

Academic Archives: *Überlieferungsbildung*

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ARCHIVES—REPOSITORIES AND DOCUMENTS—AND THE ARCHIVISTS who are responsible for them draw their identity from the institutions they serve. Government archivists serve the interests of government and keep the records of governmental activities: war, diplomacy, taxation, legal proceedings, utility regulation, and welfare programs. Business archivists hold records of production, investment, patenting, marketing, and employment. Religious archivists are responsible for the documentation of clerical activities, vital statistics of institutions that record the hatching, matching, and dispatching. Academic archivists retain documentation on teaching, research, public service, and the acculturation of youth. Institutions of higher education occupy a unique position of importance and influence in America. A society distinguished for its technology, political institutions, and mass education needs the continuing scientific examination of its progress and the preparation of a large group of citizens for civic leadership. Academic archivists have a major responsibility for *Überlieferungsbildung*, the handing down of culture or civilization.

The origins of the modern university lie in the medieval university, which has been called the "school of the modern spirit." Charles Haskins stated that "no substitute has been found for the university in its main business, the training of scholars and the maintenance of the tradition of learning and investigation." Though the early universities drew upon classical culture, the organizational structure is traceable to Bologna, Paris, and Oxford in the middle of the twelfth century. Nevertheless, an American university or college prefers to be known as the "Athens of the West" rather than the "Bologna of the West." Henry Adams noted that Paris seemed to have been a university town "before it had a university." Thousands of students flocked to Paris to listen to Abelard and speak their "barbarous Latin" in the Latin Quarter.¹

Norman Cantor observed that the medieval university, "which grew out of the early twelfth-century French cathedral schools and the Italian municipal schools, was a distinctive and original contribution to the institutionalization of higher education. . . . Organized for the dissemination of many branches of knowledge to a large number of students as

¹Charles H. Haskins, *The Rise of the Universities* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1923), p. 36; Hastings Rashdall, *The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1895), 1:6-22; Henry Adams, *Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1913), pp. 288-89.

cheaply and as systematically as possible, . . . it was superior to the academies and schools of rhetoric of the ancient world." The system was designed "to get students through prescribed programs and to give them degrees certifying a minimum proficiency for membership in a sworn brotherhood of persons following a common occupation." The medieval university also developed the formalities of licensure for masters and inception or commencement for graduates as well as "a new teaching method involving lectures and the use of textbooks which is still . . . substantially in use today."²

Cantor found that a thirteenth-century penchant for the systematization of knowledge in summaries and encyclopedias was paralleled by the incorporation of intellectual activity in the life of academic institutions. Not again until the twentieth century would the universities "so dominate the life of the mind" in the western world. The academics held an even greater monopoly in the thirteenth century. The important writers on theology, philosophy, law, and science were "scholastic" professors in the schools and universities who were devoted to the dialectical method of reasoning and exposition.³ When national governments needed civil servants trained in law, a school was established in Bologna which produced a new species of bureaucratic man. Cantor noted that to become a lawyer "in a country which had received the Roman law, it was necessary to devote many years to formal academic study under a very strict regimen. This helps to account for the fact that the young lawyers of medieval Europe tended to be cut from the same cloth: they were all well educated and zealous, but also generally impecunious, somewhat inhuman, and eager to sell their services to the highest bidder. They made ideal bureaucrats." Between 1158 and 1216, the successful papacies of Alexander III and Innocent III, one a teacher and the other a student of law at Bologna, demonstrated the advantages of a university education.⁴

Like modern institutions, the medieval university depended heavily on technological advances. During the first two hundred years of its existence, between 1150 and 1350, the manufacture and use of rag paper spread northward through the countries of Western Europe. This relatively economical writing medium enabled clerks to keep more account books, and produced archives. Robert-Henri Bautier of the *Ecole des Chartes* asserted that paper led to improvements in the administration of agricultural estates and commercial companies and in the organization of government. By the 1290s a paper workshop developed at Bologna to supply the needs of the university. The advent of this "paper society" was soon followed by the important invention of the printing press. The use of movable metal type around 1440 led to rapid progress in book production. 35,000 volumes were produced before 1500.⁵

The Renaissance was a period of proliferation for European universities. Migrations of masters and students in search of peace and privileges coincided with efforts of cities to secure the financial rewards and cultural distinction of a *Universitätsstadt*. The religious and secular authorities strengthened their claims on the loyalty of the educated classes by issuing papal bulls and royal charters creating new institutions. Benefactors had additional motivations. The founder of the Spanish College of the University of Bologna "meant to secure in perpetuity the intercession of all members of the college in behalf of his soul."⁶

²Norman F. Cantor, *Medieval History, The Life and Death of a Civilization* (Toronto: Macmillan Co., 1969), pp. 465–66.

³*Ibid.*, pp. 464–65, 468.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 341.

⁵Robert-Henri Bautier, *The Economic Development of Modern Europe* (London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1971), pp. 216–17, 246–48.

⁶Margaret Aston, *The Fifteenth Century* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1968), pp. 30–31, 37–39; Berthe M. Marti, *The Spanish College at Bologna in the Fourteenth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1966), p. 33.

Impecunious students were prone to riots, and intellectual academics soon began to question the ways of the establishment. The weight of university-trained ecclesiastical reformers and social critics was felt in the influence of two faculty members, John Wycliffe of Oxford (1356–82) and John Huss of Prague (1390–1414). In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the University of Padua flourished under Venetian patronage. At least two cubic feet of archives are visible in Raphael's "The School of Athens." Of the fifty-eight figures in this painting, fifteen are holding documents.

In the seventeenth century, John Milton and Isaac Newton took their Cambridge B.A.'s in 1629 and 1665, respectively. Jean Mabillon, the founder of modern historical research methodology and the archival science of diplomatics, completed the six year humanities course at the University of Rheims and received his M.A. in 1652. Adam Smith and Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud and Albert Einstein, Leopold von Ranke and Samuel Muller, they all prepared at universities.

Continental academic archives differ only in degree from their American counterparts. In 1971, Franz Gall, the archivist at the University of Vienna, took me on a tour of the Archives where he showed scholastic records of Sigmund Freud, drums carried by the students in wars against the Turks and against Napoleon, and other artifacts and records stored in the Archives' basement vaults. The Archives was located in the north basement of the chief university building. Gall was particularly proud of an extensive collection of seals, including the original university charters dating from its founding by Count Rudolf IV in 1365. The archivist had written a small volume, *Kleiner Führer Durch die Universität Wien*, for the university's 600th anniversary. Most of the archives staff were civil servants, although some students were employed. The archival area was cramped and crowded. Materials were stored on table tops and in several types of filing containers. Large map case-type storage was used for charters. Little attention was paid to preservation, fire protection, and water protection.

The leading German university archives is at Tübingen. Founded in 1476, Tübingen's statutes and matriculation records date from its beginning. Academic senate records date from 1524, college or curriculum records from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Student records date from 1875. The university archives was founded in 1965. At the time of Tübingen's 500th anniversary the archives was transferred from the library to the rectory. Substantial destruction of university records occurred in a 1534 fire and in the 1930s. The archives occupies fine office space in the university library and has about 6,000 square feet of basement storage space. Another area provides a total capacity of 380 cubic meters. In 1978, the staff included five archivists, a half-time position, and six students. It receives substantial support from the university's medical clinics. The archivist grants permission to destroy records and lends materials for use at other institutions.⁷

In 1971, there were about ten major British university archives. Only three of them, Cambridge, Liverpool, and Oxford, had active university records programs. While most of Cambridge's more than twenty colleges did not provide "proper care" for their archival materials and tended to hang on to them "like grim death," Corpus Christi College had good control of its records. Churchill College had modern facilities and an excellent conservation program. Laboratories, museums, and other administrative units also held their own records. British university archives have the same organizational location problems as American academic archives. In 1971, the Cambridge masters of arts living within three miles of Great St. Mary's Church voted 175 to 62 to move the University Archives from the campus registry office to the library. Liverpool University was one of the few institutions that emphasized personnel records, records management, and modern documentation. It maintained a university records center. In a 1970 disturbance at Liverpool,

⁷*Minerva Handbücher Archive* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1974), pp. 995–96.

students took records from the storage area. Since then the archivist has worked closely with students in explaining the purpose and functions of the university archives. In his 1912 lecture on the history of the Oxford University archives, Reginald Poole noted that the first "Keeper of the Archives," Brian Twyne, was appointed in 1634. In 1631, Twyne had inventoried the archives stored in the Congregation House of St. Mary's Church. Six years after his appointment, the new archivist prepared to move the archives into the tower of the Bodleian Library, but the room was taken for powder and shot and the archivists had to wait—until 1854. In 1664, John Wallis, as third keeper of the archives, prepared a comprehensive finding aid, which remained in use until the twentieth century. A century later, a successor prepared an index. Poole reserved his severest criticism for Dr. Philip Bliss, keeper of the archives from 1836 to 1857. A "first rate antiquary" and "encyclopedia of University information," Bliss regarded the Archives "as the place of deposit of all the papers which came to him" in any of five official capacities, and "had a constitutional aversion to throwing away even the most trifling paper that reached his hands." An indefatigable collector, he made the archives a storehouse for this private accumulations of notes, clippings, and unfinished notebooks. Poole decried "the fatal inability" of archivists "to destroy things when they are done with and to refuse to accept papers which do not concern them" and lamented a 1909 Oxford statute that superseded "the scientific definition of the Archives" with a "loose statement" that covered all documents that may be sent to the archives by any university officer "in pursuance of any statutory duty or power."⁸

While most American institutions were modeled after European predecessors, we have made significant adaptations. We have over 80,000 local governmental units and a kaleidoscopic array of religious groups. Higher education presents a similar picture. Replicas of English colleges, state universities, colleges for each religious sect, land grant institutions, urban universities, community colleges, and many combinations have created a uniquely American system of higher education. Universities provide not only a means for transmitting our cultural heritage, but places for criticism and research. Our institutions of higher education have played a vital role in national development. Each generation has produced a new crop of colleges and universities. After the founding of Harvard in 1636, twelve institutions were begun before 1772. In the next seven generations, Americans founded 26, 65, 214, 413, 283, 190, and 182 colleges and universities. These are 1978 *World Almanac* figures and include only 1,385 institutions that have survived. Nine hundred and one are private and 484 are public. There are now about 1,700 four-year institutions and another 1,000 junior colleges. These 2,700 institutions employ over 730,000 faculty, a figure that has tripled since 1950, and spend over \$13 billion a year. In 1977, student enrollment was 10,217,000. The 1976 value of physical plant was \$66,384,000,000.⁹

Johan Huisinga observed that the American university "is the seedbed of learning" and its goal is "to be the brains of the republic." He noted that it had the respect of the public and spent millions of dollars to solve the problems with which the nation is occupied and to teach culture. Extension education was a means of cultural development. Research institutes and bureaus made the American university a "very vital social organism."¹⁰

⁸Reginald L. Poole, *A Lecture on the History of the University Archives* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1912), pp. 5, 20–22, 26–28.

⁹*World Almanac* (New York: Newspaper Enterprise Association, 1978), pp. 154–69; U.S. Bureau of the Census *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1978* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1978), pp. 160–61, 166; U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1975), pp. 382–83, 1127–28.

¹⁰Johan Huisinga, *America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), pp. 284–85, 290.

The growth of modern universities has been phenomenal. Enrollments have increased almost as rapidly as the cubic yards of concrete poured. Most civilizations develop institutions with the responsibility for preserving, adding to, and transmitting culture and learning to future generations. In the last century, institutions of higher education have grown rapidly as more students attended college and a complex technology created new demands for college-trained persons. Adlai Stevenson noted that "in this century we have become the first society in human history to provide advanced education for a third of its young people." He underlined "the sheer scale of the educational ambition which gave this democracy, from its inception, the noble vision of learning as a part of citizenship and the school as the instrument of liberty." Some scrawled graffiti on the walls of a university founded in 1229 ran, "What has the rat race ever tortoise?" It has taught us to study the past, keep a selection of the present and be concerned about the future. In academic archives it teaches us to document innovation, dissent, and the transmission of culture.¹¹

Despite assertions, such as those in a July 1978 manifesto, that government is the "most important," the "most fundamental" institution in any society, governments do not have a remarkable record as institutions for the development of culture and knowledge, e.g., the nineteenth century governments of Bonaparte, Gladstone, and Bismarck and the twentieth century regimes of Stalin, Hitler, and Roosevelt. When we consider the power and will to document as an institutional and individual characteristic, we find that government is, indeed, the most productive engine for the creation of documentation. The archives of American higher education are not administered by a Ministry of Culture or a national commission. Universities interact with society, yet are often critical of established authority. They developed the arts of disputation and logic with arguments for and against propositions. The intellectual world of the universities has not been entirely successful, but it has the best methodology that we have developed for seeking and discovering truths and for discarding them when they have served their purpose.¹²

Like people of all ages, college and university archives embody a variety of intellectual experiences and are affected with a strong taint of amateurism. Among the earliest English usages of the word *archives*, the *Oxford English Dictionary* cites a 1638 reference to "constitutions . . . found amongst the Archives at Bennet College." University archives contain documents on the organization and development of the university and the changing influences of curricular trends and vocational pressures on higher education. Universities and colleges are also committed to the preservation of archives of diverse political, social, and economic forces, which are not necessarily those that are approved by the state. In 1818, Alexander von Stourdza cited the German universities as "archives of all the errors of the age." He wrote that these "Gothic medieval ruins" allowed youth to "plunge into all the excesses which can be suggested by intellectual anarchy and corruption of morals." He attributed this "absolute lawlessness" to the "tempting charm of so-called 'academic freedom'" and the German practice of regarding universities as a financial speculation.¹³

Harvard University is not only the oldest American institution of higher learning, it has one of the longest traditions of archival concern. Early nineteenth-century collectors included presidents Josiah Quincy and Jared Sparks. In his 10 May 1873 preface to volume 1 of *Biographical Sketches of Graduates of Harvard University*, librarian John L. Sibley commented on the "amazingly meagre and unsatisfactory" records of the college with respect to early students, and recounted his devoted efforts over thirty years to collect information about graduates and raise a "literary monument" to "Harvardians collectively." At the

¹¹Adlai E. Stevenson, "The Centrality of Education" (Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois, printed address, 1 May 1964), p. 7.

¹²National Association of State Archives and Records Administrators, "Principles for State Archival and Records Management Agencies," in *Records Management Quarterly* 12 (July 1978): 42-43.

¹³J. R. Seeley, *Life and Times of Stein* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1968), 3:420-21.

25 April 1894 meeting in Boston of the American Antiquarian Society, Justin Winsor reported on the condition of the archives of Harvard College. The four-page report listed about thirty collections, including two modern scrapbooks. One was called "Harvard College Miscellaneous Papers," and the other included "various early deeds" and "etc., etc., etc." The 1725–1805 faculty records contained "little respecting curriculum, but much about disciplining the students." The college publications were "gathered from every source and suited to illustrate all phases of the progress of the College and the life of the Academic community." Winsor further noted, that "The original charter of 1650 is framed, with a protecting curtain, and hung in the librarian's room," an early example of an archival trophy collected by a historian and librarian. He also mentioned the work of William G. Brown "the assistant immediately in charge of the archives." In 1936, Harvard published a twenty-page inventory of the Archives to 1800, in Samuel E. Morison's *Harvard College in the Seventeenth Century*. In 1941, University Archivist Clifford K. Shipton issued a guide to the functions and procedures of the Harvard Archives.¹⁴

The recent development of academic archives has been impressive. Following the lead of Harvard in the 1930s, Wisconsin, in university archives, and Cornell, in regional historical manuscripts collections, made considerable progress in the 1950s. In 1964, seventy-five college and university archivists attended the Allerton Park Institute on University Archives, at the University of Illinois. Since 1966, the Society of American Archivists Committee on College and University Archives has published three directories of archives in institutions of higher education. Edited by Robert M. Warner, Ruth W. Helmuth, and J. Frank Cook, these directories, together with the NHPRC's *Directory of Archives and Manuscript Repositories*, have listed archival programs at 1,183 institutions. Data on holdings and staffing are inexact, but the 1980 Directory lists 1,600 archives staff members. The statistics include custodians of college and university archives, and curators and librarians responsible for collections of historical and literary manuscripts maintained by academic institutions. Many staff members included in the directories are librarians who devoted a small percentage of their time to archival work. The Society of American Archivists surveys in the 1970s show a gradual increase in the percentage of college and university archivists in its membership from 33 percent to 40 percent. In 1978, 48 percent of the membership of the Midwest Archives Conference and 38 percent of the New England Archivists were academic archivists.¹⁵

Data in the college and university archives directories and the 1978 NHPRC *Directory* lists 912,815 feet of records in the institutions maintaining academic archives and manuscript collections. These reports indicate a major need for administrative control over archival holdings and standardization in descriptive statistical measurements. The volume of these dispersed holdings is nearly equal in size to the holdings of the National Archives. The tabulation of the data raises several questions, including one for my friends in Massachusetts and New York: "Where do you put it all?" Another, for archivists in the ten "Archives Belt" states east of the Mississippi and South of the Mason-Dixon line: "Is not

¹⁴John L. Sibley, *Biographical Sketches of Graduates of Harvard University* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1873), 1:xi; Justin Winsor, "Archives of Harvard College," in *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* (Worcester, Mass.: The Society, 1894), 9:109–12; Samuel E. Morison, *Harvard College in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1936), pp. 662–81; *The Harvard University Archives* (Cambridge: Harvard University Library, 1957), pp. 1–10.

¹⁵Robert M. Warner, et al., comps., *College and University Archives in the United States and Canada* (Ann Arbor: Society of American Archivists, 1966); Ruth W. Helmuth, et al., comps., *College and University Archives in the United States and Canada* (Ann Arbor: Society of American Archivists, 1972); J. Frank Cook, et al., *Directory of College and University Archives in the United States and Canada* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1980); Nancy Sahli, ed., *Directory of Archives and Manuscript Repositories in the United States* (Washington: National Historical Publications and Records Commission, 1978).

the absence of southeastern states that have strong state archival and historical agency programs from the fourteen states holding the most academic archives an indication of a healthy diversity in our archival tradition?"

Academic archives include publications, official records, personal papers, and organizational records. As generators of "new knowledge," universities produce large quantities of publications. In subject content, college and university records cover academic attainment, administrative actions and proceedings, course descriptions and materials, research under contracts and grants, academic events, social activities, housing, arts, and athletics. Many academic enterprises are likely to be photographed. Old buildings, distinguished visitors, groups on steps, prized animals, athletic teams, and posed representations of college life are our common inheritance. Both sides in the confrontations of the 1960s and 1970s carried cameras to document the activities of the other side. Archives also hold newspapers, scrapbooks, yearbooks, student organization records, and a generous sampling of dance programs and football films.

The academic institution has archives that document the sources of its income, which may come from the gifts of alumni and friends, legislative appropriations, or the proceeds of holdings in land or patents. The archives also contains the record of how the money was spent, generally for operations and capital improvements. In 1930, faculty instruction accounted for 43.5 percent of total expenses in colleges and universities. Since World War II, auxiliary enterprises and activities such as student housing and services have increased from .5 percent to 11.5 percent, and instructional or faculty costs have dropped to 33.6 percent. Capital expenditures were never as simple as felling one log for Mark Hopkins, but there has been a major change from the rented lecture rooms in twelfth-century Bologna to modern automated libraries, scientific laboratories, and the creature comforts of spectator sports facilities.¹⁶

Compared to government, business, and church archives, academic archives are more likely to be associated with large libraries; have smaller staffs, budgets, and holdings; rely on students and part-time assistants; and handle records with a greater variety of subject content. Archivists and researchers have been attracted to universities because of their traditional role as centers for scientific, economic, and social research. Colleges and universities have sought to discharge their responsibilities or enhance their reputations as research centers by collecting historical and literary archives and manuscripts collections. The prestige factor motivates both prince and legislator, president and dean. The non-current archives of academic organizations, the correspondence and manuscripts of literary figures, business archives, the papers of politicians, oral history tapes and transcriptions, microfilm copies of holdings at other institutions, and audiovisual archives have joined the familiar, bound record-books on the archivist's shelves. College and university archives have played a major role in the development of state archival networks and regional depositories for public records.

Archives are appraised and retained for research uses and future opportunities. In undertaking a responsibility for the transmission of civilization, a strategy, style, and process of selection or appraisal is more important than perpetrating or perpetuating a national data base. Human retention periods are plus or minus three score and ten. There is a comprehensive disposal plan for the physical disposal of human bodies, with a moral audit proviso for the religious. The "life cycle" for records of information is less precise. What is it that we keep? Why do we keep it? What are we intending to pass on? Records of property ownership? Culture? Appreciation? What were the attitudes of those who came to America? What pasts did they bring? What did they leave behind? What did they

¹⁶Census Bureau, *Historical Statistics*, p. 384; Census Bureau, *1978 Historical Abstract*, p. 166.

write and say about their documentary heritage? The questioning, critical curiosity of the appraiser is essential and endless.

Quality is more important than content. The credibility and integrity of a record may be a more significant appraisal factor than its informational value. The archivist weighs the usefulness of the data against the costs of processing, conservation, and retention. Appraisal must take precedence in establishing retention schedules. Less than 10 percent of all records are retained. The most voluminous records preserved in university archives include personal papers, correspondence, and subject files. The impact of low cost reprography and the paper output of automated systems have compounded appraisal problems for all archivists.

A certain pragmatism should guide college and university archivists in appraisal. They should be able to answer questions. Once the archivist becomes the institution's information officer, many responsibilities relating to appraisal criteria and collection strategies will be met. The working core of an academic archives consists of trustees' reports, audit and financial reports, catalogs, student newspapers and yearbooks, alumni directories and files, staff and student telephone directories, college and departmental annual reports and newsletters, published histories, a photograph file, and the correspondence and subject files of the chief administrative officer. Acquiring and gaining a thorough familiarity with the content of these records will establish an archival program.

Academic archives include a wide array of descriptive systems that provide access to official records and publications of universities, to manuscript collections from the university community, and to subject matter material held as "special" or "historical" collections. The principles of provenance and pertinence are applicable to arrangement and description. Administrative control of the physical information or record by source, and intellectual control of subject content are twin goals of the practicing archivist. An archives cannot function without effective control over each record series or manuscript collection in its custody. The basic informational elements are title, inclusive dates, volume, and physical location. The appropriate means of subject access depends on the series or collection. The variety of subjects covered in academic archives is reflected in 3,423 subject descriptors used in the University of Illinois Archives data base. When a "critical mass" is reached, a subject access system should be developed for the repository. Control systems should be capable of extension to provide more detailed access to specific, high-use series and collections and compatible with national information systems. Without an effective control system by source and subject, reference involves sending a retriever through the tall grass to see what will fly up.

Conservation and security are old problems for the academic archivists. The archives of the Spanish College at Bologna provides an idea of the medieval approach. The college statutes stated that all of the privileges, legal instruments, and authentic documents shall be registered word for word in a parchment register to be chained in the book cupboard. The college seals were kept in a chest and used to seal official letters. Three inventories were maintained on parchment: one for the college books, another for legal instruments relating to college real estate and revenues, and a third for movable goods. The inventories were read in public three times a year. For library security, all college books were placed in series according to each faculty, and chained in order with iron chains locked with two keys. The 1377 revision of the college statutes was protected by a model plan for archival security. The original was locked up with the originals of all legal instruments of the college "in a place reserved for this purpose in the wall of the sacristy, which shall never be opened without great and serious need." One copy was kept by the rector. A second parchment copy was bound like a book and "chained in the college library." Copies three, four, and five were held by councilors. The sixth copy was put in a common chest with other legal documents, which could be opened only by means of five different keys. To ensure that these seven copies would not be lost through negligence, they were read out loud, word for word, three times a year to the whole college. As a condition of admission,

scholars had to be familiar with the text of the statutes and take an oath of unconditional obedience to them. If the documents were lost, the rectors and councilors *ipso facto* forfeited half a year's salary.¹⁷

In 1379, William of Wykeham, the founder of New College at Oxford, provided a fifty-five-foot tall muniment tower for the archives. It was "almost a fortress," with walls thirty-eight inches thick, and the rooms were reached through "massive iron-clad doors fitted with intricate locking devices." Despite a lack of heating, air conditioning, dehumidification, and modern ventilation, the 600-year-old records are in good condition.¹⁸

The early concern for security was justified. In 1261, a Cambridge riot led to the burning of university records. During the popular revolt of June 15–16, 1381, the insurgents seized and burned university records. The public burning of records was accompanied by suitable expressions from the town concerning the oppressive financial burden and parasitical nature of the university clerks. In the 1960s and 1970s security became an important consideration at Paris, Berkeley, Urbana, and hundreds of other campuses.¹⁹

Aside from a long history of security problems, academic archives are heir to all of the conservation problems of the twentieth century. Rotting paper and deteriorating films and tapes are taken in every day. With the meager conservation budgets in university archives, these records have a physical life expectancy which will determine how long they will be available for use.

A college or university archives cannot be justified without use. Indeed, we are in an age of the user. User analysis and user satisfaction are popular themes. Some would seek social acceptance as purveyors of data by appointment to the information poor. We have considered discarding fifty-three of our sixty-three record groups, as they account for only 20 percent of our reference use. In meeting our responsibilities to users, we should reflect on archival doctrines. Archivists have a traditional concept that administrative and evidential users are most important. Margaret Norton wrote that the archivist's primary responsibilities were the promotion of administrative efficiency and the protection of individual rights, rather than facilitating historical scholarship. She sought to restore a balance that is lost when only scholarly research needs are considered. The view that administrative use should take precedence can be as misleading as the view that archives serve only scholarly researchers.²⁰

These general concepts have been modified by experience in the university community. While administrative efficiency is not directly dependent on the retention of records, the accountability of administrative and academic officials requires the preservation and accessibility of records documenting the formation of policy and the expenditure of funds. Against the high cost of retaining archives, we balance a responsibility for documenting society's investments. As we calculate the cost of retaining records of agricultural, engineering, and scientific research, we must consider the university's responsibility for maintaining a record of the expenditure of hundreds of millions of dollars. In the 1957–77 period, American libraries received 790 million dollars in federal aid. Archives document the role of librarians and their associations and institutions in securing and using this financial assistance. Publications documenting these activities tend to report agreed upon results rather than to record plans and justifications, methods and procedures, exchanges of viewpoints, and the process of interpreting the data. Publications are the place where the researchers begin. They are 10 percent of our holdings at the University of Illinois

¹⁷Marti, *Spanish College at Bologna*, pp. 33–34, 261, 263, 283.

¹⁸Francis W. Steer, *The Archives of New College, Oxford* (London: Phillimore & Co., 1974), pp. ix–x.

¹⁹Charles H. Cooper, *Annals of Cambridge* (Cambridge: Warwick and Co., 1908), 1:48; 120–21.

²⁰Thornton W. Mitchell, *Norton on Archives* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1975), pp. 4–8.

and account for 43 percent of our reference use. Twenty-seven percent of our holdings are personal papers or manuscripts. They account for 19 percent of the use. Official records occupy 63 percent of the space and receive 38 percent of the use. Access to archives lays a necessary basis for the understanding and examination of present problems and prevents the unnecessary repetition of work done in the past. Short-sighted persons who cannot provide adequate space for a record of the discharge of official responsibilities betray a lack of confidence and understanding of the purpose of a university. Among the most important individual rights is the right of access to records and the ability to investigate social problems.²¹

The archivist has a major role to play in citizenship education that instructs students in the careful examination of documentary evidence and consideration of all viewpoints. By the zealous preservation of the record of society's successes and failures, the archivist permits an understanding and identification with the past, through which we come to appreciate continuity and change and can welcome the future. Students are the primary users of academic archives. They account for 48 percent of the use of the archives at Illinois. Just as the primary users of governmental archives are genealogists searching for an understanding of their familial origins, students use archives to discover their role in society. They study the institution that replaced their families as they prepare themselves for career and family responsibilities of their own. They examine its relationship to social and political issues. The teaching of research is a vital part of the academic archivist's duties. Historians constitute a small minority of the users. Their use of archives is matched by research assistants in administrative offices. At Illinois, faculty use is 20 percent, with the remaining 32 percent evenly divided between administrators, the public and faculty, and students from other universities. Administrative uses were 16.3 percent of the total. Dissertations and theses account for another 13 percent. Course papers and classroom use amount to over 30 percent of reference use. Use and reuse of the same records for sophomore papers or freshman speeches may not seem to be an inspiring type of investigation, but it is where people begin as researchers. Students who graduate from a college or university should know about archives and the sources they contain. As each student generation comes and goes, we have a continuing responsibility to teach its members how to discover the past. As Henry Adams boasted, his university taught "little, and that little ill, but it left the mind open, free from bias, ignorant of facts, but docile" and "ready to receive knowledge." We document the production of such minds.²²

The professional development of archivists in institutions of higher education dates from the post-World War II period. Though the Society established a Committee on College and University Archives in 1949, there were few full-time archivists until the 1960s. The first university archivists joined the Society's Council in 1965. In the past two decades, the number of publications listed in the annual *American Archivist* bibliographies written by college and university archivists has increased from 4½ percent to 9½ percent. Still, academic archivists share a poor publication record with their colleagues. As pressures for publication as a factor in employment, tenure, and promotion decisions increase, we may see a quantitative improvement. The quality of publications on academic archives can be improved by standard reporting practices, funds for research investigations, and critical pre-publication review. On 28 September 1979, the Society's Council approved *Guidelines for College and University Archives* containing statements concerning goals, administrative relationships, acquisition and processing procedures, security and conservation, access and reference service, archival personnel, space requirements and facilities, and records man-

²¹University of Illinois Archives *Annual Reports* (Urbana, 1971–80).

²²Henry Adams, *The Education of Henry Adams* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1918), p. 55.

agement. The Society's 1973 *Forms Manual* and 1979 *Selected Readings* provide additional counsel to academic archivists.²³

Academic archivists have played a prominent role in archival education. In a recent survey of sixty-three programs in Canada and the United States, thirteen included university archivists on their faculties. Since 1970, Case Western Reserve University has offered eleven summer workshops for college and university archivists. In course sequences and continuing education programs, academic institutions play the leading role in archival education.²⁴

College and university archives document higher education and acculturation. They are not concerned with the annals of governmental activities or lists of officials, taxpayers, militia, and voters. They are not interested in becoming grant-dependent participants or warehouses for national data collecting and user information systems. In a proper relationship to society, universities can be very useful institutions. To the extent that the American college or university stands outside government control, it may define and maintain its own standing. The ideological conflicts between capitalism and Marxism and between democracy and totalitarianism sometimes obscure the continuing struggle between the government and the citizen; i.e., how much control should government exercise over the individual? In Europe the *öffentliche hand* of the state has been a common solution to administrative problems created by rising populations and modern technology. Models of European archival solutions are widely disseminated in the developing countries. Americans have inherited the gamut of European, Asian, and African political and social ideas. We have also received those who could no longer live in harmony with the governments and cultures of other continents. If we began deporting political refugees and their descendants, we would quickly depopulate our country.²⁵

Every nation has its archival traditions and problems. It is interesting to see how different cultures treat their documentary heritage and how they resolve the common problems of our era. In recent years I have spent most of two sabbatical leaves in Germany and have studied the archival system. Building on a fine tradition of scholarly excellence, the German archivists supported an archival journal nearly 150 years ago and a training school in the 1890s. With the political disruptions of the twentieth century, the tradition has been adapted to the needs of the Federal Republic, the Communist Democratic Republic, and Bavaria. A lively exchange in archival journals and publications has created an important body of literature on current archival problems.

Despite my admiration for the fine tradition and efficient functioning of the German archives, I have gained an increased respect for and pride in our archival system. There is no special providence or unique dispensation for American archives. Still, the thought keeps coming back that as persons and as archivists we are blessed by American citizenship. We have a singular freedom of choice. As archivists we have a greater freedom and a heavier obligation than our fellow citizens as we choose what shall be committed to the future. We have a free market for archival ideas. Descendants of emigrants fleeing a past and seeking new cultural experiences, American archivists have re-invented the wheel. It may be a better wheel. It is designed to serve those institutions with the power and will to document their accomplishments. The strength of religious, academic, and corporate archival establishments emphasizes the plurality of American archival experience. It often

²³"College and University Archives Guidelines" in *American Archivist* 43 (Spring 1980): 262-71; J. Frank Cook, comp., *Forms Manual* (Chicago, Society of American Archivists, 1973); Charles B. Elston, et al., eds., *College and University Archives: Selected Readings* (Chicago, Society of American Archivists, 1979).

²⁴Lawrence J. McCrank, *Education for Rare Book Librarianship: A Reexamination of Trends and Problems* (Urbana: Graduate School of Library Science Occasional Paper 144, April 1980), pp. 66-70.

²⁵Huisinga, *America*, p. 294.

contravenes the *öffentlichen hand*. Archives and manuscripts document the total human experience. Despite a tendency to downgrade the value of original sources, contemporary documentation remains essential evidence for retrospective research. With our colleagues in federal and state government and historical and library agencies, we can provide comprehensive documentation on the role of America in our time.

College and university archives and private collections are frustrating to archival systematizers; and systematization is a cardinal archival virtue. American academics are unique in maintaining an independence from direct governmental controls. There are instances of faculty members transferring records of their government service to a university archives before corresponding official records are made available in federal archives. Documentation of the scientific or academic viewpoint is more likely to be retained in an institution where academic freedom is a cherished tradition. Over a century ago Sibley observed "the heresy of one period ripening into orthodoxy in another." It is no accident that dissent and opposition to government policies and wars are nourished in academic environments. Too often, the answers to questions of public policy have been resolved by appeals to the financial and political power of the state. Archivists have a reputation as trusted servants and defenders of the establishment. By natural selection, they are guards. A number of professional limitations can be traced to their identification with the institutions that employ them. Academic archives represent a counterpoise to the government's tendency to monopolize documentary and financial power. Intellectual and technological expertise provides universities and colleges with a bargaining power.²⁶

The academic archivist carries a unique responsibility for *Überlieferungsbildung*—cultural transfer. Archives have a special importance for institutions without the power to issue laws and regulations or print money. Large numbers of our fellow citizens are captives of nostalgia, cultural chauvinism, or patriotism which give them a very limited view of the past. Their "past" leaves them particularly susceptible to historicism and futurism. The careful study of archival sources in colleges and universities will provide a "past shock" that can open a new world to them. No human institution—not government, not the church, not political parties, not professional organizations—should stand between humans and their responsibility to understand their heritage. Mark Van Doren observed that education is "an altogether personal affair." We must each develop our own unique intellect, which is "the one thing that makes us equal." As archivists, we are primarily concerned with the future. The present is the context of our work. Our heritage from the past is our special charge, but we should not worship it. The successful resolution of contemporary problems requires a concept of a dynamic society. We will all succeed to the extent that we can welcome change.²⁷

²⁶Sibley, *Graduates of Harvard*, 1:x.

²⁷Mark Van Doren, "The Joy of Being Serious" (Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois, printed address, 15 Sept. 1963), pp. 5, 7.