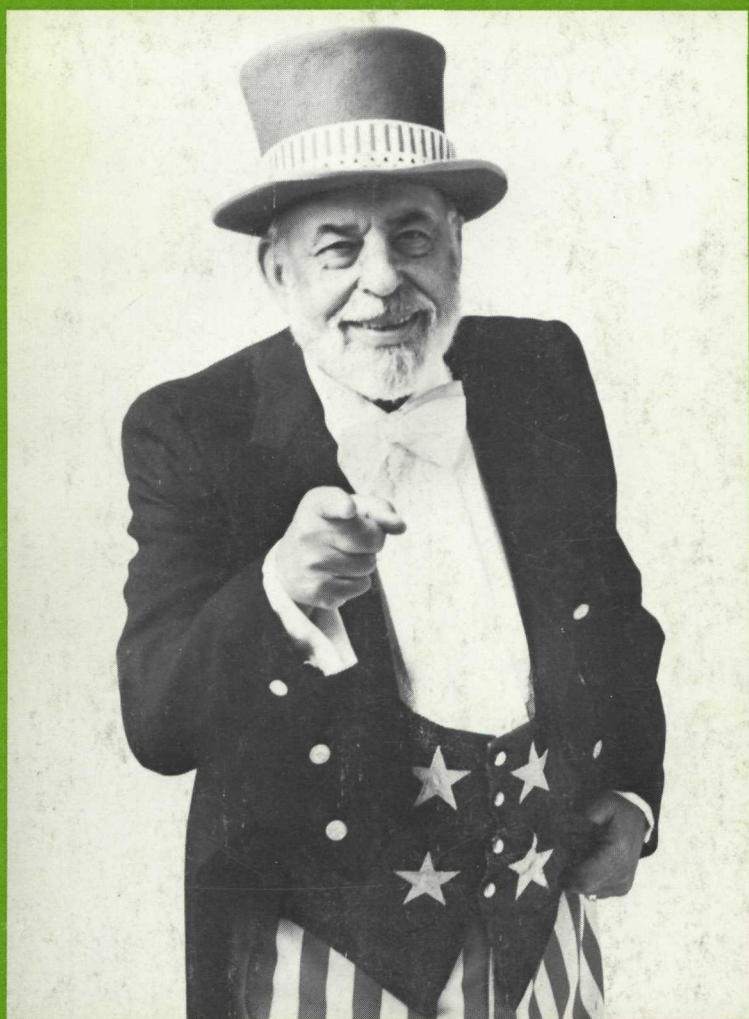


The American Archivist

Volume 44
Number 3
Summer 1981



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Published Quarterly by
The Society of American Archivists

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COVER: "Uncle Stanley Needs You!" Mr. Stanley Marcus, founder of the Neiman-Marcus retail firm, wears an Uncle Sam suit in the poster calling for employees to bring in memorabilia for the store's archives. See "News Notes," p. 276.

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THE AMERICAN ARCHIVIST is published by the Society of American Archivists, 330 S. Wells, Chicago, Illinois 60606, four times yearly. Postmaster: Send all correspondence and 3579 forms to SAA, Suite 810, 330 S. Wells Street, Chicago, Illinois 60606. Subscriptions: \$25 a year to North American addresses, \$30 a year to other addresses; single copies, \$6 to members, \$7 to nonmembers.

ARTICLES AND RELATED COMMUNICATIONS: Virginia C. Purdy, Editor, *The American Archivist*, National Archives Building, Washington, D.C. 20408; telephone (202) 523-3879.

ADVERTISING CORRESPONDENCE, MEMBERSHIP AND SUBSCRIPTION CORRESPONDENCE, SOCIETY OF AMERICAN ARCHIVISTS PUBLICATIONS AND BACK ISSUES: Ann Morgan Campbell, Executive Director, SAA, Suite 810, 330 S. Wells Street, Chicago, Illinois 60606; telephone (312) 922-0140. Notice of nonreceipt of an issue must be sent to the executive director by domestic subscribers within four months of issue publication date and by international subscribers within six months.

The American Archivist is indexed in *Library Literature* and is abstracted in *Historical Abstracts*; book reviews are indexed in *Book Review Index*.

The American Archivist and the Society of American Archivists assume no responsibility for statements made by contributors.

Typesetting for *The American Archivist* is done by Compositors, Inc., of Lanham, Maryland, and the journal is printed by Kirby Lithographic Co., Inc., of Arlington, Virginia.

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The Forum

FROM THE EDITOR:

ALTHOUGH THE ONLY COMMENT I have received about the slim Winter and Spring issues of the journal was complimentary (see below), I understand that the President and the Executive Director have been bombarded with complaints. Therefore I hasten to point out that two factors make the last two issues of the *American Archivist* appear to be smaller than in fact they are. First, they were printed on lighter weight, less expensive paper than has been used in the past, reducing the bulk of the magazine. These two issues have the same number of pages as the July 1978 issue, about which there was no hue and cry. Second, the type size was reduced, so there is more text on every page than in previous issues. These two factors make the journal appear to be in the final stages of malnutrition, if one looks only at the spine. Actually, there is as much text as in most previous issues.

By producing two 96-page issues for Winter and Spring 1981, we have left ourselves much leeway to produce larger issues for the rest of this calendar year. Accordingly, we invite your input, especially to the "Technical Notes" and "News Notes" departments. Send the editors of these departments your news items, and we will have a better journal.

VIRGINIA C. PURDY
Editor

TO THE EDITOR:

A HASTY NOTE on the new "lean" look to *The American Archivist*. I like it! I'm sure

you will get some critical letters—well, here is a vote for some strict priorities for *AA*. For the first time in ages, I read every article (in Winter 1981).

