

# A Profile of College and University Archives in the United States

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THE ARCHIVAL PROFESSION HAS BECOME more concerned with its own history as the profession has evolved. This is particularly true of college and university archivists, now the largest group of archivists, defined by employer, in the United States. In an effort to update previous surveys, a detailed questionnaire was circulated to a 10-percent sample of archivists at institutions of higher education. The results of the survey, reported in this article, are of particular interest in that they include data reflecting the remarkable growth in the number of these archival institutions in the decade of the 1970s. The survey also sheds new light on the nature, strengths, and weaknesses of these programs and represents a baseline from which the developments of the 1980s can be measured.

The growth and development of archives at colleges and universities has been monitored periodically through a series of surveys made since the formation in 1949 of the College and University Archives Committee of the Society of American Archivists. In the summer of 1949 the committee conducted a survey among 200 colleges and universities, selected to include as wide a range as possible, in order "to determine the extent of archival awareness in institutions of higher learning in the United States and Canada."<sup>1</sup> Eighty-four institutions responded that they had some form of archives or historical manuscript collection, but the picture was generally a bleak one—few institutions apparently understood the distinction among institutional records, historical manuscripts, and local public records.

<sup>1</sup>Dwight H. Wilson, "Report of the Committee on College and University Archives," *American Archivist* 13 (January 1950): 62–64; Wilson, "Archives in Colleges and Universities; Some Comments on Data Collected by the Society's Committee on College and University Archives," *American Archivist* 13 (October 1950): 343.

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Few employed full-time staff to manage the archives, and few staff members had any formal archival training. The most encouraging sign was that many institutions were considering establishing archives and sought the advice of the committee. The committee's chair, Dwight Wilson, concluded his impressionistic report with a plea that "some day a more scientific survey" should be conducted.<sup>2</sup>

Not until 13 years later did the committee attempt the task. In 1962 the committee expanded its survey to 350 institutions in an effort to determine trends in archival programs.<sup>3</sup> The 77-percent response revealed that 113 institutions employed full- or part-time archivists; 70 located the archives in the library, 54 left responsibility for preserving official records to the office of origin, and 31 reported they had no program for preserving their institutional records. More than half of those who reported an institutional archives noted that they also collected historical manuscripts. Reporting the results of the questionnaire, Philip Mason, Director of Wayne State University's Archives of Labor History and Urban Affairs, took heart from the fact that 133 institutions were considering establishing an archives and that 23 of them planned to establish one in the near future.<sup>4</sup>

Four years later the College and University Archives Committee, under the chairmanship of Robert M. Warner, undertook a comprehensive survey of 1,156 institutions in the United States and Canada "to ascertain, first, if an institutional archives existed, and second, something about the nature and scope of

the operation."<sup>5</sup> Nearly half of the institutions indicated they had some kind of archives but only 9 percent of the institutions with an archives employed at least one full-time professional archivist. Although respondents were not asked specifically about where the archives reported administratively, responses to other questions led to the conclusion that perhaps 80 percent reported to divisions of the library.<sup>6</sup> Of those institutions in the survey that reported having an archives, only 25 percent had more than 100 cubic feet of records; fewer than 5 percent had more than 1,000 cubic feet. Nearly 90 percent of the institutions with archives were regularly open to interested scholars.

In 1972 Ruth Helmuth, chair of the College and University Archives Committee, reported on 857 responses to a questionnaire sent to nearly 1,400 institutions. As compared with earlier surveys, fewer respondents—539 versus 585—indicated they had archival programs. In identifying by title the individual responsible for the archives nearly as many used some variant of "archivist" as used "librarian." Respondents overwhelmingly indicated that the archives was administered by the library, with various other offices, such as the office of the president, the vice president, or the academic dean, combining for a distant second. Concerning the founding date of the archives, two-thirds reported having been established between 1960 and 1972, although some confusion over how the question was interpreted by respondents may have skewed the results. Of those providing

<sup>2</sup>Wilson, "Archives in Colleges and Universities," p. 346.

