAM J. MAHER

ABSTRACT: Archivists' professional development is critically dependent on a diverse system of archival organizations. Through meetings, publications, and committee work, these organizations provide members with education, experience, and legitimatization. Regional archival organizations are enviably positioned to fulfill archivists' educational and socialization needs. Their middle position, however, requires special attention to ensure that cooperation and competition are used productively.

Organizations like the Midwest Archives Conference (MAC) sometimes show a narcissistic tendency when they pause to examine how well they fulfill their roles as representatives of their profession. In fact, one can point to an almost disconcerting proportion of conference sessions and archival literature given over to such navel-gazing. Nevertheless, the vitality of organizations like MAC and of the archival profession as a whole requires attention to such issues. This self-examination is the only way in which each member and each archivist can be assimilated into the profession to contribute to its ongoing development. The process also allows members to redefine goals and operating procedures and to adjust for the inevitable changes in the environment within which the profession and organization function.

Among the most important issues for self-examination are the relations between archivists and allied and competing occupations because these define the boundaries of the archival profession. Archival organizations play a key role by serving as advocates for archivists and providing a forum for discussion of relations with collateral professionals, such as librarians, records managers, historians, and museum specialists. Archival literature and annual meetings have been quite useful in covering these topics and thereby helping to articulate the need for the autonomy that is essential if the archival profession is to survive and prosper.

Equally important are the relations among the diverse organizations established to serve archivists. Conflict and tension may be less explicit here, but it is just as real and deserves attention because it affects the allocation of archivists' most plentiful resources—their time and talents—to volunteer organizations. The tensions emanate from fundamental differences in the interests

that lead archivists to assemble in specialist groups organized around common experiences and interests. Most such groups are focused on type of repository (e.g., government archives, college and university archives), format (e.g., photographs, machine-readable records), or archival function (e.g., description, preservation). While all share the basic goal of advancing archival work, each interest group works to advance its specialized needs and accomplishments, competing for existing resouces. Without the infusion of significantly more resources, it is unrealistic to expect that those tensions can be eliminated. Nevertheless, they are not without positive effects. If kept in balance, they can move the archival profession forward by improving both its techniques and its responsiveness to specialist constituent groups. Moreover, the potential for damage from these tensions can be limited if specialists redirect their attention to their overall commitment to the core archival goal of preserving the past and making it accessible to the future.

Different, but possibly more productive, tensions can develop among the many nonspecialist, or umbrella, archival organizations established to address a comprehensive range of archival concerns in a specific geographic area. At the national, regional, state, and metropolitan levels, these organizations are central to the health and development of the archival profession in the United States. Each type has a unique role to play, but all draw from a single pool of archivists for their members, officers, journal authors, committee members, and conference attendees and speakers. Because of the resultant potential for both competition and duplication of effort, it is important for archivists to look at the relations of the umbrella archival organizations operating at these four geographic levels.

The development of the regional, state, and local archival organizations can be seen as an example of the overall trend in post-World War II America toward decentralization and regionalism. On the other hand, it can be equally well explained by the innate tendency of Americans to create organizations as noted by Alexis de Tocqueville:

> Americans of all ages, all conditions, and all dispositions constantly form associations. They have not only commercial and manufacturing companies in which all take part, but associations of a thousand other kinds, religious, moral, serious, futile, restricted, enormous, or diminutive.... If it is proposed to inculcate some truth or to foster some feeling by the encouragement of a great example, they form a society. Wherever at the head of some new undertaking you see the government of France or a man of rank in England, in the United States you will be sure to find an association.[1]

Regardless of whether or not this is any longer a uniquely American habit, the growth of regional, state, and local archival associations is the result of a commitment to democracy, as much as it is a manifestation of the overall growth in size and complexity of archival work.[2]

To provide a base for reviewing the relations of archival organizations, the table on the next page outlines the size and founding dates of archival organizations in the Midwest.[3]

Despite the long-standing preeminence of the Society of American Archivists (SAA), for more than two decades midwestern American archivists have found it necessary to pursue professional goals not only through a national organization but also through groups closer to home.

	DATE ESTABLISHED	NUMBER OF MEMBERS
National		
Society of American Archivists	1936	3,365
Regional		
Midwest Archives Conference	1972	1,000
State		
Michigan Archival Association	1958	250
Society of Ohio Archivists	1968	160
Society of Indiana Archivists	1972	100
Wisconsin Archivists Society	1987	50
Metropolitan		
Association of St. Louis Archivists	1973	110
Library Council of Metropolitan Milwaukee	1977	20
Kansas City Area Archivists	1978	119
Chicago Area Archivists	1982	70
Twin Cities Archives Roundtable (Minneapolis-St. Paul)	1982	100

The beginning of the 1990s is a particularly appropriate time for these organizations to examine their relations because the subnational organizations now have sufficient experience to assess their successes and sufficient stability to acknowledge their limits and failings. In addition, given the demographics of the archival profession and the limited prospects for dramatic growth in members during the next decade, understanding the health of the entire system of archival organizations will be critical to our future success as archivists and as professionals. Moreover, an overview of the relations among the many archival organizations in the Midwest is important to allow each to reassess and redefine itself.

To provide a regional perspective on these issues, three areas will be examined. First, the goals of organizations, the means of achieving them, and some of the positive byproducts of professional organizations will be reviewed. Second, some of the contributions that regional associations are particularly well positioned to make will be described. Third, the issue of cooperation versus competition will be examined, and it will be argued that neither should be a driving force in how professional archival organizations relate to each other.

Generic Goals, Activities, and Outcomes of Organizations

To set the stage, one needs to understand the nature and purpose of professional organizations. Under the various names of organization, society, association, conference, and congress, there are literally thousands of such bodies in the United States.[4] Each represents the confluence of interests of specialists in an occupational area, employing institutions, and interested third parties. While none of these could replace the archival associations, the purposes of any society are truly generic. All share six basic goals:

- education of members and nonmembers in the given occupation
- communication of information relevant to the occupation

- advancement of knowledge, theory, and practice in the field
- definition, promulgation, and enforcement of standards of practice
- control over the definition and use of the occupational title, especially regarding the linkage of the term "professional" to the name of the occupation
- advocacy on behalf of the fundamental concerns of the occupation before governmental, institutional, and competing professional bodies.

In the context of relations among umbrella archival organizations, it should be noted that the first three of these relate to knowledge and expertise and are therefore equally within the grasp of the subnational as the national association. The latter three relate to control and may be exercised most fully at the national level.

The mechanisms or activities that associations use to accomplish these goals are equally generic, and include

- formal conferences, workshops, and seminars
- publications, especially newsletters, journals, technical literature, and public relations documents
- committees and task forces working on a subfield of the occupation, a technical problem, or a political issue
- promulgating policy statements, formal and informal lobbying representation on interoccupational committees, task forces, and agencies
- hosting events that foster development of informal communication among individual professionals.

Although not every activity is equally appropriate for each type of organization, this outline can be used as a checklist to assess the relative activity of archival organizations at each geographic level.