REV. NORBERT BROCKMAN, SM
Marianist Training Network
Memphis, Tennessee

AS A GRADUATE STUDENT with a limited financial base I greatly appreciated John Fleckner's "Forum" letter in the Winter 1981 issue concerning the location of this year's annual meeting. Because of the more reasonable costs at Berkeley, I will be able to attend my first convention. I can only speculate, but there must be several other people in a situation similar to mine.

It is difficult for me to understand the argument that the quality of the meeting could be lessened by the move from San Francisco to Berkeley. Even more incomprehensible is the idea that the strength and influence of our profession should be measured by the cost of conventions. I joined SAA with the understanding that it promoted full participation and a broad sharing of knowledge rather than status achievement and elitism. The SAA advisory poll and Mr. Fleckner's comments have reinforced my preconceptions.

JOEL F. WURL
University of Denver

CONGRATULATIONS to the Committee on the Status of Women, for completion of

the archival profession survey; and thanks to Mabel Deutrich, Ben DeWhitt, and others for the clear presentation of data in the tables. As an original member of the Status of Women Committee which undertook the 1973 survey, I can recognize the present result as a great step forward in data collection and display.

Unfortunately, some of the interpretations presented are not supported by the data, although mention is made of additional supportive data. Several generalizations regarding gender-salary variation were stated:

(1) "The most obvious general trend is the nearly universal observation that females are compensated at lower rates than males" (p. 529). There are data for this conclusion in tables 1 and 2, but, as the authors note, the conclusion merely restates a widely known fact.

(2) "In terms of education, experience, years with present employer, and age, salaries of females continue to lag behind those of males" (p. 530). The conclusion with respect to age is documented in Table 1, but no data are presented in the remaining tables to document any conclusions about salaries of females with respect to education, experience, and years with present employer. These data should have been presented with these very important conclusions, or the conclusions should have been omitted.

I submit that it is more important to pursue substantive explanations of salary variations by gender than it is to repeat the obvious fact of such variation. We need analyses, based on carefully constructed hypotheses, concerning the causes of salary variation by gender if the profession is to move beyond general complaints of discrimination to a valid analysis of the present situation and meaningful corrective action.

As an optimist, let me suggest a hypothesis. As one moves from more senior levels to more junior levels of the profession, salary advantages of males compared to females, *attributable to gender alone*, greatly decrease. That is, if one controls for other significant sources of variation such as education and number of continuous years in

the profession, rather large salary variation by gender will appear among senior members of the profession, and smaller salary variations by gender will appear among more junior members. In other words, the hypothesis is: things are getting better for women vis-à-vis men of the same education, experience, etc. If the hypothesis is confirmed, we can confidently proceed with efforts to encourage/assist women to acquire pertinent education, experience, etc. If the hypothesis is not confirmed, or if over years of keeping statistics the situation does not improve, then we have to focus on a very recalcitrant problem of discrimination.

Ben DeWhitt kindly gave me copies of the SPSS data analyses. I spent some time thinking about these data, and I believe there is reason to support my optimistic hypothesis. For example, with respect to salary variation explained by *gender and education*, I note the following points: (1) the highest educational levels exhibit the least variation by gender; (2) the proportion of females increases as one goes lower in the academic credentials ranking; (3) salaries of females decline more rapidly than salaries of males as one goes lower in the academic credentials ranking.

I have no conclusion to offer, except the conclusion that we must analyze the variation of salary by gender to determine why females are compensated at lower rates.

We must build on the recent improvements in data collection to support statistical references about the archival profession. At the present, we can generalize only about the sample (those who responded). Thanks to DeWhitt and others, we now have the capability to manipulate these data in SPSS.

RICHARD H. LYTLE
Smithsonian Institution

MR. LYTLE'S COMMENTS are most welcome. Indeed, it was hoped that the survey would raise such well-defined questions among the SAA membership. Given time and space limitations, we sought in the article to provide readers of *The American Archivist* with the maximum range and

amount of information. There is no need to reiterate the qualifications, suggestions, and hopes concerning past and future surveys which are set forth in the article. Once again we solicit further analysis, or suggestions for analysis—especially when they demonstrate the care and spirit evident in Mr. Lytle's letter.

BEN DEWHITT

*Machine-Readable Archives Division
National Archives and Records Service*

I AM WRITING to thank you for the excellent review of one of our *Occasional Papers*, in your Winter 1981 issue of *The American Archivist*.

Another reason I am writing is to clear up some confusion about where the *Occasional Papers* series is published. In the review it had Chicago as the city of publication. However, the *Occasional Papers* are published in Champaign at the Graduate School of Library and Information Science. If you would note this information for future reference, it would be appreciated.

Also, I noticed that *The American Archivist* sometimes runs price information with the review. In the future, if possible, could you please provide that information so that

readers of the review will be able to acquire the publication with no problems?

JAMES S. DOWLING

*Graduate School of Library and Information
Science, Publications Office,
University of Illinois at
Urbana-Champaign*

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The price of the Occasional Papers is \$3 per copy, or \$12 for a year's subscription to them, of which there are usually five per year. For firm information or to order, write to: The Graduate School of Library and Information Science, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Publications Office, 249 Armory Building, 505 East Armory Street, Champaign, IL 61820.*

WE APPRECIATE your mentioning the World Conference on Records, in the Winter 1981 issue of *The American Archivist*. We particularly want to thank you for plugging the printed proceedings, which are for sale. However, I doubt that we will have many orders for soft-cover bound volumes at the price you printed on page 68, which quotes \$800 per set. The price is actually \$80.

Thank you anyway for thinking of us.

THOMAS E. DANIELS

*Manager, Public Relations
Genealogical Department
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints*