Postappointment Archival Training: A Proposed Solution for a Basic Problem

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ABOUT FIFTY YEARS AGO, J. Franklin Jameson, the "godfather" of the archival profession in this country, observed that the idea of training a young man to become an archivist in the United States was something like training him to be struck by lightning.[1] Jameson's observation reflected both a state of affairs and an attitude that, unfortunately, have continued down to the present. Children—even those of archivists—do not yet aspire to be archivists when they grow up, and few young men and women enroll in our colleges or universities to prepare themselves directly for archival careers.

Jameson's remark is significant in another respect. It reflected and continues to reflect the view of most historians regarding archivists, and of all groups of professionals and of users of archives historians have been the most active, the most articulate, and the most influential in the development of the American archival profession. This has been especially the case with regard to archival training. The evolution of archival training in the United States has been described in a number of studies.[2] My present purpose is not to recount that history in detail, but rather to examine it for its relevance to the current and future needs of our profession.

When viewed in perspective, the development of American archival training reveals three major, and conflicting, themes regarding its character, extent, and organizational placement. Two of these themes predate the establishment of our separate professional organization, while the third is of relatively recent origin.

The oldest and most important theme relates to the extraordinary influence historians have had upon archival training. This influence, in turn, reflects the role the historical profession has played in European archival training. During the last half of the nineteenth century, public archival institutions in Europe experienced a shift from the appointment as archivists of persons trained in the law to the appointment of those trained in history, and, correspondingly, a change in the academic conception of these agencies from "administrative archives"—"arsenals of law"—to "historical archives,"—"arsenals of history."[3] The historical one was the model per-

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[1] Julian P. Boyd, "Some Animadversions on Being Struck by Lightning," *Daedalus* 86(May 1955): 49.

[2] The most recent of these is Frank B. Evans, "Educational Needs for Work in Archival and Manuscript Depositories," *Indian Archives* 21 (July-December 1972):13-30, upon which the historical background included in the present paper is based. For earlier writings on archival education and training, see the studies quoted and cited in this article.

[3] A. Wagner, "The Policy of Access to Archives: From Restriction to Liberalization," *Unesco Bulletin for Libraries* 24 (March-April 1970):73.

ceived by the first generation of professional American historians trained abroad, and this was the model upon which they based their recommendations for American archival training.

Thus, at the first Conference of Archivists, held in 1909 under the sponsorship of the American Historical Association, Waldo Gifford Leland, in discussing American archival problems in the light of European experience, stressed the need for American archivists to have both "historical and legal" training. Since we lacked an inheritance of medieval documents, he did not think it necessary to create an American Ecole des Chartes with its heavy emphasis on such auxiliary sciences as paleography, diplomatic, and sigillography, and instead suggested the introduction of archival courses in either universities or library schools.[4] Leland also proposed preparation of a manual of archival practice to facilitate training, but only the initial chapter was ever published. Written not by a practicing archivist but by the prominent colonial historian Charles M. Andrews, it defined archives exclusively in historical terms and emphasized only their value and use in the writing of history.[5]

During the next two decades Jameson, Leland, and their academic colleagues were in the forefront of the movement that in 1934 finally resulted in the creation of our National Archives. Two years later the annual Conference of Archivists was expanded and transformed into an independent Society of American Archivists, and one of its first acts was to create a Committee on the Training of Archivists. The committee consisted of five academic historians under the chairmanship of the distinguished diplomatic historian, Samuel Flagg Bemis. Only two members had ever been involved in administering archives or manuscripts.

In light of these circumstances it is not at all surprising that the report of the Bemis committee, submitted in 1938, reviewed archival training in Europe, rejected what it termed "so-called library science" as appropriate training for the American archivist, and concluded: "It is the historical scholar, equipped now with technical archival training, who dominates the staff of the best European archives. We think it should be so here, with emphasis on American history and political science."[6] The committee conceded that a course in library science would be useful, particularly in relation to cataloging and the organization of a supporting library for archival agencies, but warned that there was "a distinct danger in turning over archives to librarians who were not at the same time erudite and critical historical scholars."[7]

To traditional historical training the committee proposed adding the study of the history and literature of archives, and of archival practice, past and present. In its view these topics could be combined into a comprehensive course that "might easily be grafted on to graduate instruction in American history in any first class American university." The committee also endorsed the European practice of apprenticeship, and recommended that universities offering archival training should consider the possibility of a voluntary apprenticeship with the new National Archives or with one of the state archival agencies. The committee made

[4] Waldo Gifford Leland, "American Archival Problems," in American Historical Association, *Annual Report . . . for the Year 1909* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1910), p. 346.

[5] Charles M. Andrews, "Archives," in American Historical Association, *Annual Report . . . for the Year 1913*, 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1914), pp. 262-65. On the background and history of this manual see Frank B. Evans, "Modern Methods of Arrangement of Archives in the United States," *American Archivist* 29 (April 1966):243-47.

[6] Samuel Flagg Bemis, "The Training of Archivists in the United States," ibid. 2 (July 1939):157.

[7] Ibid., pp. 157-58.

one further recommendation: that directors and senior staff of major archival repositories be recruited from among those who had received the doctorate in American history, and whose dissertations involved the use of a wide range of public records and manuscripts; and that the heads of smaller agencies and lower level staff in larger ones be recruited from among those who had received the master's degree in history or political science, supplemented by the proposed archival training and an internship in an archival agency.[8]

For the past four decades the philosophy, and the assumptions, of the Bemis report have been the dominant influence on American archival training. Its recommendations were reflected in the content and placement of the first formal archival course taught in this country—at the Columbia University Graduate School in 1938-39 by Solon J. Buck, an academically-trained historian then on the staff of the National Archives. When Buck shortly thereafter was appointed Archivist of the United States he cooperated closely with a new staff member at American University in setting up in Washington the most fully developed archival training program we have had.[9] The faculty member was Ernst Posner, who had been trained in the classical German tradition, first as an historical scholar, and then as an archivist.

Under Posner's direction the archival program at American University was expanded to include separate courses on the history of historical writing, research methods and materials, comparative administrative history, administrative history of the federal government, and administration of current government records—records management, to use the contemporary term. Following Posner's retirement in 1961 as dean of the Graduate School, however, this unified program was first divided between two schools and then reduced to two records management courses in one department and two archives courses in another department.[10] A major factor in this reduction was lack of both faculty and student interest.

The archival courses at American University also served as a model for similar courses in other parts of the country; and multicourse offerings in archives administration were developed, beginning in 1950, by the University of Denver in cooperation with the Colorado State Archives; by the Wayne State University in 1962 in cooperation with the University Archives; and, after an initial effort that was interrupted for several years, by the North Carolina Department of Archives and History,

[8] Ibid., pp. 158-60.

[9] Ernst Posner, "European Experiences in Training Archivists," in Kenneth W. Munden, ed., *Archives and the Public Interest* (Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1967), pp. 56-57. Drawing upon his own experience, Buck had maintained that the knowledge required of the archivist constituted an applied rather than a pure science, and was "compounded of parts of many other sciences or fields of knowledge together with certain principles and techniques derived from practical experience." He nevertheless was convinced that the essential background knowledge needed by the archivist was best provided by a thorough training in history, by an understanding of historical method, and by some acquaintance with the auxiliary historical sciences. To assist the archivist in mastering the special fields to which the records in his custody related, Buck did indicate the need for a "broad general education" and an ability on the part of the archivist "to orient himself in any field of knowledge when the occasion arises." Solon J. Buck, "The Training of American Archivists," *American Archivist* 4 (April 1947):8486.

[10] Posner, "Archival Training in the United States," in Munden, ed., *Archives and the Public Interest*, pp. 65-67; H. G. Jones, "Archival Training in American Universities, 1938-68," *American Archivist* 31 (April 1968):142; and Karl L. Trever, "The Organization and Status of Archival Training in the United States," ibid. 11 (April 1948):155-57. While Posner generally subscribed to the philosophy of the Bemis report, he placed particular emphasis on the need for "broad training in advanced methods of research in history and related fields," on including the social sciences in the training program to a greater extent than they were in most European archival training programs, and on "study of and instruction in the history of records making and record administration," which he regarded as being as necessary for the archivist in modern times as was study of diplomatic for archivists of an earlier age. Posner, "European Experiences in Training Archivists," pp. 56-57.

most recently in cooperation with the North Carolina State University at Raleigh.[11]

The original American University program was of benefit chiefly to persons in the Washington area and was not really a practical solution to the problem of providing training for persons already holding archival positions in numerous smaller repositories scattered throughout the country. To help meet this need, Posner first offered in 1945, through the Department of History, a short, intensive summer institute cosponsored by the National Archives, the Library of Congress, and the Maryland Hall of Records. This institute has been reorganized a number of times over the years, but it is still accredited by the university and will be offered three times during the current academic year.[12] The institute in turn has served as a model for other institutes, beginning with one at the University of Denver.

In addition to formal academic graduate programs associated with history departments and accredited short institutes, a second theme that emerges from a review of training efforts is that of archival training provided by library schools. Again we find the roots of this development in nineteenth-century European practice, where a number of specialized schools had been created to teach historical methods, with particular attention to national history. Although not created primarily for the training of archivists, these schools provided specialized training for both archivists and librarians who had previously received basic historical training.[13] The generation of Jameson and Leland were familiar with this tradition, and Leland had proposed the introduction of archival training courses into either universities or library schools. A summer session on the administration of archives and manuscripts was offered by the Columbia University Library School as early as 1940, and two years later by the University of Michigan School of Library Services.[14] The major activity in this area, however, can be traced directly to the efforts of Theodore R. Schellenberg.

Trained as a historian, Schellenberg had joined the staff of the National Archives early in its history, and from Buck he had inherited the internal National Archives training program. Schellenberg used this program as a vehicle to help develop a methodology for administering modern public records and archives, and the result was a steady stream of published bulletins, circulars, and articles, culminating in 1956 in his major work, *Modern Archives: Principles and Techniques.*

Having become convinced of the need for uniformity in methodology, regardless of the institutional and physical type or form of archives involved, Schellenberg continued to develop his ideas and to extend them to personal papers and collections of historical manuscripts. After he had established a theoretical basis for the principles and techniques of collective arrangement and description, he next attacked the problems of intellectual control faced by the archivist and experimented in subject classification and cataloging of individual record items and manuscripts. His theories and the techniques to implement them he tested in summer session courses he taught in the library schools of the universities of Texas and Washington, and, following his retirement from the National Archives and Records Service in 1963, he continued these activities culminating in publication in

[11] Posner, "Archival Training in the United States," pp. 72-73; Jones, "Archival Training in American Universities," pp. 143-44, 146.

[12] Ibid., p. 142.

[13] Posner, "European Experiences in Training Archivists," pp. 48-52.

[14] Trever, "Organization and Status of Archival Training," pp. 158-59; Jones, "Archival Training in American Universities," p. 139.

1965 of his second major work, *The Management of Archives.*[15]

This work presented the first significant challenge to the philosophy and assumptions of the Bemis report. The main thrust of the challenge was contained in one paragraph. "Library schools are the proper places in which to provide archival training." Schellenberg wrote, "for they reach the most important class of records custodians, i.e., the librarians themselves. Existing archival training courses have influenced only a very small proportion of the librarians of this country," he continued, "and the training provided in them has usually been too discursive and too theoretical to be meaningful." To support his position Schellenberg pointed out that more than 50 percent of the institutions listed in Philip M. Hamer's 1961 *Guide to Archives and Manuscripts* in the United States were libraries.[16]

Schellenberg's decision to abandon the philosophy of the Bemis report and the traditional reliance upon graduate history departments for archival training was in turn challenged, among others, by H. G. Jones, at that time state archivist of North Carolina. Jones had also been trained as a historian, had attended one of the American University summer institutes, and was then involved in teaching courses in archives administration. To clarify the basic issues, Schellenberg and Jones agreed to present papers at a session on "Various Approaches to Archival Training" at the next annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists.