All of these goals and activities are important to archival organizations, but there are other roles fulfilled by professional societies that must be considered in any analysis of the relationships of local, state, regional, and national associations. These are the outcomes or effects of professional organizations. While logically related to formal goals, four deserve special attention.

First, like all other institutions, once professional organizations are firmly established, they are driven by a desire to survive. This inevitably fosters a conservatism in program planning and operations. No matter how innovative the impetus for their creation, most organizations soon adopt routines for programming, administration, and governance, and these routines often become the unexamined *raison d' être* for operations. Thus, each faces a challenge to remain fresh while remaining true to the reasons for its creation.

Second, one of the most critical roles of organizations is that they provide legitimacy and credibility for the individual professional. Because an organization represents a body of assembled experts in a field, the recognition that the organization bestows on a member via program participation, election to office, and committee service functions as an invaluable endorsement that the professional can carry back to his or her institution. For archivists, who are often lone, or at least minority, professionals within their employing institutions, this can be particularly useful in securing credibility and professional autonomy for their programs. For example, an archivist's claim for use of nonlibrary techniques to describe manuscripts will have considerably greater credibility at one's employing library if the archivist has been an active participant in the development of archival practice through associations.

Third, professional organizations fulfill a role as an exercise and proving ground. Because organizations all depend on volunteer labor for offices and committees, they provide innumerable opportunities for their members to develop and refine skills that contribute significantly to their effectiveness as employees. Organizations educate and train professionals in these especially important areas: critical thinking, writing skills, interpersonal skills, program planning and management, and budgeting. Thus, while organizational work in MAC or SAA may take one away from one's everyday job, it should also return one with valuable experience that few institutions can afford to provide as part of internal staff development programs.

Fourth, professional organizations fulfill a complex socializing and humanizing role. Through meetings and committee work, organizations create an environment in which the technical details of archival work can be mixed with the personal interests of members. These may include the frivolous (such as the current performance of the Chicago Cubs), avocations (furniture refinishing or car restoration), and personal (family relations and progress of children or pets). This not only humanizes professional work, but also establishes an environment where creativity can flourish because spontaneous social interaction is easily mixed with concentrated professional discussions. Especially important for this outcome are the informal aspects of professional meetings, such as mixers and receptions. These should not be written off as mere entertainment as is sometimes the case.[5]

From reviewing both the formal goals and actual outcomes of professional organizations, it becomes apparent that some are more suited to one type of organization than others. For example, creating standards and defining professional credentials may be accomplished far better by national organizations whereas socializing functions may be achieved best in local organizations. Similarly, lobbying on state records issues is clearly best performed by state archival associations.

The Contributions of the Regionals

To assess the relation of the regionals to other organizations, one must consider what they contribute to the overall system of professional organizations. This can be understood best by looking at their inherent strengths compared with other archival organizations.[6]

1. *Regionals have a critical advantage in their position between nationals and state and local organizations.* Unlike the national organizations, regionals do not bear many of the heavy responsibilities for the national definition of the profession. Because of their smaller size and scope, they have the luxury of not needing to be active in every area of archival work, and can instead concentrate their efforts. Likewise, because regionals do not operate with the financial responsibility for a headquarters office and staff, they can have much more flexibility in their budget and operations, and should be able to take more risks. Although the demise of an organization like MAC would be most unfortunate, the realization that its survival is less critical than SAA's should liberate its leaders to take programming and operational risks that the national might not take.

2. *The position of regionals vis-à-vis the state and metropolitan organizations is also a major reason for their strength.* Because regionals draw from a large geographic area (e.g., MAC incorporates 800,000 square miles in twelve states) they can tap a large pool of diverse institutions. While there are high quality archival institutions in each of MAC's twelve states and in most cities, the number and diversity of such institutions only reaches a critical mass when the net is cast broadly enough to include several states and metropolitan areas that incorporate a heterogeneous mix of institutions. Thus, MAC can include professionals from the American Jewish Archives in Cincinnati, the National Ba'Hai Archives in Wilmette, the Minnesota Historical Society, and the Urbana Free Library. At the same time, the regional often draws from the same calibre of talent that is the mainstay of the national organization. True, some of this talent is also available within larger states like Ohio and major cities like St. Louis, but creating a diverse pool in those areas is inherently more difficult.
3. *The position of regionals helps them to be much closer to their members than the national.* They can offer programs of a quality often very close to that of the national, and they are able to do so with lower dues and fees. In this way, the regionals perform an important role in professionalizing new archivists and new archival programs whose situations inherently severely limit how much they can spend on travel and professional guidance. Regionals perform a critical educational function because they bring a high level of professional expertise within the reach of all archival institutions and individuals. They are particularly effective in this because they are smaller and more intimate, but as a regional grows to the size of MAC, maintaining intimacy is more difficult. State and metropolitan organizations clearly have greater potential for one-on-one contact among archivists.
4. *The benefits of size also carry over to governance.* MAC, for example, has always prided itself on its democratic and grass roots philosophy. One of the reasons that this spirit can prevail is that the regional can draw from a good-sized pool for its officers and active members. No single institution, handful of institutions, or single type of repository is so likely to predominate as it might in metropolitan and state organizations. In addition, since the regional is not the preeminent national organization, the stakes in controlling it are not so high as to cause tension. Consequently, this has contributed to more amicable elections and committee appointments in MAC than is sometimes seen in SAA.

These observations are not intended to slight SAA or the state and local organizations. Rather, these are the areas where the position of regionals solves problems that can be more challenging to the organizations at the other ends of the geographic scale. At the same time, it should be noted that the middle position of a regional creates three unenviable problems. First, it is hard to maintain the immediacy and intimacy that gave the organization its original life as the membership grows to more than ten times what it was in the first years. Second, providing a broad array of services for a large number of members at a low cost is very difficult when that low cost also precludes hiring a paid staff to handle the administrative functions of the organization. Third, there is a challenge in remaining a grassroots organization long after the association has been placed on a firm footing, and, indeed, has become an institution that seeks to preserve itself and its traditional ways of doing business.

Cooperation versus Competition

With an understanding of the purposes and relative advantages of archival organizations, it is possible to turn to the issue of cooperation and competition among organizations. Unfortunately, the usual treatment given to this issue is quite unsatisfactory. Even the most detailed and lengthy discussions of cooperation and competition can be reduced to the aphorism: "We should reduce the amount of competition because it wastes our resources. Instead, we should engage in more cooperative ventures to pool talent, avoid duplication, and rationalize the services we provide." It is hard to argue with such sentiments without appearing to be a Philistine, but these sentiments make a very unproductive starting point for specific actions when cooperation or competition is encountered. The traditional responses to the cooperation/competition question are inadequate because they overlook five important aspects of the issue that should become the basis of archivists' thinking.

1. *Both cooperation and competition are inevitable; both produce good, and both produce bad.* Cooperation and competition occur both formally and informally, in highly visible ways and many less apparent ways. The formal ways include the cooperative scheduling of workshops and the competitive hosting of meetings.
2. *The informal and subtle aspects of cooperation and competition have received too little attention.* For example, one of the most important subtle aspects of cooperation is that each organization trains leaders for the other organizations. Generally this works in an upward fashion. For example, an archivist may start his or her association career as a council member or secretary of a metropolitan association, and then with this experience be elected to a state or regional office. Another example of subtle cooperation are the contributions to the national from the experience of the regional, such as the development of committee guidelines for the SAA following the model used by MAC for its committees.
3. *The third observation is that competition produces many desirable and productive results that should persuade us to accept, if not encourage, competition.* The low-key competition among associations for the attention of archivists has energized their members to provide superior programs and products of which each can be proud. Anyone who has served on a program committee recognizes an inherent competitive challenge to make the program better than any other offerings concurrently available. The same can be said of newsletters and journals. If each organization were to try to operate solely in a noncompetitive fashion, the overall quality of all of our archival associations would be seriously impaired.
4. *Competition may have ill effects, but this should not be a reason to avoid activities that might have competitive overtones.* Few would defend contentious competition for members, meeting attendance, or public attention, but most forms of competition are not so stark as this. Instead competition and contention will arise when each organization is merely attempting to develop and run its own programs. The best examples of this problem are in the areas of scheduling meetings and soliciting manuscripts for publication. In both areas, it is very hard for the larger organizations not to step on, or at least step near, the toes of the smaller organizations.

The larger organizations must tread sensitively, but the smaller organizations need to recognize the importance of the regional's programs to the overall archival professional system. More advance consultation in scheduling meetings and development of cooperative programming, such as MAC attempted in 1989, should keep this problem to a manageable level although this is not to deny that misunderstandings about that meeting may have caused MAC to wonder whether a new and more contentious era was at hand.[7] As future instances of such tension occur, archivists should remember that it will not always be possible to avoid bruising toes. Conflict avoidance should not be a preeminent criteria in program planning, and each organization should not hesitate to look to what is best for itself and its mission. Wise leaders of our associations should recognize that our own missions cannot be fulfilled properly if the way we conduct ourselves creates a large group of dissatisfied colleagues in another association.

5. *While discussions of competition often focus on meetings and programs, a more important and subtle issue is competition for the time, talent, and ideas of our members.* Archives is not a large profession, and all organizations are utterly dependent on the volunteer time of their members. Although each of us stretches our time, the time we spend on a national or regional inevitably is time denied to the state and local organizations. For example, one implication of MAC accepting an invitation to hold a meeting in Iowa is that it will be calling on the time and resources of many archivists in Iowa for the years and months leading up to the meeting. This often will cut both ways—it will detract from the time Iowa archivists can devote to developing an association and meetings of their own, but it also can bring greater attention to the professional development of archives than would be possible just within a state or local group.
6. *Another important aspect of the cooperation/competition issue is that individuals—not organizations—compete or cooperate.* The organizations are the beneficiaries and sometimes the victims of how well individuals get along with other individuals. The force of one personality should never be so great as to alter the fundamental relations between two organizations, but we would be naive if we did not acknowledge that some of the worst tensions have arisen because personalities have been allowed to take precedence over organizational missions, goals, and long-term interests.

In its effort to be even-handed and to avoid relating some of the more unpleasant examples of difficulties in the relations among archival associations, this analysis may strike some as bland. Its positive tone, however, comes mainly from the many good things that have been accomplished by the umbrella archival organizations in the Midwest. Overall, the current system of separate and independent archival associations at the national, regional, state, and local level is sound, and will continue to serve us very well. To continue to make it work, however, members of each association need to be diligent to ensure that they do not undermine the goals and means of the other organizations. We all need to spend time mending the fences and the gates that demarcate our borders.

We need to recognize that our resources and audiences have limitations, but we also need to understand how the overall pie has, and can continue to, enlarge to accommodate archival professional organizations at all levels. The continued

development of multiple associations as in the past twenty years can enhance greatly the cause of archival preservation and archival programs. As archivists we are all better served by having diverse and viable organizations at each level. This can be accomplished best *not* by defining standards and rules for our mutual behavior. Rather than coming from attempts to draw lines on maps in remote conference rooms, it will come from conscientious individuals in all organizations who are willing to negotiate the coastlines and borders and solve problems as they are encountered.

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NOTES

1. Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America,* vol. 2 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1946), 106.
2. In fact, it has been suggested that Dutch archivists show a similar tendency toward regional organizations independent of the authority of central government. Johannes-Petrus Sigmond, "The Role of Associations of Archivists in Continuing Training," *Archivum* 32 (1986): 203-06.
3. This table is based on data in the 1989 Directory of Regional Archival Organizations published as an insert in the *SAA Newsletter* (January 1989).
4. The current *Encyclopedia of Associations,* 25th ed. (Detroit: Gale Research, 1990), lists nearly 23,000 nonprofit American membership organizations of a national scope, including both the SAA and MAC. In addition, a separate list covers over 47,000 regional, state, and local organizations, and 9,700 international organizations.
5. An extensive literature on the nature of information exchange among professionals has found evidence of the importance of informal events and communication at conferences for the development of the knowledge base of disciplines. For example, see William J. Paisley and Edwin B. Parker, *Scientific Information Exchange at an Interdisciplinary Behavioral Science Convention* (Stanford, CA: Institute for Communications Research, 1967); and Bertita E. Compton, "Convention Attendants and Their Use of the Conventions as a Source of Scientific Information," report no. 4 in *Reports of the American Psychological Association's Project on Scientific Information Exchange in Psychology* 1 (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 1963), 83.
6. What follows is inevitably colored by the author's very positive experience in MAC. Furthermore, in describing the strengths of regionals, the author does not wish to imply that local, state, or national organizations do poorly in these areas, but that these are areas in which regionals can excel.
7. For a review of the problems and solutions that developed between MAC and the Michigan Archival Association concerning the 1989 fall meeting in Lansing see the second half of "Plans Changed for Fall MAC Meeting" *MAC Newsletter* 16:3 (January 1989): 4. See also William J. Maher, "A Challenge for MAC's Future: Relationships with State and Local Archival Organizations," *MAC Newsletter* 16:4 (April 1989): 8-10; and Dennis E. Meissner, "MAC Council Meets with State and Local Archival Organizations," *MAC Newsletter* 17:3 (December 1989): 4-5.

THE ARCHIVAL BRIDGE

KEVIN PROFFITT

ABSTRACT: Once upon a time state archival groups stood alone. The emergence of regional organizations such as MAC forced many state groups to face a new reality. A newly competitive archival world prompted them to readjust their goals and priorities. Cooperation between archival groups must be part of this readjustment. Through cooperation the state groups and the regionals will benefit, as will the larger archival profession.

While serving as president of the Society of Ohio Archivists (SOA), I received a letter from a longtime SOA member. "I'm not going to renew my SOA membership," he wrote, "because MAC has made SOA redundant." This letter came during a time when SOA's membership was dropping, its treasury was dwindling, and many in SOA doubted whether we would survive as an organization—or, perhaps worse, become nothing more than a social group, lacking purpose and influence. For a long time I wondered: were SOA and other state archival associations redundant? Had MAC and other regional organizations rendered SOA obsolete? After much thought I concluded that SOA was not redundant. It has a place in the archival community and it has a role to perform.

During the last decade MAC and the state organizations became competitors throughout the Midwest. With its size and resources MAC offered opportunities and variety—at the same or lower costs—that state organizations could never hope to match. That fact alone, however, did not make state organizations obsolete. Using a business analogy, I began to see MAC and other regionals as foreign competitors, challenging state organizations with new and aggressive ideas, forcing them to adapt or fall behind. In the 1970s MAC came into a region where state organizations such as SOA had previously reigned supreme. With commitment, organization, efficiency, and foresight MAC built an organization that was the envy of all who saw or competed against it. MAC seemed capable of making state organizations obsolete—as computers have now replaced typewriters. So, as in the business world, those state organizations in the Midwest that continued in their old ways of doing things were doomed to fail. Change in state organizations was necessary for them to flourish. In this article, I would like to justify and specify the continuing need for state archival organizations, offer a few suggestions to help these groups redefine and refocus their goals, and conclude by noting how regional organizations could assist state groups in these efforts.

For Midwest state archival organizations, MAC has grown to be a giant that looms over them. From a state perspective, MAC can hold meetings wherever it

wants and has the resources to do whatever it wants. MAC casts a very large shadow—a shadow that influences many, if not most, state decisions concerning meetings and membership. Further, I believe it is fair to say that MAC has drawn away many archivists who would otherwise support state or local groups. Nor is MAC going to wither away, releasing members to state groups. If anything, it is reasonable to predict that MAC will continue to grow and have even more influence throughout the Midwest in coming years.

Knowing this, state organizations need to face a new reality and stop trying to do what MAC can do better. State organizations should reevaluate their programs, goals, and agendas to provide personal and specific services that MAC does not. They should realign their goals to speak, as MAC cannot, for archival issues and needs in their states. They should readjust their goals to meet the specific needs of their states. They should target their growth toward members that MAC is too big to reach and work on problems that MAC is too distant to solve. Such goals are neither trivial nor unimportant to professional archivists.

For example, state groups should expand their membership base, seeking out those who need their services, regardless of whether these persons might be outside the traditional archival realm. This is a matter of survival. State groups are relatively small. They should be more concerned with obtaining new members than in maintaining professional purity. This is not to say they should recruit new members indiscriminately. They should, however, expand their scope to include those in related fields who are now ignored but could benefit from membership in an archival organization. In seeking members state groups should move away from their traditional emphasis on university or large historical society archivists and focus more on local, even nonprofessional, institutions and individuals. These could include lone arranger archivists, religious archivists, local historical society curators, genealogists, local librarians, and others. The key here is practicality. State groups should seek out those persons who need professional state organizations the most. Those who need close, affordable meetings, inexpensive professional instruction, ready support, and a local forum for interaction and discussion of their work. State groups have the potential to become umbrella organizations for unaffiliated individuals and groups who share the goal of preserving of our documentary cultural heritage.

By seeking out nonprofessionals, state groups will be on their way to meeting the goal of being service organizations. Often it is members of this target audience who would benefit the most from attending professional meetings but lack the money or release time to travel out of state. Even if they do, the advanced nature of most MAC or SAA sessions may not benefit them. Without strong state organizations, these persons are without any professional support.

Although regional groups often profess interest in nonprofessional members, it seems inevitable that as increasingly more archivists from larger repositories continue to choose MAC or SAA their concerns will become predominant. The larger groups can also meet the professional needs of these archivists better than the state groups can. The state organizations, however, are uniquely qualified to plan their programs to meet the needs of a broad array of smaller and local repositories and should do so. They can provide affordable, convenient, innovative meetings specifically designed for these individuals and their needs. They can offer workshops and training sessions in basic procedures and they can provide an opportunity for these persons to come together in a way they might never have thought possible to learn, discuss, and improve their skills.

For example, in Ohio for the last three years SOA has, in cooperation with the Ohio Historical Society, sponsored one-day basic instruction workshops in conjunction with its annual spring meeting. These workshops—on conservation of manuscripts, the care and storage of photographs, and oral history techniques—were designed specifically for beginners and nonprofessionals. They have been enormously popular, with all three of the sessions being filled to capacity. Almost all the attendees represent persons who otherwise would not have attended an SOA meeting. These workshops provide good public relations for SOA, are a valuable public service to the attendees, and are an excellent source of revenue. SOA has made up to $500 on each of the workshops. This is a major benefit for financially strapped local groups.

State organizations can also serve by expanding their activities to become more involved in causes and movements in their states, relative not only to archives, but also on behalf of other heritage groups and their interests. This kind of involvement is something regional groups cannot do. Even with all of its resources, MAC, for example, cannot become involved in the local affairs of each of its member states. This is an area in which the state groups are uniquely qualified. Unfortunately, it is an area too often ignored. SOA was negligent in this area for a number of years, eventually retreating into a shell and losing much of the prestige and influence it once had—prestige it is working now to rebuild. For example, in the mid-1970s SOA compiled and published a directory to archives and manuscript repositories in Ohio. This was a milestone achievement for a state organization and a high-water mark for SOA. Regrettably, it was the last outside initiative of any consequence in which SOA participated. From that point SOA began a gradual decline and became less active, losing members, resources, prestige, and influence in the state.

We must not ignore the importance of organizational self-esteem and confidence. An active and involved organization, working to shape the cultural future of its state, creates energy. Conversely, if, like SOA, an organization grows flaccid and inactive, that inertia can permeate the organization and cause a negative ripple effect. State archival organizations do well by aspiring to be both a clearinghouse and a lighthouse for all the unaffiliated professionals and heritage groups in their states.

How do regional groups fit into this? First, they must broaden their horizons. It is not enough for regionals to think that since all is well with them all is well elsewhere. MAC, for example, is a large organization with significant financial and membership resources. Although MAC should not give financial assistance to the state groups, it should realize its place and obligations in the archival world and look beyond itself more than it has in the past. Initially, MAC should be aware of the state and local groups and be attentive to their needs and circumstances when scheduling and planning meetings. Next, MAC must encourage continuing contact with the state groups. Interorganizational cooperation should become a permanent agenda item in all MAC council meetings, while providing regular opportunities for discussion of this issue, both at its annual meetings and in its publications.

Of course there are many other forms of cooperation and assistance that can, and should, be considered. The point, however, is this: the regional groups must take the lead in this effort or it will surely fail. Healthy and active state archival organizations benefit regional organizations. They strengthen and promote the

cause of archives on the local level. They generate and pass along to the regionals interest and enthusiasm for archival work. Regional organizations have a vested interest, as well as an ethical and professional responsibility, to work with the state groups, helping them whenever possible. Only the regionals, with their size, influence, and resources can provide the forum and initiative necessary to sustain this effort.

Progress has been made. MAC has addressed this issue honestly and openly. But there is more to do. The first step—to make the regionals aware of their impact upon and need to cooperate with the state groups—has begun. Beyond this, state and regional groups should establish guidelines for formal and continuing interaction. MAC might consider forming a standing liaison committee —consisting of representatives from MAC and all state and local groups in the MAC region—to address this issue in detail and prepare an agenda for progress. Planning must give way to action; specific methods to increase and promote cooperation must be implemented and maintained.

This initiative is not a favor or concession from the regionals to the state groups. Rather, if the recent trend in Ohio spreads and state groups waste away to nothing more than occasional social gatherings, the archival profession will suffer. Consider the archival profession as a miniature replica of the three levels of government: SAA at the top, the regionals in the middle, and the state groups, in effect, being the grass roots or local government.

No one expects the National Archives to document the history and culture of every local community. That's why local historical societies and archives exist. In much the same way, SAA and the regionals need the state groups. Without strong and vibrant state groups to educate and promote the work of archives on the local level, the archival profession would be weakened, much as if the National Archives worked alone to document the history of each community in the United States.

Strong and active state groups are the base of the pyramid, the place where public contact begins. The archival profession is relatively unknown. It is not large in number or rich in resources. Its strength and its hope for progress must begin with local involvement. The archival profession works best when all archives, all archivists—working within their organizations and their communities—educate and inform those around them of their work, their purpose, and their goals.

Archivists are now standardizing the work of their profession. Certification and the creation of uniform descriptive procedures using the MARC format are two examples. Interorganizational cooperation is a natural addition to this agenda. Cooperation is the first step toward standardization. Interaction and communication are the foundations of growth and unity.

The rallying cry for this generation of archivists has been Gerald Ham's dictum to be on "the archival edge." Maybe cooperation is the archival bridge. In any case, many of the problems and decisions now facing archivists will be solved easier by being solved together.

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BOOK REVIEWS

UNESCO, ICA and Archives in the Modern World: Essays from the UNESCO Journal of Information Science, Librarianship and Archives Administration. Edited by Alan Ives. Wagga Wagga, Australia: Riverina-Murray Institute of Higher Education, 1987. 221 pp. Paper. $15.00 Australian includes postage and handling.

The title of this collection is self-illuminating: it consists of papers about archives reproduced from the *UNESCO Journal of Information Science, Librarianship and Archives Administration,* which was published from 1979 to the end of 1982. The articles were written by distinguished archivists representing the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and such countries as Argentina, India, Israel, the Netherlands, Senegal, Sri Lanka, the (former) Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and the United States.

Among the topics covered are: the involvement of UNESCO in the archival field, the International Council on Archives (ICA), international standards, records management, archival appraisal, automation and archives, audiovisual archives, the design of archives buildings, conservation, archival education, and archival development in particular countries.

The articles are brief and vary in quality. Due to the time lapse since their first publication, the information in some of them has been superseded (the automation area has changed, for instance; so has the administrative structure of the Soviet Union!), while others remain topical. The perspectives given on the archival profession at the end of the 1970s, including a report by Frank Evans on UNESCO and an article by Michael Cook on the educational needs of professional archivists, are particularly valuable.

Because the journal is now defunct, it is useful to have these archival essays in a different format. The collection appeared in 1987, but has received little circulation to date. Its editor anticipates the publication of a related volume of selected papers from the *UNESCO Bulletin for Libraries,* the predecessor to the *Journal of Information Science, Librarianship and Archives Administration.*

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Archives and Manuscripts Administration: A Basic Annotated Bibliography. Compiled by Richard J. Cox. Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, [1990]. 36 pp. Index. Paper. $5.40 AASLH members; $6.00 nonmembers.

As the fourteenth in the new AASLH technical report series, this bibliography has been prepared by Richard J. Cox partly to update his 1980 bibliography of archival literature (AASLH Technical Leaflet 130). But more important, it is intended to address the perceived problem of access to archival literature at an introductory level. Cox feels the profession lacks a bibliography suitable for one seeking a guide to the best and most relevant sources, and that access to literature can be a lengthy and tedious process given the variety of indexes one must consult. Designed to address this need, the bibliography will be useful for the beginner seeking pertinent and introductory information on the care of historical records, graduate students studying archival administration, and those archivists preparing to take the Academy of Certified Archivists' certification examination.

The bibliography is by no means comprehensive in its inclusions. Cox has chosen to be highly selective, and rather than include all citations for all aspects of archival work, he has produced a source list suitable for a firm introduction to the profession and its supporting literature.

Cox has concentrated on works of a basic introductory nature, those addressing particularly pertinent or current issues, as well as the standard works that are models, comprehensive statements, or summary writings. Monographs, serials, reports, manuals, and journal articles—restricted mainly to works of the past decade—are included. The bibliography focuses predominantly on archival practice in the United States with limited citations to Canadian and other foreign sources.

The bibliographic citations are arranged topically: general references, basic functions, special records types, specific repositories, archival administration and its relationship to other professions, and the development, present state, and future directions of the archival profession. There is an author and subject index to allow for cross-referencing, since many sources address more than one topic or issue. Each of the citations is annotated with a useful description of the nature and quality of the source. However, the annotation often includes an additional citation to a related source. I believe this "citation within a citation" hinders use of the bibliography. Although the citations mentioned within annotations are accessible through the index, they are not easily spotted if one is browsing by category. There are 242 entries in the bibliography, but many more sources are cited incidentally. In some cases the incidental citation is also annotated, contributing to a single epic-length annotation. Sources significant enough to be mentioned deserve separate entries. Drawing comparisons or showing relationships between sources could have been done by noting corresponding entry numbers.

Cox's six topical categories are quite useful, and allow for easy browsing. The general references section includes a listing of comprehensive bibliographies that are available in printed form. Perhaps it would have been useful, in addition to this, to have cited the various databases and indexing and abstracting services available in computerized or printed formats that would be likely to

include archival literature. Although the purpose of this bibliography required selectivity, the tools useful in conducting a comprehensive search could have been mentioned. The basic functions section addresses very well the many activities in which archivists are involved, including management of records from acquisition to reference, administration, outreach, and professional development. Sections on special records types and specific repositories address all record formats and types of repositories one might encounter. Thus, the problems of any specific type of archivist are covered, with the possible exception of an archivist who works independently as a consultant. Cox includes a section pertaining to how archivists relate to other similar professions. There is also a section on archival history and current professional issues.

In his introduction, Cox describes a basic bookshelf for archival and historical records administration. These are sources that he terms essential—the "bare bones" of an archival reference library. Cox also comments about their merits as essentials. The comments are useful, although many will prefer to have seen such information in the regular entry annotations. Hidden in the introductory narrative, these comments are inaccessible if one is simply browsing through the bibliography entries. Also, within the bibliography itself it is not readily apparent which are the "bare bones" sources noted in the introduction.

To complicate matters further, Cox has marked with asterisks certain entries in the bibliography. These he considers to be basic references, providing either the best or most comprehensive statement or the strongest introduction on a specific function or topic. Some items recommended for the basic bookshelf are marked as basic references, and some are not. Perhaps some specific criteria for each list would have made these classifications more meaningful.

As a relatively recent graduate of an archives administration program, I agree with Cox that there is a need for this sort of bibliography. While in graduate school, I often found myself involved in long and desperate searches of the appropriate literature without many tools available—especially any designed as introductory. I did find it rather odd that a date does not appear anywhere on the publication. This is a problem, since the bibliography is designed partly to focus on current issues, which may soon become outdated.

Despite minor shortcomings, I found this bibliography to be quite useful. It is more than a list and represented an analysis of the literature by one with many years of experience in the profession. Cox has included what he considers to be some of the best and most useful sources. He has made knowledgeable choices considering the audience he is intending to reach.

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Managing Archival and Manuscript Repositories. By Thomas Wilsted and William Nolte. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1991. 105 pp. Paper. Index, bibliography. $19 SAA members; $25 nonmembers.

Despite the common usage of a term like "archival administration" to describe the theories, principles, functions, and practices utilized by North American archivists, the administration or management aspect of our work has

been relatively neglected in this profession. There have been few substantial articles on the topic, few books that seriously concentrate on the management of archival repositories, and virtually no research on the management of archives. The profession has tended to emphasize archival functions, and what has been written on their administration generally has been done in a piecemeal fashion. Thomas Wilsted and William Nolte have filled a major gap in the archival literature, and the planners of the Society of American Archivists' new "Archival Fundamentals Series" should be applauded for having the foresight to commission such a volume.

Managing Archival and Manuscript Repositories consists of ten chapters, a bibliography on the management literature and list of professional associations in this field, and an index to the volume. The initial two chapters serve as a kind of warm-up to the topic, reviewing the "management process" and the "archivist as manager." From these two chapters emerge what is one of the most important themes of this volume: that every archivist, no matter what the size of his or her repository, has management responsibilities. "Archivists, working in organizations and responsible for the records of organizations, cannot escape the managerial implications of their profession. At some point in their careers most archivists will find themselves performing managerial tasks" (p. 3). In these chapters the reader is introduced to such matters as basic management concepts, important issues such as the impact of organizational culture, and the need to define vision and to cultivate leadership.

The remainder of the volume carries the reader through a concise review of the essential aspects of managing an archival repository. Chapter three considers the archival program's placement in its parent organization's structure and the program's relationship to the rest of the organization. Following this chapter are discussions of planning, managing human resources and finances, administering archival facilities, fund raising and development, public relations, and managing technology. All of these chapters are solid introductions to the topics, providing a well-rounded view of the management of archival repositories. The concluding section on the management literature and professional associations provides a useful source for additional assistance.

In the last chapter on technology another important concept about managing in an "uncertain environment" is introduced. This is worth special comment because it relates to a criticism of this volume and, indeed, this series. "Archival managers must be willing to dedicate staff and other resources to projects without requiring success.... It means that project managers must be chosen for their willingness to 'champion' causes, but must not be judged, in career terms, solely on the success of those causes" (p. 95). This statement introduces an element of risk management that has been little evident in the profession, perhaps a reflection of the "limited resources" available to the repositories and the profession, as suggested by the authors, or a general conservative attitude emanating from a still-prevalent custodial perspective. Unfortunately, the authors could have introduced some of this perspective into their own writing. For example, the section on managing archival facilities rests on an assumption of a centralized archival records repository, never giving any credence to the possibility of other approaches. This may be the result of the mandate to the authors to summarize current practice and practical approaches. The volume's introductory note states that it "seeks to provide archivists with an introduction to the con-

cepts and functions of modern management" (p. 2). But the authors missed an opportunity to reveal where there are shifting attitudes, new ideas, debates and controversies, and needed research. This dimension could have been added without diminishing the volume's basic introductory quality or adding any substantial length.

A final note is in order. Archivists who already have dabbled in the literature of management science or applied management will find little new here. But the volume still stands as a useful, single publication on how to manage an archives. It should direct archivists to the management concepts that will help them in their work. Furthermore, it will assist both those new to the archival profession and archival educators who need management literature to which their students can easily relate. While it is worrisome that such basic management concepts might be new to many working archivists, this volume can be seen as a benchmark for the archival profession. If its publication results in more research studies on archival management, more detailed examinations of this subject by other archivists, and noticeably improved administration of archival institutions, then we can say this volume was a success.

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The Archival Trail: An Introduction to the Role Archives Play in Business and Community. Produced by Queen's Film Studies Department: Producer, Derek Redmond; Director, John Vainstein; Writer, Blaine Allen. Toronto: Ontario Council of Archives, 1990. 21 minutes, VHS format. $30.00 U.S.

The Archival Trail is a public relations video production. It works to communicate the value of archives to viewers by gathering success stories which suggest that archives enable us to retrace the trail left by history. Through five case studies, viewers see how archives in Ontario have been useful to their communities: a legal case in which archival documents resolved a dispute between the city of Windsor and the owners of the tunnel connecting it to Detroit; the internal and community use of a ballet company's recently developed in-house archives; a Toronto bank's day-to-day use of its corporate archives for management and organizational memory; an outreach program to public school classes that provided experience with primary sources and taught local history; and a Windsor building development project that confirmed the viability of a site through archival records. Each story is developed through images of documents, live action shots, and on-camera interviews with city officials, corporate representative, educators, and archivists, giving both personality and immediacy to the impact of archives.

Into the development of these scenarios, *The Archival Trail* injects a short segment outlining the four stages in the life of an archival collection before it is used by researchers: appraisal, accessioning, processing, and conservation. This segment offers an inside look at the specialized tasks that archivists do and visualizes what many of us have struggled to explain to the nonarchival world. Perhaps best of all, it allows the viewer to see modern facilities (including the use of computers by both archivists and researchers), thus subtly demolishing

the stereotype of an archives as the dusty archaic cupboard of an institution. Not surprisingly, however, it depicts in the most depth what is most easily demonstrated (conservation) and covers the other aspects more superficially. Despite its value, this segment seems counterposed against the series of examples mentioned earlier and some may find that it interrupts rather than contributes to the flow of the main argument being developed.

There are several high points in *The Archival Trail.* Among these is the segment on the public school students' exploration of and excitement at a community archives. This image depicts the happy ending for which archivists live! Another bright spot is the statement by an archivist on the purpose of archives: "In order to be an archives, we can't just be a room in the back that people give their materials that they don't want. We want to be a working resource center where people can take things from the past to find historical documentation of things, and also use it towards the future, because otherwise we sit here collecting files." A third gem is a scene with the aging ballet performer assisting young students, which quietly reinforces the point of the video.

But the production also has its flaws. The most pronounced of these is its seeming lack of focus. It is also unclear what the desired response to the video is to be. The accompanying description states that the intended audience includes "administrators and staff, teachers and students or interested groups and organizations." However, the program seems more aimed at resource allocators in the public, corporate, and education spheres. Their understanding of the role of archives and appreciation of their utility will not only reinforce the role of archives, but also insure a continuing trail of documentation, support, and use. Assuming the general goal of gaining support for an archives, *The Archival Trail* might be effective as a presentation to a potential donor of records, or to a corporate executive whose influence could make or break a fledgling archives, or to an innovative educator, or to a community funding source. Among the general public and uninitiated students, however, *The Archival Trail* may be less successful. It might persuade the almost converted with its appeal to business/legal pragmatism and community zeal, but might also reinforce the general public's feelings that history is remote and not very useful. *The Archival Trail* may have undercut its main goal by trying to say too much to too many.

Those who may be interested in using the video will be pleased to know that its usefulness is not limited to a Canadian audience. It capably and concretely articulates the advantages of an archives to the community. While the context is Canadian, the argument transcends political boundaries. Nor should would-be users wonder about the quality of the production. It is well done, is visually engaging, and is served by the quality of its audio and musical soundtrack. Potential users should be aware that the stories illustrating the usefulness of archives are drawn primarily from government and corporate archives perspectives. For those archivists using visual or other media to communicate to donors, supporters, and users, *The Archival Trail* not only illuminates the historical trail for those who will walk on it, but furthers the practice and discussion of how to promote and explain archives to the nonarchival world.

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Archives & Museum Data Models & Dictionaries. By David Bearman. Archives and Museum Informatics Technical Report No. 10. Pittsburgh: Archives & Museum Informatics, 1990. 100 pp. Preface, tables, figures, and bibliography. Paper. $35.00.

This report is the tenth to be published by David Bearman as part of his irregular series of monographs addressing information management issues facing archives and museums. These reports are "designed to provide practical guidance on such issues as selecting and collecting software, determining functional requirements for management systems, and evaluating the impact of new technologies." As with the others, this report's basic premise is that archives and museums share common interests in their administrative activities, holdings, and audience, and, hence, in their requirements for automated systems.

Bearman's report has several stated aims: (1) to be an introduction to unpublished and intellectually inaccessible materials such as network data dictionaries, planning documents, and complete data models; (2) to foster increasing discussion, (and ultimately agreement) on common data definitions and how to represent them in models that contribute to the development of standards for information interchange; (3) to make the needs and outlook of systems designers, nontechnical archivists, and museum curators mutually comprehensible when they undertake to design information systems; and (4) to assist individual institutions and commercial ventures in developing standardized information systems utilizing the proposed model. Bearman describes data models as defining "the structure of information in a system and the operations performed on it. The basic structure consists of entities, or things, about which information is collected, the attributes or characteristics of those entities, and the relationships between entities."

To achieve these aims, Bearman examines and compares the functions and data elements of the existing descriptive standards of the MARC Archives and Manuscripts Control (AMC) format and the United Kingdom's Museum Documentation Association (MDA) data standard for museums. He finds both to be incomplete for the purposes of comprehensive data modeling in that their scope is "restricted to information about collections [but] silent on data about members, funds, facilities, events, and other aspects of archives and museum operations, except when these have an impact upon collections description." Bearman argues that the list of potential entities identified in these two national standards is considerably enhanced by adding the more detailed entities used by such institution-specific data dictionaries as those of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (VMFA) and the National Archives of Canada (NAC).

Although the resulting tables identify some common data element groups and entities between archives and museums under the headings of actions and processes, authorities, collections, and repositories, there is still not enough overlap under these headings to substantiate the author's claim of sufficient commonality between the two types of institutions to be the basis for a standardized system architecture. It is also not clear, without increased definition, that the listed headings actually refer to the same activity or practice in both cases.

This deficiency may be rectified by the work Bearman, Richard Szary, and Ted Weir conducted during a summer 1990 NHPRC Mellon Foundation Fellowship at the Bentley Historical Library, which has led to the formation of

an NHPRC-funded working group. The group seeks to define archival information system architecture guidelines along the lines suggested by Bearman in this text.

Some of the aims of the report are successful, others less so. The report is certainly provocative—as ever. Bearman presents some interesting, even visionary, ideas that will generate plenty of discussion in archival circles for some time to come. For archivists interested in theoretical concepts relating to archival automation, the report is, therefore, recommended reading. For the nontechnical audience, however, the somewhat cryptic chapter titles: Data Models and Data Dictionaries, Entities, Attributes, Relations, Underlying Processes and User Views, and Data Types & Data Representation; the systems analysis flow charts; and an appendix entitled Entities and Pseudo-Entities may well prove to be intimidating. Indeed, reading the report, which is replete with systems analysis jargon and automation acronyms, is heavy going, even for the automation-literate. For those wishing to develop or enhance automated archival systems, this report outlines a useful conceptual structure, but novice archivists or cautious repositories may wish to wait until the results of the working group are disseminated before trying to utilize such a data model for any practical application.

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Guide and Resources for Archival Strategic Preservation Planning. National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators. Prepared by Bonnie Rose Curtin. Atlanta: NAGARA, 1990. 2 vols. (Manual and Resource Compendium) and Computer-Assisted Self-Study. 205 pp., 645 pp., two 5-1/4 inch disks, one 3-1/2 inch disk. Available from Society of American Archivists, 600 S. Federal Street, Suite 504, Chicago, IL 60605. $95 SAA members, $120 nonmembers.

Between 1988 and 1990, the National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators (NAGARA) conducted an ambitious project designed to help archives of all kinds improve the physical preservation of their holdings. Admirably, the focus was less on the nuts and bolts of repairing deteriorated documents and more on the planning needed to balance preservation concerns with other archival responsibilities. The project, underwritten by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission and headquartered at the Georgia Department of Archives and History, developed a comprehensive planning tool, which it then tested at more than twenty state and local government archives around the country. The result is this imposing *Guide and Resources for Archival Strategic Preservation Planning,* known affectionately as *NAGARA GRASP* or (to its close friends) simply *GRASP.*

The thing itself comes in several pieces. First is a *Manual,* which outlines a procedure for strategic preservation thinking. In fourteen goals and thirty-five separate objectives, this manual offers detailed guidelines for integrating preservation into other archival activities. Next comes a fat (645 pages) *Resource*

Compendium, containing copies of articles, publications, bibliographies, lists of suppliers, forms, and other useful items that permit individual archivists to improve their own knowledge and procedures. Finally and most importantly, at the heart of *GRASP* is a computer-assisted self-study that walks archivists through their own repositories, assessing what they are doing right and what needs improvement. This study, based on an "expert system," takes about two hours to complete, and it yields a report offering guidance tailored to the individual needs of particular archives. Though developed initially for larger public records repositories, *GRASP* is intended to be equally useful to other archives as well, regardless of size or organizational parentage.

What are we to make of so ambitious an undertaking? First the good news. *GRASP*'s perspective on the preservation problem is refreshing. Its concern is for the big picture: planning, policy development, administrative procedures, support (financial and otherwise) from archival resource allocators. The goal here is preservation—that is, preservation *management*—rather than conservation—endless washing and deacidifying. In a profession that has heretofore put too much emphasis on what might be called the "Mister Wizard" wonders of the conservation lab, this report offers a more sensible approach, recognizing that all the hands-on treatment in the world is wasted without a coherent archival context in which to put it. *GRASP* is a welcome guide to preventive medicine rather than a glorification of high-tech brain surgery.

The *Manual*'s planning guide is also part of the good news. It is all-encompassing and thus offers the detailed direction most archives need. Organized around the core archival functions (administration, appraisal, arrangement, description, use), it provides a clear-headed mechanism for moving in the right direction. For each objective, it progresses logically from "make a plan" to "implement the plan" to "review the plan," identifying appropriate actors, resource needs, and control procedures along the way. Even without any other portions of the larger *GRASP* package, archivists will find this planning guide very useful.