<sup>3</sup>Philip P. Mason, "College and University Archives: 1962," *American Archivist* 26 (April 1963): 161–62.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 165.

<sup>5</sup>Robert M. Warner, "The Status of College and University Archives," *American Archivist* 31 (July 1968): 235.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 236. An independent unpublished study of colleges and universities in the West conducted by UCLA archivist James V. Mink in the 1960s revealed that more than 60 percent of the institutions were part of the library.

usable information on staffing, nearly one-fourth devoted less than 10 percent of one professional staff member's time to archives; fewer than 40 percent boasted a staff of at least one full-time professional. Volume of holdings for repositories varied greatly, but well over half had fewer than 500 cubic feet and only 25 percent had more than 1,000 feet.<sup>7</sup>

Finally, in 1979 the College and University Archives Committee again undertook to survey institutions to develop a new directory. Published in 1980, the *Directory of College and University Archives in the United States and Canada* listed more than 900 institutions with some form of archives and an aggregate staff in excess of 1,600.<sup>8</sup> This meteoric growth in college and university archives since the SAA committee began monitoring their development is revealed in Figure 1. It is also reflected in the fact that college and university archives now comprise the single largest group of archivists in the Society of American Archivists defined by type of employer—currently 40 percent.<sup>9</sup> As impressive as that growth has been, with as many surveys as have been conducted since 1949 the data must be interpreted with caution. Indeed, the great variation in the format, content, and follow-up of the questionnaires makes it difficult to

generalize with assurance about the development and state of college and university archives; as a result the profession has collected surprisingly little information about the size, scope, staff, budget, and use of college and university archives. None of the 160 articles and documents examined by the committee for inclusion in its *College and University Archives: Selected Readings* (published in 1979) dealt systematically with the composition of college and university archives.<sup>10</sup>

In an effort to survey more thoroughly college and university archives and to obtain comparative information about staffing, budgets, holdings, services, facilities, and problems, the authors conducted a survey of institutions of higher education in the United States. The results should provide some basic information on which college and university archivists can build, and thus avoid generalizing from impressionistic and potentially misleading data. As the single most complete, accurate, and recent listing of colleges and universities that indicate they have an archives, the *Directory* served as the source for selecting a random sample of 110 United States institutions to survey in depth. After necessary follow-up, 95 (88 percent) of the institutions

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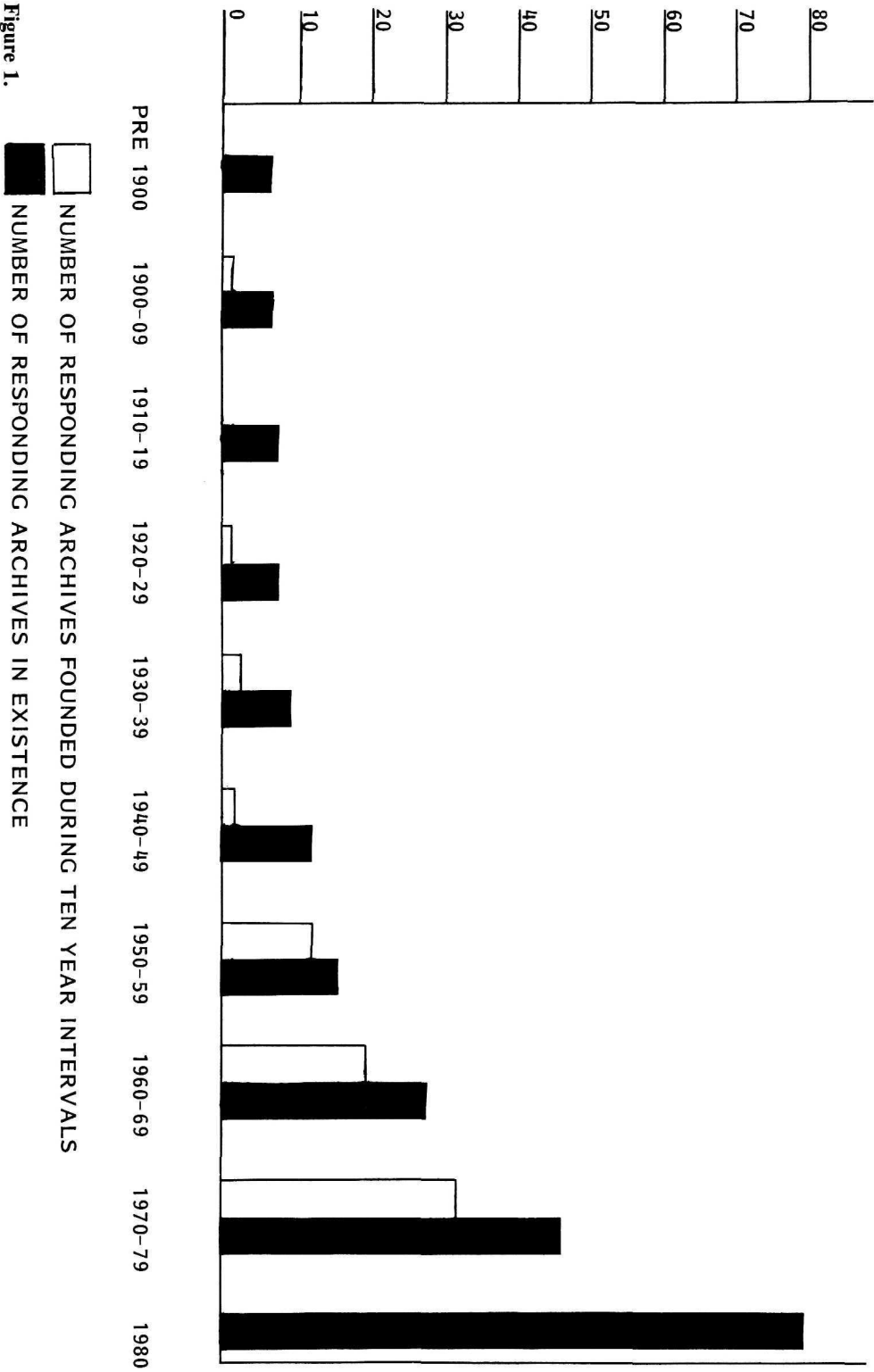
<sup>7</sup>Ruth W. Helmuth, "Startling Facts Revealed by the C & U Survey," presented before the College and University Archives Committee at the 36th Annual Meeting of the Society of American Archivists, Columbus, Ohio, October 31–November 3, 1972 (unpublished).

<sup>8</sup>College and University Archives Committee, *Directory of College and University Archives in the United States and Canada* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1980).

<sup>9</sup>Ann Morgan Campbell, ed., "Survey of the Archival Profession," *American Archivist* 43 (Fall 1980): 532.

<sup>10</sup>Frank B. Evans, comp., *Modern Archives and Manuscripts: A Select Bibliography* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1975), pp. 154–56. College and University Archives Committee, *College and University Archives: Selected Readings* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1979).

Figure 1.





returned the completed questionnaire.<sup>11</sup>

The following analysis refers to this sample itself, not to the entire population. One must resist the temptation to apply rigid conclusions inferred from the data to all colleges and university archives, particularly inferences drawn from a combination of variables. Even so, both the sample size (approximately 10 percent of all college and university archives in the United States) and the high percentage of responses afford the best opportunity available to examine the status of these archives. Further, because the results of a survey of all Canadian archival repositories—historical societies, university repositories, provincial archives, etc.—have recently been published, some comparisons with the Canadian experience can be made. In fact, the introductory remarks of the Canadians on their survey report apply as well to the status of college and university archives in the United States:

In interpreting the results of our survey, the reader must bear in mind what is obvious to anyone who has visited several Canadian archives—that is, their startling diversity. What unity there is is the conceptual unity provided by basic principles. But in their facilities, staffing, budgets and programs, archives are disparate things. The wide difference between the mean

and the invariably low median suggests the lack of institutional hierarchy or homogeneity.<sup>12</sup>

Of the 95 responding institutions nearly 60 percent are private; the remainder are public universities, colleges, and junior colleges. Enrollments, expressed as full-time equivalent students (FTE's) registered for the fall semester of 1979–80, range from 100 to 40,000, with a mean of 6,500 and a median of 2,500. The larger institutions tend to be public, averaging nearly 11,000 students, while the smaller, private institutions average somewhat more than 3,000 students. Half of the public institutions have 8,000 or more students; half of the private have fewer than 1,500.

The difference both in founding dates and establishment of an archives for private and public institutions is striking. Those in private institutions are generally older, reflecting the initial predominance of private education well into the 20th century. Ninety percent of the private institutions were founded by 1916. It was not until 1960 that the same proportion of public institutions was founded. Public institutions did not create archives until the 1950s and more than one-half have been created since 1970. Many private institutions, on the other hand, report archival repositories dating from the 19th century and more than one-half were established by 1955.

<sup>11</sup>Until the *Directory* was published it would have been extremely difficult to survey currently operating archives. Using older directories would necessarily exclude the sizable number of new programs developed in the past 10 years; relying on the membership mailing list of the Society of American Archivists risked excluding a significant number of institutions staffed by individuals who are not SAA members. A general mailing to all or even a random sample of all libraries would probably have meant too few responses to a lengthy questionnaire to be meaningful.

The authors analyzed the 95 responses out of the 110 solicited using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences to manipulate the data generated by 93 variables obtained from both multiple choice and fill-in-the-blank questions. Most questions, such as founding date of institution, size of staff and budget, and size of holdings, were coded as given with no attempt to pigeonhole data in predetermined sizes or categories. A question on the size of the budget was open-ended, for instance, rather than written with predetermined categories that the data might not naturally fit. The questionnaire was pretested with members of the College and University Archives Committee and modified in light of that experience.

Some of the reported results are not directly reflected in the tables; they are the results from separate computations based on analysis of computer printouts.

<sup>12</sup>Consultative Group on Canadian Archives, *Canadian Archives: Report to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada* (Ottawa: The Council, 1980), p. 30.

The growth of archival repositories at U.S. colleges and universities has paralleled the growth in archival repositories in Canada (Figure 1). Only slightly more than one-fourth of the Canadian college and university archives were founded before 1960 and 40 percent have been founded since 1970.

More than one-third of the responding institutions report no full-time professional staff; another one-third have only a single professional. Staffing patterns across the entire range of types of employees reveal other differences between public and private, large and small (throughout this paper "small" refers to institutions with a full-time equivalent student enrollment of 2,500 or less) institutions that can be seen in Figure 2. Public institutions generally have larger archival staffs, averaging 4.7 versus 3.1 FTE's for those institutions indicating any staff at all. That average, however, may be misleading. When responses are broken down by employment category with an entry of "0" con-

sidered a valid entry of no personnel, the picture changes: 37 percent (30 percent of public institutions and 43 percent of private institutions) of the respondents indicated no professional archival staff. Nearly the same number, and roughly in the same proportion, reported having only one full-time professional. Similarly one-third of the Canadian institutions have no professional archivists.<sup>13</sup> While 25 percent of public institutions have two or more professional staff members, only 15 percent of the private schools have an equivalent staff. Predictably, more than one-half of the small institutions have no professional staff and only 7 percent have more than two on the staff. Even 19 percent of large institutions report no professional staff and only 17 percent have more than two professionals.

Well over half of all respondents have no paraprofessional or student assistants, and only one quarter employ at least one FTE. Public institutions also have a greater number of staff members,

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 35.

PERSONNEL	TYPE OF COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY									
	Public		Private		Large		Small		All	
	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mean	Median
Professional	*1.6	1.1	*.93	.66	*1.95	1.31	*.56	.44	1.2	.81
Paraprofessional/ Student	1.2	.65	.91	.28	*1.88	1.04	*.30	.15	1.0	.38
Clerical	*.46	.34	*.21	.10	*.52	.38	*.14	.08	.31	.18
Volunteers	.16	.04	.06	.03	.16	.05	.05	.02	.10	.04
Grant-funded	.26	.11	.60	.10	.65	.17	.33	.07	.46	.11

\*Asterisked figures in this and subsequent tables indicate that the larger mean is statistically significantly greater than the smaller mean using the t tests with appropriate degrees of freedom and a 95-percent confidence level. These multiple t tests should be interpreted with caution.

Figure 2. Staffing patterns by type of college or university

AFFILIATION	TYPE OF COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY				
	Public	Private	Large	Small	All
SAA	60%	40%	*65%	*33%	48%
Regional Archives	63%	48%	*70%	*39%	54%
ALA	44%	29%	41%	46%	42%
Regional Library	61%	50%	56%	56%	54%
ARMA	*11%	* 2%	12%	0%	6%
Regional RM	11%	0%	9%	0%	4%
OAH-AHA	29%	21%	30%	20%	24%
Regional History	60%	36%	58%	39%	47%
Oral History	5%	2%	5%	2%	3%
Regional Oral History	8%	2%	7%	2%	4%

**Figure 3.** Professional affiliation of staff by type of college or university

with 27 percent having two or more FTE paraprofessionals or students, compared with 14 percent for private institutions. Fewer than 25 percent of the small institutions have any such staff, while 66 percent of large institutions have at least one FTE paraprofessional or student. More than 70 percent of all institutions report no clerical staff, but 40 percent of public schools have at least one clerical employee in contrast with 17 percent at private institutions. Virtually no institutions have volunteers and fewer than 20 percent of all institutions have staff funded by grant money.

Membership in national historical, archival, library, and records management organizations provided some information on how the professional staffs of these archival repositories see themselves. Whether they are members of national, regional, state, or local organizations suggests the depth of commitment of professionals to archival and allied professional organizations. As can be seen in Figure 3, fewer than 50 percent of the institutions reported staff belonging to the Society of American Archivists, but of those with members 60 percent are from public institutions

and 40 percent are from private. By nearly a two to one ratio large institutions reported at least some SAA members when compared with small institutions. If institutions indicating no professional staff are eliminated, then the percentage of institutions with at least one SAA member increases to 67 percent. Although a somewhat larger number of institutions report staff belonging to less expensive regional, state, or local archival associations, the pattern between public and private institutions varies, with 63 percent of public and 48 percent of private belonging to such organizations. Nearly 60 percent of small institutions indicated no regional affiliation, but only half as many large institutions have no staff belonging to regional organizations. Again, for institutions with at least one professional employee the participation in regional archival organizations rises to 70 percent. As might be expected, the number of staff members belonging to library rather than archival organizations declines, with 42 percent of the institutions reporting American Library Association members, but nearly the same percentage belong to state and

regional library organizations as belong to archival organizations. More small institutions have ALA staff members, but for regional library association affiliation, the membership rate is the same. By a three to two ratio public schools have a larger percentage of ALA members than do private schools.

The only other sizable allied professional associations that include a significant number of archival staff are historical organizations. Nearly 25 percent of all institutions report members belonging to either the Organization of American Historians or the American Historical Association, or both. Regional historical association memberships are reported by 47 percent of all respondents. Again, public institutions tend to have more members belonging to OAH or AHA and more members of regional historical organizations. Large and small institutions divide in roughly the same proportion. Few institutions have staff belonging to the Association of Records Managers and Ad-

ministrators or its local affiliates. Even fewer have members belonging to the Oral History Association or regional or state oral history organizations. In all cases except archival organizations, eliminating institutions with no professional staff does not significantly affect the percentage of participation in allied organizations.

Professional association membership is one gauge of a college or university's archival program; so too is the level of staff education (Figure 4). Nearly 80 percent of professional staff at all institutions have some kind of advanced degree beyond the bachelor's degree. Staff at private institutions generally had more formal education than their public counterparts. The greatest number of staff across all categories have the Master of Library Science degree, followed by those having some other advanced degree, most often a Master of Arts degree in history. While it is understandable, given the complexity and variety of their institutional

LEVEL OF EDUCATION	TYPE OF COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY				
	Public	Private	Large	Small	All
Percent BA or BS	24%	18%	*23%	*16%	21%
Percent MLS	31%	38%	29%	41%	35%
Percent Other Advanced Degree	35%	25%	*31%	*27%	29%
Percent Ph.D	10%	20%	*17%	*10%	15%

Figure 4. Educational level of professional staff by type of college or university

TRAINING	TYPE OF COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY				
	Public	Private	Large	Small	All
NARS Institute	5%	3%	* 7%	*1%	8%
Course Work	7%	13%	*12%	*7%	20%
Workshop	11%	7%	15%	2%	17%
Combination of Above	3%	1%	4%	0%	4%

Figure 5. Non-degree training of professional staff by type of college or university

holdings, that large institutions should attract a greater percentage of staff holding the doctorate, it is surprising that private institutions hold a two to one edge over public institutions in percentage of staff with the Ph.D. Nearly 70 percent of all Canadian repositories require a bachelor's degree for professional staff, and almost 20 percent require a master's degree.<sup>14</sup> While this survey did not seek to determine the degree requirements for staff, it appears from an examination of announcements of position openings that an advanced degree, usually in library science or history, is becoming a standard requirement for professional positions.

Because no undergraduate major or advanced degree is awarded in archival administration, the level of formal education alone may not be an accurate measure of archival training. Participation in institutes, workshops, and courses provides important additional educational opportunities for archivists (Figure 5). Courses and workshops are the most frequent means of upgrading archival skills, but 80 percent of college and university archival staff have taken no graduate course work, and 75 percent have attended no institutes or workshops. Just as private institutions tend to have staff with more formal education, they also have a substantially larger percentage of staff with formal archival training. On the other hand, more staff at public institutions participate in workshops than do their counterparts at private colleges and universities. Across all categories the staff of large institutions participate in educational programs in much greater numbers than do those of small repositories. The Canadian survey indicates a strong demand by small repositories for basic manuals and texts,

followed by regional workshops and internships as the most helpful training for beginning professionals or those with archival duties.<sup>15</sup> The sample of college and university archival personnel in the United States suggests the same may be true for small archives in this country.

The level of participation in professional organizations and educational attainment reflect the quality of institutional staff, but support for that staff is a significant measure of an institution's commitment to a viable archival program. One yardstick is institutional support for expenses associated with attendance at professional meetings (Figure 6). Unfortunately, 37 percent of all institutions provide no financial reimbursement for staff to attend such meetings. Among those institutions that provide at least some support, however, public institutions (78 percent) lead private ones (51 percent). Fifty-three percent of small, versus 20 percent of large, institutions pay no expenses whatsoever. One-third of small institutions, compared with two-thirds of large institutions, pay more than \$100 per year for travel. Average reimbursement for public and private institutions that *do* provide some financial assistance is nearly \$200 per person. Sixty percent of those private institutions provide \$200 or less; 70 percent of the public ones supply \$200 or less.

As another way to gauge this support, the questionnaire sought to determine what percentage of an employee's expenses are covered by the institution. For the 55 percent of respondents who answered this question, the average reimbursement per person is nearly 33 percent; half the institutions pay none of the costs. Of those institutions that report that they reimburse at least some portion of the expenses, half of the

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 43.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., pp. 44-45, 55-56.

TRAVEL	TYPE OF COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY									
	Public		Private		Large		Small		All	
	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mean	Median
Dollars	*\$154	\$125	*\$97	\$10	*\$170	\$100	*\$96	\$50	*\$122	\$50

Figure 6. Support for professional association meetings by type of college or university

CATEGORY	TYPE OF COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY									
	Public		Private		Large		Small		All	
	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mean	Median
Holdings Cu. Ft.	2,036	804	2,945	1,000	2,957	1,000	938	633	1,959	836
Stack Capacity Cu. Ft.	3,037	945	2,371	836	3,878	1,000	1,421	704	2,665	850
Percent Stacks Filled	70%	80%	77%	80%	73%	80%	72%	80%	73%	80%
Unprocessed Cu. Ft.	521	197	595	50	520	210	630	37	561	96
Percent Unprocessed Accessions	32%	21%	32%	21%	29%	20%	37%	26%	32%	20%
Percent Non. C & U	36%	7%	25%	5%	38%	31%	25%	5%	30%	5%

Figure 7. Capacity and holdings by type of college or university

public schools cover at least 75 percent of expenses, while half the private cover 80 percent of expenses. This seems to contradict the pattern of relatively greater support by public than by private institutions, but the small number of responses suggests any such conclusion is highly tentative.

In addition to data on personnel, information on size and composition of holdings gives an indication of the dimensions of institutional programs (Figure 7). The grossest measure of a repository's holdings is cubic feet of processed and unprocessed collections. Holdings vary from 3 to 25,000 cubic feet, with an average of slightly less than 2,000 cubic feet. Nearly 60 percent, however, report holdings of less than 1,000 cubic feet. The Canadian survey conducted in August 1978 provides information on all types of archival repositories. The average size of Cana-

dian holdings is slightly more than half the average size of holdings for college and university repositories in the United States. Half have holdings of less than 100 cubic feet.<sup>16</sup>

Total stack capacity varied from 36 cubic feet to 28,000 cubic feet with an average across all institutions of 2,665 cubic feet, compared with slightly more than 4,000 for all Canadian institutions. The median for U.S. colleges and universities, however, is 850 cubic feet compared with 555 for Canadian repositories.<sup>17</sup> Nearly half of the U.S. repositories note a capacity of less than 1,000 cubic feet while slightly more than half (not necessarily the same institutions) report holdings of less than that amount. While private institutions average a considerably smaller capacity than public ones, their median capacity is only 100 cubic feet smaller. Half of all respondents report that more than 80

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 35.



percent of their available stack space is filled; 15 percent have used 100 percent of stack space.

Size of holdings is important, but the amount of those holdings that are unprocessed makes access, retrieval, and patron use difficult. To determine exactly how great a problem is posed by unprocessed collections, institutions were queried about their processing backlog. There appeared to be little difference between public or private institutions and the size of their unprocessed backlog. The average is 560 cubic feet of material, but more than half report less than 100 feet of unprocessed accessions. Average size of the backlogs for public and private is about the same, but small institutions have a much greater percentage of unprocessed records than do large institutions (37 percent versus 29 percent).

Confusion over the definition of college and university archives persists. Some college and university archives may be responsible only for the official records of the institution; others are charged with collecting material, such as papers and records of faculty, students, and alumni, to supplement the official record; still others may collect material on a specific subject, geographic region, or time period not directly related to the university. All types of materials, however, may be called the institution's archives. What does a typical college or university archives generally collect? To the question "Does your archives collect material other than university archives and the papers of those directly related to the institution?" 60 percent of both public and private institutions answer "yes." On the related question "What percentage of your archives' manuscript holdings are non-C and U related?" the average response is 30 percent, but because of the large number of those reporting no such records, the median

response is only slightly more than 5 percent. While the median percentage is nearly the same for both public and private institutions, a much larger percentage of the holdings of public institutions were non-college or -university related. For both public and private institutions responding they have non-college or -university holdings, half report that such records comprise 50 percent of their total holdings.

The range of material and the percentage of institutions that collect non-official records is given in Figure 8. In nearly every category a greater proportion of large or public than small or private institutions collect these materials. The "other" category includes architectural drawings and blueprints, news clippings about the institution, and local history manuscripts. None of these "other" items appears to be related to size or type of institution.