Because of the conflicting philosophies involved in their respective positions, the two papers merit extended summary. Jones reviewed the history of archival training in the United States and readily agreed with Schellenberg that American archivists thus far had failed in their professional responsibility to provide "adequate, regular, and comprehensive training." But he was not willing to accept fully Schellenberg's alternative. To refute the contention that librarians constituted the "most important class of records custodians," Jones cited a study by Robert L. Brubaker which pointed out that of the 800 libraries listed in the *Hamer Guide,* at least 540 had in their custody fewer than 1,000 manuscript items. In terms of the usual archival unit for recording total holdings, each of these libraries had an average of only about one cubic foot of manuscripts, and only about fifty libraries had more than twenty cubic feet of manuscripts. Jones noted also that manuscript libraries were most often staffed not by library-trained personnel but by historians.

Jones agreed that librarians would benefit from a general knowledge of archival history, theory, and practice, and that since many of them were responsible for small bodies of manuscripts they should be taught how best to handle them. He maintained, however, that such courses could be taught effectively only by experienced archivists, and insisted that this was a "far different proposal from one that implies that the professionally trained librarian who is permitted to take an elective course in archives administration thereby becomes qualified as a professional archivist."[17]

Turning to the "desired foundation for archival training and where the main body of future archivists can best be trained," Jones restated the classical view in

[15] On Schellenberg's role in the development of archival theory and practice see particularly "In Memoriam: Theodore R. Schellenberg, 1903-70," *American Archivist* 33 (April 1970):190-202; and Frank B. Evans, "Modern Concepts of Archives Administration and Records Management," *Unesco Bulletin for Libraries* 24 (September-October 1970):243-47; on his promotion of archival training through library schools see Jones, "Archival Training in American Universities," pp. 146-48, 154, and T. R. Schellenberg, "Archival Training in Library Schools," *American Archivist* 31 (April 1966):155-56.

[16] T. R. Schellenberg, *The Management of Archives* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965), p. 70.

[17] Jones, "Archival Training in American Universities," p. 137; *cf.* ibid. pp. 148-50. The study referred to was Robert L. Brubaker, "Manuscript Collections," *Library Trends* 13 (October 1964):226-53, particularly p. 232.

behalf of a background education in history combined with archival training through graduate schools of history. He questioned both the demand and the need of large repositories for librarians who had taken a single course in archives. Because "practically all archival holdings are historical," he declared, the archivist must have a "strong background in history and the historical method." In his opinion, "the title *archivist* should never be applied to a position" that did not require "a wide knowledge of history, experience in the historical method, and training in archival history, principles, and practices. This training, unfortunately," he concluded, "often is denied to students of library schools."[18]

What Jones proposed as a "more practical and desirable solution" in training archivists for beginning positions was the introduction, by a limited number of graduate schools of history in cooperation with leading archival agencies, of a three-semester or four-quarter program during the first year of graduate study, in the "history, nature, principles, and practices" of archives administration. The final semester or quarter would consist of a supervised period of in-service training in the cooperating archival agency. The program would be accredited toward the master's degree in history, and he suggested a separate certificate for its successful completion.[19] His proposal, in brief, was an expanded historically oriented program that combined elements of those currently offered through history departments at American, Denver, Wayne State, and North Carolina State Universities.

Schellenberg, in support of his position, restated his initial proposal, elaborated on his earlier views on the training required by the archivist in modern times, and gave further reasons why that training should be offered through library schools. His position was essentially that since manuscripts in modern times are natural accumulations, they possess archival characteristics and should be handled according to archival principles and techniques. In addition, because all archival functions are directly influenced by the way records are created, used, and maintained, archivists should be trained in the administration of current records. To deal effectively with modern documentation they should take courses in the fields of history; archival methodology; technical methods of preserving, repairing, and reproducing documentary materials; library science; and records administration. Far from rejecting the historical tradition he frankly asserted his belief that "the best basic training that an archivist can have . . . is thorough training in history."[20] But the best basic training obviously is not the same as the only acceptable training.

Insisting on the need for standardization as a prerequisite to the professionalization of archival work, Schellenberg proposed an introductory course covering a series of topics similar to those included in the American University introductory course and its summer institute. To this he proposed adding an advanced course on arrangement and description; technical training in preservation, repair, rehabilitation, and photoduplication; introductory and specialized courses in records management, including data processing; and library science courses in classification, reference tools and reference service, and government documents.[21]

Schellenberg acknowledged that historians, as primary users, had a justifiable interest in archives, but he warned of "two dangers inherent" in having archival training given by historians. In discussing methodology they would "excessively

[18] Jones, "Archival Training in American Universities," p. 150.
[19] Ibid., pp. 151-54.
[20] Schellenberg, "Archival Training in Library Schools," p. 158; *cf.* ibid. pp. 155-57.
[21] Ibid., pp. 157-60.

emphasize historical developments"; they generally were "not concerned with methodology," he added, and were "prone to consider techniques either as unimportant or as a kind of restraint that will stifle scholarly initiative." The second danger, in his opinion, was that "historically trained archivists" would "excessively emphasize the historical work required in appraising, arranging, and describing" documentary material. "This work should not be made an end in itself," he insisted; "it should be directed to finding out the source of documents, not their meaning."[22]

With equal frankness Schellenberg noted the dangers inherent in having methodological training given by librarians. They would "mistakenly apply the techniques of their profession to archival material" which differs essentially from publications; they "may become preoccupied with single record items"; and they "may also attempt to arrange records by subject." "In order to teach archival courses properly," he warned, "librarians must literally change their thinking about methodology." Another danger was that librarians would become "so engrossed with method" that they would "lose sight of the scholarly aspects of archival work." Classifying and cataloging in libraries had been reduced, in his view, to a "routine procedure," and had become "largely a matter of physically manipulating publications" according to rules that were "refined to cover every aspect of the work." Archival work could not be governed by precise rules, he explained, since archival material lacked the common attributes that would make possible the development of such rules.[23]

Schellenberg nevertheless maintained that librarians, provided they recognized and understood the basic difference between publications and records, could effectively teach archival courses. To prove that library schools reached a very important class of records custodians, he again noted the number of libraries listed in the Hamer *Guide* and cited the large number of manuscript holdings reported by libraries in the 1962 volume of the *National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections*.