Unfortunately, there is some bad news as well. The *Resource Compendium* contains helpful material, much of it not widely available, but it is organized in a somewhat capricious way that makes finding anything in it unpredictable at best. Much of it seems to have been assembled with an "oh, here's another thing" approach that will probably limit the use it actually gets. Going through it is a little like borrowing someone else's class notes: helpful to a point, but not really the same as being there. Archivists, whose daily concern is the intellectual and physical control of complex information, might have been expected to do a better job of putting these resources together.

The computer-assisted study also presents some problems. The program is (as advertised) reasonably user-friendly—some early problems with the 3-1/2 inch disk have been corrected—but glitches remain. One inquiry (#142) displayed the choice of answers but not the question. The help screens associated with several questions are indeed helpful, but they do not always show up where one needs them: question #189, for instance, assumes one knows the differences among some pretty specialized equipment (Quick: what's an "aspirating psychrometer"?), and question #18 presumes the archivist is on intimate terms with ANSI Standard T9.2-1988. Double-negatives (#137, for example) trip up the process here and there; some questions (#21, 92, and 233) are really two differ-

ent questions in one; and a bit of conservation snootiness creeps in. In question #265, for example, apparently the only way to remove staples is with "a stainless steel microspatula or other tool recommended by a trained conservator": well, excuse me.

These may seem like petty cavils, but problems like these stand in the way of *GRASP*'s stated desire to be useful in archives of all kinds, including single-person operations. There are also features of the program that make the project seem painfully amateur. To be blunt, there is an embarrassing number of typos and misspellings here. One screen that appears a dozen times during the survey begins, "If you are do not know about these activities in your repository...." All right, annoying but not a big deal. Still, we would not tolerate this kind of sloppiness in a printed book, and it is just as unacceptable here.

It would be easier to overlook these shortcomings if the final report based on the survey were worthwhile, but, after raising our expectations, this is the most disappointing feature of *GRASP*. I ran the program for four different archives, two of which really exist and two I made up: a small religious archives, a medium-sized university archives, a fictional state archives that was a real basket-case, and a "perfect" government archives that had all the staff, money, policies, facilities, and support one could hope for. The reports that the program generated for these had some striking similarities. In every case, including the perfect archives, the report advised me that "funding is needed for major renovations and/or a new or expanded physical plant." Elsewhere (including such areas as storage facilities, disaster preparedness, and reprography), the reports all told me that the archives needed more authority, more money, or both. No doubt that is true—though one wonders why that recommendation appeared for an archives that said it already had them: maybe it knew I was lying—but in the end does that tell me anything I did not already know? After all the work of conducting the review, a report that says, in effect, "Go, and sin no more" is just not particularly helpful. As an archivist, am I left with nothing more than a fancy computer printout telling me what I could have told it at the outset? As Peggy Lee used to say, is that all there is?

If the report offered a new way of looking at my problems, it might indeed have been worth the trouble, but that is another of *GRASP*'s failings. The computer-generated report, which is designed to be the key to the whole business, is extraordinarily user-unfriendly. It provides two sets of general recommendations (one organized according to preservation concerns, the other according to archival functions), and then a list of suggested planning activities in descending order of priority. The presentation of these last—potentially the most helpful because they propose specific actions for the described archives—is practically incomprehensible. It is difficult to see where one suggestion ends and another begins, and several of them seem to lump very different priorities together. One single recommendation, for instance, told me to implement a reprography program, improve my environmental and security controls, set standards for the training of staff, control the activities that take place in storage, and develop a preservation plan for traveling exhibits. Each of those is an entirely praiseworthy goal, but if *GRASP*'s intent was to clarify my thinking about preservation, an outcome like that obviously has the opposite result. Most archivists are not going to be helped by this kind of report, and all the commendable labor that went into assembling this planning tool will be dissipated. One hopes that future

editions of *GRASP* will yield a very different kind of output, or at least include a section on "how to read and use this report."

With an effort such as the one that went into this project, the reviewer wishes he could praise it more highly. There is useful material here, particularly in the *Manual,* and archivists who want to rethink and improve their preservation goals and priorities—and that, of course, should be every archivist—will find much of value. The shortcomings are the more unfortunate because they obscure the clear-cut contribution *GRASP* could have made but did not.

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A Guide to the Archives of the City of Seattle. Edited by Scott Cline. Seattle, Washington: Office of the Comptroller, 1988. 234 pp. Index. Paper.

The "Queen City of the Pacific Northwest" now has a guide to its records, which reside in several archival repositories throughout the city. This guide to Seattle's public records was made possible with grant funds from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. Editor Scott Cline, also the city archivist, begins this useful finding aid with a brief history of the city of Seattle. In seven short paragraphs, Cline quickly runs the reader from Seattle's settlement in 1851; through the devastating fire of 1889 and the period of rebuilding, improvement, and growth; to the modern city with more than a half million residents and more than 40 city departments and offices.

Cline then introduces and summarizes the objectives of the Municipal Archives Program which produced this guide. This program was initially established through an NHPRC grant in 1985 and is now funded entirely by the city. The guide fulfills one of the program's goals to ensure the usefulness and accessibility of city records. The final portion of this introductory section includes instructions on how to use the guide and where to go to find city records.

The guide is divided into two sections. The first section, the largest and meatiest, provides brief descriptions of record series and their locations. In general, records are located at several designated repositories including the State Archives, King County Regional Branch (Regional Archives), Manuscripts Section at the University of Washington Libraries, and the city clerk's office. Records from 32 departments, offices, commissions, boards, and programs are included, as are special sections for annexed cities, other boards and commissions, and special committees. City agencies are arranged alphabetically. A brief narrative introduces each section and provides valuable information about agency functions, organization, and history.

The record series entries under each appropriate creating agency are standardized, containing seven elements: a unique control number, series title, inclusive dates, collection size, description, location, and a note concerning any available finding aids. Series are arranged on each page in a double column format which makes it difficult to understand the hierarchy of the records; however, standardized entries and readable type do help. Overall, the guide is a handy reference tool.

The second main section is an alphabetical subject and name index. The unique control number listed with each term corresponds to the record series described in the first section. An extensive number of subjects and names was gleaned from the records during arrangement and description, and contributes to an index which appears comprehensive.

Since local researchers and the city agencies themselves seem to be the intended audience, the names index should be particularly useful. The editor also had the forethought to anticipate the need to easily update the finding aid. Public agencies have received the guide in a three-ring binder and the Municipal Archives Program staff plans to furnish periodic updates to keep it current.

The guide makes particularly effective use of numerous photographs, signs, maps, and models—many from series listed. The visual reproduction of this materials is excellent. The placement of illustrations throughout the text adds life to what may otherwise have become just another guide. Although the *Guide to the Archives of the City of Seattle* may not earn a spot at every archival repository or on every archivist's bookshelf, it succeeds in consolidating available information which is dispersed among several different repositories throughout the city of Seattle.

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