Schellenberg then advanced two additional reasons why library schools should introduce courses on archives. "Such schools are concerned with methodology," he declared, "and they are the only place in which attention is likely to be given to methodological training." Furthermore, "through the years librarians have developed an attitude of service to the public, and they have followed the practice of unstintingly making available the material in their custody. In regard to their holdings," he continued, "they have emphasized cooperation, not competition. Their views, if inculcated in training courses, will greatly benefit the archival profession. They will promote cooperative effort in the development of methodology, as well as the cooperative use of material in the possession of documentary repositories."[24]

The format of the session that featured the Jones and Schellenberg presentations did not, unfortunately, call for prepared rejoinders, nor was the general discussion that followed recorded and published.

For a new generation of archivists, the Schellenberg-Jones debate restated and updated two of the basic conflicting positions regarding archival training. Viewed in retrospect, however, the outcome of the debate was largely indecisive. Until his death in January 1970, Schellenberg continued to promote the introduction of archival training in library schools, and this movement, in the form of single intro-

[22] Ibid., pp. 160-62.
[23] Ibid., pp. 162-63.
[24] Ibid., pp. 164-65.

ductory course offerings, has continued to the present day. Although no department of history has developed on a continuing basis the kind of training program Jones advocated, a number of history departments in the past several years have introduced individual or multiple course offerings, including internship arrangements. No institution, however, has developed a separate formal degree program.[25]

Jones did make one final effort to solve the basic problem of archival training. Shortly after his debate with Schellenberg, the Society of American Archivists joined with the American Historical Association and the Organization of American Historians to undertake a study of the past and probable consequences of the 1949 reorganization of the National Archives as the National Archives and Records Service (NARS) and its subordination to the General Services Administration. As a member of the joint investigating committee Jones agreed to prepare the study, which was eventually published in 1969 as *The Records of a Nation: Their Management, Preservation, and Use.*[26]

In this report Jones was highly critical of the status of archival training in the United States and proposed as a solution the establishment by NARS, in collaboration with one of the Washington area universities, of a master's degree-granting Institute for Archives Administration and Records Management. His detailed plan included a fully developed syllabus; scholarships, including a number for foreign students; and estimates of operating expenses.[27] The Jones proposal was discussed widely within the profession and a study was made of the proposal by a NARS staff committee. This committee, however, immediately encountered basic questions, including the legal authority of the agency to launch its own national training institute and program. Related problems involved the general desire and demonstrable need for such an institute. The Jones proposal asserted but did not document either the need or the desire for a federal government program, a matter that would be critical in obtaining funding, either from Congress or from foundations. Equally troublesome were the relationship of the proposed institute with a degree-granting institution, and, particularly, the necessity and desirability of a separate degree program in archives administration and records management.[28]

Furthermore, at the time of the Jones report and proposal a movement was already underway within the SAA to seek a foundation grant to study the entire problem of archival training. Many of those involved were reluctant to abandon this effort in favor of the Jones proposal, particularly those who opposed a formal and centralized training program associated with the national archival agency. The Society, therefore, took no action on the proposal.

It was at about this time that the third major theme discernible in our training efforts first became significant. This theme might be termed one of self-help, and it has been occurring both inside and outside of the Society framework. As previously indicated, an effort was underway at the time of the Jones proposal to secure a foundation grant to study the entire problem of training. Informal approaches to several foundations and fund-granting agencies, however, revealed that archival concerns were relatively low on their lists of priorities, and that any grant proposal would require adequate supporting basic data.

[25] See particularly the Society of American Archivists, *Educational Directory: Careers and Courses in Archival Administration* (Ann Arbor: Society of American Archivists, 1973).

[26] H. G. Jones, *The Records of a Nation: Their Management, Preservation, and Use* (New York: Atheneum, 1969).

[27] Ibid., pp. 216-21.

[28] This account is based upon the notes of the author who served as a member of the NARS Committee.

In the absence of funds to collect and analyze such data on a comprehensive basis, two volunteer efforts were then made within the Society. In 1970, Robert M. Warner, chairman of the Committee on Education and Training, and I undertook a survey by means of a comprehensive questionnaire of the Society's membership. Some 40 percent of the questionnaires (423 of 1,060) were returned, and because most of the responses were from those in the upper levels of their institutions (in terms of reported salaries), the results were particularly revealing.[29]

Of the leadership group within the profession, which was broadly interpreted to include manuscript curators and records managers, 14 percent reported no university degree and some 30 percent had no advanced degree. Respondents were requested to designate the type of institution they served, and the findings regarding formal training in archives administration were equally revealing. Only 64 percent of those in the federal government reported having completed at least one accredited course or institute. Other totals were as follows: church archives, 52 percent; college and university archives, 50 percent; state government, 46 percent; historical societies (including manuscript libraries and repositories), 41 percent; municipal and local government archives, 30 percent; and business archives, 28 percent.[30] A membership survey one year later, structured along somewhat different lines but with a larger response, revealed that only about 49 percent of the respondents had received any formal training in archives administration or records management.[31]

These data were further supplemented by the results of a separate study made in 1972 by Warner in his capacity as the Society's secretary. The study was restricted to archival courses and institutes offering formal academic credit. Of the fifteen reporting programs, including several in Canada, all but three recruited their faculty from among practicing archivists holding full-time positions in archival agencies. In three programs instruction was provided by library science faculty members.

Perhaps the most remarkable finding of this study was that of the 232 students enrolled in the credit courses and institutes on whom background information was available, more than half (144) were studying for an advanced degree in library science, 68 for an advanced degree in history, and 21 for graduate degrees in other disciplines. Only 20 of the students had had any archival experience, and a total of only 44 indicated they either were already employed as archivists or were planning to enter the archival field and had chosen the courses as part of their professional preparation. An overwhelming number of students—144, plus 24 who indicated no preference—did not intend to become archivists.[32]

"This admission," according to Warner, was "extremely significant" for those involved in and concerned with archival training:

> It could be argued that a large percentage of students taking archival training courses will never become archivists. They may be, for example, librarians or library administrators who perhaps want some knowledge of the unique work that an archivist performs. Quite possibly, too, they are history students hedging their bets in a closing job market. Perhaps they are stu-

[29] The project and the results of the survey are reported fully in Frank B. Evans and Robert M. Warner, "American Archivists and Their Society: A Composite View," *American Archivist* 34 (April 1971):157-72.

[30] Ibid., pp. 169-72.

[31] Unpublished appendix to Society of American Archivists, Report of the Committee for the 1970s.

[32] Robert M. Warner, "Archival Training in the United States and Canada," ibid., 35 (July-October 1972):347-54.

dents who believe that their own research and preparation in historical methodology will be enhanced by archival training. In any event it is important to recognize that archival courses are heavily used by students from diverse academic backgrounds with varied career objectives.[33]

While the Warner study was still underway, a special Committee for the '70s of the Society was also looking into education and training as part of its general review of the problems and needs of the Society and the profession during the next decade. The committee's final report, as adopted by the officers and the general membership, recommended that the Society, through its Committee on Education and Training, "formulate guidelines for courses, institutes, and training programs." In the formulation of such guidelines the report further recommended that consideration by given to a number of conclusions and recommendations. First, that persons offering training should themselves have an appropriate education, archival training, and direct experience in administering archives and manuscripts. Second, that the Society should not at that time endorse particular courses or programs, but that instead its Education and Training Committee should develop minimum standards to assist members and others in evaluating existing course offerings and programs, and that the committee should seek the necessary financial resources to accomplish this objective. Third, that the Society should intensify its efforts in such areas as standardization of terminology and statistics and the preparation of publications dealing with basic archival functions. Fourth, that the Education and Training Committee should develop "position descriptions" for archival positions that would include education and training requirements. Fifth, that in-service training or internships were an essential part of archival training, and that archival repositories should provide such internships for beginning archivists who were not on their staffs. Sixth, that with regard to degree programs:

> Our best interests as a profession are not served by attempts to develop separate degree programs in our colleges and universities for archives administration. We recommend instead the development of a sequence of introductory and advanced courses, including closely supervised internships, specialized directed-reading courses, seminars, and thesis or dissertation supervision for studies dealing directly with archives administration. Such a program would constitute a solid area of specialization within existing degree programs for an M.A. or a Ph.D. Even if combined with related courses in records management, information sciences, and administration of general historical agencies or programs, the result, in our opinion, would still not constitute a sufficient intellectual discipline to merit a separate graduate degree. We recommend that the Society not attempt at this time to develop its own degree program or to endorse such programs should they develop.[34]

The draft of this report was available to Warner while he was studying formal training courses and institutes, and his conclusions and recommendations reflected many of those above. Specifically, he called for a conference of teachers of archival courses, agreed that accrediting of training programs and courses by the Society appeared to be "unfeasible" at that time, urged upgrading and broadening of the membership and responsibilities of the Education and Training Committee, and called upon the Society to "continue to seek sufficient funds to conduct much more intensive and thorough studies of existing archival training programs, records management education, and short-term institutes." Such studies, he added, "should be based on the idea that at present the archival discipline is too narrow a base on which to build a comprehensive educational program."[35]

[33] Ibid., p. 354.

[34] Philip F. Mason, "The Society of American Archivists in the Seventies: Report of the Committee for the 1970s" *American Archivist* 35 (April 1972):207-10.

[35] Warner, "Archival Training in the United States and Canada," pp. 357-58.

When grant funds could not be secured to hold a major conference that would include not only all persons teaching archival courses but also specialists within and from outside the profession, the Society's council agreed to fund a more limited two-day meeting of ten teachers of archival courses. Out of this meeting, held in March 1973, emerged a set of draft guidelines for credit courses and institutes for archival training. The guidelines included the following topics that "should be covered in an introductory course and treated in greater depth where a sequence of courses is offered": historical development of archival concepts, terminology, principles, and literature; program development and administration; records management; records appraisal and disposition; collecting policies and procedures; accessioning; arrangement and processing; description; reference service; physical protection and preservation; audio-visual, cartographic, machine-readable, and "microphotographic" records; publications programs; and a practicum or laboratory work in an archival institution.

The draft guidelines prepared by the teachers' conference also provided that:

> The institution offering the program should have, or should arrange for, adequate library resources to sustain the serious study of archival administration, and access to sufficient archival materials and physical facilities for practical work.
>
> Faculty should have a minimum of five years of responsible archival administrative experience and a graduate degree. As more offerings become available, faculty should have formal training in an archives course.
>
> Appropriate instructional methods include a combination of lectures, discussions, research seminars, supervised practical work or internships and independent study.[36]

These guidelines were approved by the Committee on Education and Training and by the council of the Society. They were then published in the *SAA Newsletter* and comments invited from the membership. Few comments were received, and none of them took major exception to the guidelines.

During the past two years various committees of the Society have undertaken projects and continued the work developing guidelines called for by the report of the Committee for the '70s. The Committee on Terminology compiled and published a basic glossary of archival, manuscript, and records management terms,[37] and has since been charged with responsibility for developing a system of uniform archival statistics; while an ad hoc committee has completed a study of the entire area of professional publications, with particular attention to instructional materials. At the present time, however, there is no effort underway to secure any foundation grant or other funding to support earlier Education and Training Committee proposals.

Paralleling these developments within the profession have been several self-help developments outside the Society structure. The same impatience with the existing order and the demand for change and responsiveness to membership needs that had produced the Committee for the '70s was reflected in the emergence of a number of state and regional archival organizations, a movement that was ultimately endorsed by the Society. Basic to the activities of these local organizations has been the scheduling of semiannual or annual one and two-day meetings at which a wide variety of informal training sessions are conducted. Aimed primarily at new recruits and lower-grade and nonprofessional staff in smaller repositories, these sessions frequently serve the important purpose of providing some basic information to those

[36] *SAA Newsletter*, June 1973, pp. 2-3.

[37] Frank B. Evans, Donald F. Harrison, and Edwin A. Thompson, comps., William L. Rofes, ed., "A Basic Glossary for Archivists, Manuscripts Curators, and Records Managers," *American Archivist* 37 (July 1974):415-33.

either unable or unwilling to attend the tuition or fee-supported academic courses or institutes.[38] The emphasis upon self-help is also evident in the increased number of workshop and working committee meetings, open to the general membership, that have been added to the Society's annual conference in recent years. Obviously, such brief and selective training experience at semiannual or annual meetings cannot serve as an adequate substitute for a more comprehensive training program, but it does serve as a continuing reminder of the nature and extent of our need for formal training.

Three essentially different approaches exist to the problem of archival training; the basic problem not only remains unresolved but in part necessarily continues to change in keeping with the times and the changing demands upon our profession. During the course of the proceeding survey, reference was made to certain assumptions regarding archival training, assumptions that may or may not be valid, or that once were valid and no longer are. To deal realistically with the problem of training we need to examine these assumptions more closely.

One set of assumptions involves the relationship that has existed traditionally between graduate study in history and the training of archivists. As initially defined in the Bemis report, history was not only the proper formal educational background for archivists but archival training itself should be provided by a select number of graduate history departments in cooperation with leading archival agencies that would provide internships. For nearly four decades the achievement of this objective has been our major goal in the area of education and training. This effort, however, has met with relatively little success. Neither the Society nor graduate history departments have fully supported the effort. To this day, Ernst Posner has been the only "full-time" teacher of archives administration in this country, and his teaching activities were necessarily limited by his duties as departmental chairman and then graduate dean. In addition, once the immediate needs of the staff of the relatively new National Archives had been met, the expanded program developed by Posner at the American University, including internships, had to be cut back for lack of enrollment.

Significant contributions toward meeting our training needs of the several programs established elsewhere in graduate history departments in imitation of the American University program are equally difficult to discern. Organized by persons who have had full-time positions as archival administrators, the courses at Wayne State, Denver, and North Carolina State have generally been attended by new staff members of the cooperating archival agencies. The courses have therefore served, at least in part, as a type of in-service training program. At the University of Wisconsin and the University of Illinois at Urbana, where the archival courses are offered through the graduate library school, the courses have attracted a significant number of librarians. Enrollments in these formal academic programs have increased in the past few years, but the fact remains that historically they have trained only a very small percentage of the total number of archivists in this country. Several new programs have been and are being established by history departments concerned about nonteaching careers for history majors, but the number of departments and students involved are relatively few. One is forced, therefore, to conclude that currently there is no evidence to indicate that the Bemis model will be any more successful in the future in meeting our training needs than it has been in the past.

[38] For a recent summary of these organizations see ibid., 37 (July 1974):505–10.

A second and related assumption of the Bemis model is that because historical scholars equipped with technical archival training dominated the staffs of leading European archival agencies nearly half a century ago, that pattern should be duplicated in the United States. But the "technical archival training" given to historical scholars in European training schools was concerned less with how to administer archives than with how to use them in historical research, particularly those dating from earlier centuries. Thus there was emphasis upon the auxiliary historical sciences and time was devoted by the professional staffs of archival agencies not only to documentary publications but to the research and writing of interpretive monographs and treatises. This was the practice in most continental archives and it continues to be the practice today in certain countries, usually to the detriment of basic arrangement, description, and reference service responsibilities. In contrast to this ideal of the archivist as an active historical scholar is the model of the archivist as impartial custodian of the official evidence of institutional activity, public and private, and as servant of the government (or private institutional employer), and of the general public as well as of the scholar.

The currently prevailing concept of the American archivist seems to incorporate elements of both of these ideals. The preferred formal educational background continues to be the field of history, since it continues to be generally regarded as providing the broadest possible base for appraisal judgments and an understanding and appreciation of the problems and needs of the researchers using unpublished documentary sources. With very few exceptions, however, American archivists do not write interpretive history based upon the materials in their custody, and even the archivist's role as editor of documentary publications, at least in public archives, has been challenged by academic historians (witness the Roosevelt Library case). Furthermore, the technical training needed by the modern archivist is not in the auxiliary historical sciences, but in specialized areas in which no history department or library science school in the country is prepared to offer adequate instruction with its own full-time faculty. The body of archival theory and practice has continued to grow over the years, and except for the fact that it may be viewed historically—as may any body of knowledge—it bears very little relationship to the curriculum and courses of history departments or of schools of library science.

It should also be noted that during the past decade we have witnessed an evergrowing number of students who have been awarded the master's degree in history without having done original research, and the doctorate in history with no formal training in research methods and materials.[39] This trend has forced us to reexamine our assumption that persons with a background in history are necessarily qualified to appraise the research potential of records and manuscripts; that such persons are familiar with research interests, needs, and trends; and that they can best assist the scholarly researcher because they thoroughly understand the research process and have participated fully in the research experience. At the same time we are facing real problems with the documentation, both human and machine-readable, of science and technology, of causes and movements, and of the arts and the professions. To advise us on the identification, appraisal, description, preservation, and use of such materials we must necessarily call upon specialists in disciplines other

[39] On the decline of training in research methods and materials, see Walter Rundell, Jr., *In Pursuit of American History: Research and Training in the United States* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1970), *passim*.

than history. In brief, there is evidence that in some areas the relationship between graduate history departments and archival training has increasingly become traditional rather than essential.

One further aspect of the academic relationship requires discussion: the matter of academic credit for archival training. Such credit was implied by the Bemis report and has been of continuing concern to archivists in their efforts to achieve full professional status and acceptance. Academic credit is obviously of value to those using archival courses as electives for advanced degrees in history, library science, and other fields; but, as has already been indicated, few of the students enrolled in these courses in recent years are either employed as archivists or intend to seek archival positions. Furthermore, fewer than 40 percent of the enrollees in the past several NARS archives institutes have scheduled the institutes for credit; and this figure is distorted by the fact that the same requirement, an examination, has been used to earn a certificate for the institute as well as to receive credit. There has thus been no additional cost in either money or effort to earn three undergraduate or graduate credits. Also, recent institutes offered elsewhere, particularly in Ohio, have no academic credit arrangement and yet continue to attract large numbers of enrollees.

Within the archival profession there continues to be divided opinion on the question of academic credit. A number of persons, including several teachers of archival courses, favor a separate master's degree program for archivists and one has been calling for a separate doctoral program. Their basic argument is that this is the only route to true professionalism for archivists; that only accredited and degree-granting programs can establish and maintain basic professional requirements and standards; and that the experience of librarians proves the validity of their argument. Others oppose both separate degrees and academic credit for any archival training. Reflecting the attitude of many of the current generation toward formalized higher education, they point out that today's students are much more concerned with the educational experience and the content of courses than with academic bookkeeping. Their views are supported by student responses on questionnaires used in archival training programs and institutes. Between these two positions are those who readily admit that neither separate degree programs nor academic credit are essential for archival training, but who see some advantages and merit in the approval of the scholarly community implied by academic credit, and in the possibly enhanced professional status and acceptance of archivists whose training is associated with graduate history or library science programs. It would appear that what is required is some determination as to whether the adequacy of the training and the value of an academic context are commensurate with the costs involved for both enrollees and for cooperating archival agencies. Experience with the NARS archives institutes indicates that with regard to post-appointment training, academic credit is neither essential nor commensurate with the costs.

Coupled with the academic history-biased assumptions of the Bemis report is the long-standing assumption that librarians are generally incapable of understanding and implementing basic archival principles and techniques, with its implied corollary that historians without archival training usually employ such principles and techniques in the handling of archives and manuscripts. In practice, however, for every librarian who has applied subject classification to archival materials we can find at least one historian or manuscript curator who has violated archival integrity by taking individual documents out of their context in organized files to build research collections around subjects, periods, or geographical areas, and who, in the process, has mixed the records of several different offices or organizations. At the

same time we have failed to recognize that as library school requirements and curriculums change, we are producing each year an increasing number of library science graduates with both training and experience in retrospective documentary research, and with the liberal education, analytical abilities, and intellectual curiosity essential to the modern archivist. I suggest that we reexamine our assumptions and reject stereotypes of both historians and librarians if we intend to deal realistically with our training problem.

A further development that may prove suggestive in dealing with this problem is the current effort of our records management colleagues to achieve professionalism through examination and certification. The records management profession has never produced a Bemis report, nor has it attempted to achieve professional status and acceptance by close association with a particular academic curriculum. Outside of the federal government it would appear that most records managers are either self-taught or untrained, in a formal sense. Records management courses were omitted from the Warner study, and the entire area of records management is almost completely neglected in the Report of the Committee for the '70s. No teachers of records management were included in the SAA conference of teachers, and only one has been a member of the Society's Committee on Education and Training during the past decade. The *Records Management Quarterly* has published several reports on records management offerings, but these generally have been part of office management courses in business schools, and the studies provide little information on current thinking, needs, or opportunities for separate, formal training in records management.[40]

A very recent development has been creation of a program to certify professional records managers. The newly established Institute for Certified Records Managers has adopted two methods for "professional certification": review of an applicant's educational and experience qualifications by a designated Board of Regents, or examination of those who meet specified educational and experience requirements. The provision of certification by review will expire after July 1977, following which all applicants must pass the prescribed examination. The only formal educational requirement is for a "baccalaureate from an accredited college level institution," and the Board of Regents is authorized, at its discretion, to substitute two years of professional experience in records management for each year of required college level education. No particular field or fields of study are prescribed in this formal educational requirement, nor is there a requirement for completion of any formal or informal records management training.[41]

[40] On records management training, past and present, see particularly W. Arthur Allee, "Records Management Course Content," *Records Management Quarterly* 4 (July 1970):30-31; American Records Management Association, Committee on Professional Training and Standards, "Teaching Records Management in the United States, A Survey," ibid. 2 (April 1968):29-35; James G. Bennett and Harry N. Fujita, "Collegiate Education for Records Management—A Challenge for the 70s," ibid. 5 (October 1971):5-8; Bennett and Virginia M. Lind, "An Analysis of Contemporary Records Management Curricula in U.S. Colleges and Universities," ibid. (July 1973):32-35, and Pt. 2, ibid. 7 (October 1973):29-53; Mary C. Griffin, "Education Needed for Administrators of Records Management Programs," *Records Management Journal* 1 (Spring 1963):13-18; "A Survey of Academic Instruction in Records Management," ibid. (Summer 1964):10-11; and Mark Langemo et al., "Teaching Records Management," *Information and Records Management* 9 (May 1975):18-22. On a recently announced associate degree (two-year) collegiate program by a small southern agricultural college with the support of the American Records Management Association, see ibid. 9 (April 1975):6.

[41] "Professionalism and Certification," ibid. 5 (October 1971):6; "The Institute of Certified Records Managers," ibid. 9 (May 1975):8, 28, 30; L. Ruth Thomas, "Professional Certification—The Certified Records Manager Program," *Records Management Journal* 13 (Spring 75): 26-27.

There is some irony in the fact that a somewhat similar course was pursued in Europe during the nineteenth century regarding archivists. In that instance, public archival agencies created examinations to ensure that only "qualified" personnel were appointed to archival positions. Creation of specialized training schools were a direct consequence, since no existing academic or other programs provided adequate preparation for the examinations. Should the proposed records management examination be sufficiently rigorous and comprehensive, and should existing academic programs in business administration and related disciplines fail to provide the instruction necessary to meet its requirements, a specialized training program initially geared to the examination could very well develop. It remains to be seen if the new national records management organization, created out of the merger of the two former ones, will persuade, or even attempt to persuade, public and private institutions and organizations to require certification before either employment or promotion as a records manager.

However objective we may desire to be in reviewing events and dealing with problems, our perceptions and judgments necessarily reflect our own education, training, and experience. Trained as an academic historian, I spent nearly a decade teaching history and political science, and I served five years in a state archival and manuscript repository before joining the federal service. For thirteen years I taught the American University courses and directed the institute established by Ernst Posner, in addition to directing the NARS in-service training course, inherited from Schellenberg, for beginning professionals. The conclusions and recommendations regarding archival training necessarily reflect my experience.

Despite the changing character of modern archives and the expanding role of archivists—indeed, in part because of these developments—there continues to be a need, in my judgment, for formal archival training. That training should be initially at the introductory level; it should emphasize the basic functions that all archivists have in common, regardless of the type of institution they serve; and it should be required of all archivists, including those appointed to direct archival programs. Since the archival profession in this country does not prescribe qualifications or control appointments, and is not likely in the near future to acquire the necessary authority to do either, most training will probably continue to be post-appointment training. Formal academic courses in archives and manuscripts will most likely continue to be offered by a scattering of history departments and library schools, and will probably expand somewhat in the future, chiefly in response to the job crisis in teaching. Such academic-based programs are important, but there is no reason to believe that they will be any more effective in the future than they have been to date in meeting our basic training needs.

In my opinion there is little to be gained by reviewing the old agreements about where archival training should be offered and by whom and to whom. Since most persons appointed to archival positions in recent years are not interested in earning academic credit, training can be offered by any institution or organization, provided those who conduct the training have themselves been trained or had extensive experience with both archives and manuscripts. Unfortunately, few history departments or library schools can meet this qualification with their own full-time faculty. What formal educational background is most appropriate for the modern archivist? The archivist should have the broadest education possible, including a thorough knowledge of research materials and methods. Again, few history departments or library schools can meet this requirement. The fact is that the archivist must master by study of the holdings themselves most of the administrative history

and the subject content of archival holdings which are, by definition, unique. All archivists, however, need an understanding of how institutions and organizations, both public and private, originate and develop; of types and patterns of internal organization and functions; of recordkeeping and records systems past and present; and of the relationship of documentation in all of its forms to organizations and functions. Such formal studies of public and private bureaucracies and their records systems, however, simply are not available, despite the fact that bureaucracies are perhaps the major force in modern life.

Finally, it should be obvious that we can no longer justify staffing both public and private archival repositories primarily in terms of the special needs of one group of users—historical scholars. Historians have always constituted a minority of our users, and as archival agencies acquire new types of documentary materials and find it both desirable and necessary to expand their services to their parent agencies and to the general public, they must recruit and provide training for persons with a wide variety of formal educational backgrounds.

With these considerations in mind, I therefore recommend that the Society of American Archivists itself, through the office of its executive director and in conjunction with appropriate committees, take the initiative in meeting our most pressing basic training needs. To date, the most effective instrument that has been developed for this purpose is the short institute with a faculty of experienced practitioners. The Society should develop and offer on a regular basis such an institute. Since academic credit is not an essential requirement, the institute need not have academic affiliation. Freed of its academic tie, the institute could be moved around the country to meet better the needs of persons in smaller repositories and the middle and lower-grade professionals in our larger ones, staff members who do not now usually attend the academic-based archival courses or get sent to the existing institutes in Washington and elsewhere. Money now being paid as tuition to academic departments could then be used to pay the travel and other expenses of the faculty, and perhaps even modest honoraria. Profiting from the experience of the American Association for State and Local History, grants should be sought not only for the institute's administrative expenses, but also for faculty expenses and payment, and particularly for scholarships. Scholarships that include funds for travel and per diem would ensure that the institute was fully accessible to all archivists.

To assist in planning, developing, and directing the institute, an advisory body should be appointed from among present and former teachers of courses in archives and manuscripts. This group would establish the curriculum, using already agreed-upon guidelines, and select the faculty. State and regional archival organizations could be invited to cosponsor the institute in their particular areas, and to assist with necessary local arrangements, including field trips and demonstrations in various types of repositories. The executive director's office should also maintain a list of repositories, approved by the advisory group, where internships could be served on either a voluntary or paid basis. Grant funds should be sought for such supervised internships. One final recommendation: the basic institute and the internships should conclude with an examination or suitable project, developed by the advisory group and faculty, on the basis of which enrollees would earn a certificate.

Should the above venture prove successful, the Society should develop similar institutes for the training of technical personnel in archival photographic and restoration processes, and advanced institutes on particular archival functions like appraisal and disposition; arrangement and description; special physical types of

material like still and motion pictures or machine-readable records; and on problems characteristic of particular types of archival repositories, such as church or college and university archives. Such institutes or seminars are essential for the continuing education required by the professional archivist. Should the certification-by-examination program of our records management colleagues also prove successful, elements of that program could very well be incorporated into the Society's program.

In conclusion, we are very much indebted to historians and librarians for the assistance they have given and continue to give us in the development of our profession. In the critical matter of training, however, we owe it to ourselves, as well as to all of our users, to make a serious effort to have archivists train archivists in a realistic program intended to meet the needs of those without adequate training who are already in archival positions.