While many archives may retain extraneous material among their collections, they may not have specific responsibility for collecting it. Thus the question was asked not merely if an archives has certain material among its collections, but if it is charged with collecting such material (Figure 9). Although 87 percent of all institutions, for instance, are responsible for collecting iconographic material, only 66 percent are responsible for exhibition. While there appears to be virtually no difference between public and private or large and small institutions on collecting iconographic material, private institutions have greater responsibility for creating and maintaining exhibitions. Only 31 percent of all institutions have responsibility for oral history programs.

What is the relation, if any, between college and university archives and records management on campuses (Figure 10)? Nearly 60 percent of all institutions report no records management

TYPE OF MATERIAL	TYPE OF COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY				
	Public	Private	Large	Small	All
Iconographic Material	95%	89%	93%	90%	91%
Sound Recordings	60%	70%	72%	62%	66%
Campus Publications	100%	93%	98%	96%	96%
Memorabilia	84%	89%	81%	91%	87%
Faculty Papers	87%	78%	88%	80%	82%
Student Organizations	92%	82%	93%	78%	86%
Alumni Papers	70%	70%	72%	71%	70%
Administrative Papers	82%	86%	86%	82%	84%

**Figure 8.** Kinds of material collected by type of college or university

RESPONSIBILITY	TYPE OF COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY				
	Public	Private	Large	Small	All
Iconography	87%	87%	88%	86%	87%
Exhibits	58%	71%	63%	69%	66%
Oral History	37%	26%	39%	24%	31%

**Figure 9.** Responsibility for function by type of college or university

RECORDS MANAGEMENT	TYPE OF COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY				
	Public	Private	Large	Small	All
As Part of Archives	*18%	*27%	23%	19%	23%
Separate	*35%	* 4%	28%	10%	18%
No	48%	69%	49%	71%	60%

**Figure 10.** Records management responsibility by type of college or university



program of any kind on their campuses, but only 48 percent of public institutions report this to be the case, compared to nearly 70 percent for private schools. Of those institutions having a records management program, 56 percent report that it is administered as part of the archives and is under the supervision of the archivist; the remainder state that it is separately administered. But the difference between public and private is noteworthy; only 33 percent of the records management programs in public institutions are administered as part of the archives, but 87 percent of the private institutions combine the functions under the archivist. This may be explained by the fact that public institutions must maintain more control over the preservation and destruction of their records because they fall under the provisions of state public records laws and, therefore, they empower a records officer to supervise disposition. Furthermore, private institutions may not need to make a distinction between the two functions, as they generally have fewer records to manage. Approximately two-thirds of small institutions that have a records management system administer it through the archives, but only 45 percent of large institutions combine the functions.

Patron access to the archives is obviously an important key to the use of the holdings. Even for repositories regularly open for research, however, the number of inquiries is not great. Approximately 25 percent of all institutions are open fewer than 20 hours per week, and the same percentage are open more than 40 hours per week (Figure 11). If those repositories that are not open regularly for patrons are eliminated, then 40 hours per week becomes the average. The average number of inquiries per week is eighteen, but half the

institutions report eight or fewer inquiries—by mail, by telephone, or in person. Public institutions average a greater number of inquiries than private ones, and large institutions average more than twice that of small institutions. Canadian institutions average 32 inquiries per week, but the median is five per week.<sup>18</sup>

Average and median patron usage over a two-year period is reflected in Figure 12. The major differences appear to be that users from the student body and the community comprise a larger proportion of patrons at public institutions than at private. Administrative use, as well as use by patrons from outside the community, is heavier at private than at public institutions. Large institutions have a higher percentage of student users than do small institutions.

As use of collections increases, so too do security problems. The researchers, therefore, asked a series of questions concerning basic security and safety procedures enforced at colleges and universities. Almost no institution reports having an unsupervised reading or search room. Fully 40 percent, however, have no separate search room at all, with 46 percent of private institutions reporting no search room for patrons. Those having a supervised search room usually are open 40 hours per week. In fact institutions that are open to the public for an average of 40 hours per week also take the precaution to have their search rooms supervised during the same period.

The question of access to the stacks also suggests how tight security may be at archival repositories (Figure 14). Surprisingly, only 78 percent have closed stacks. Whether or not stacks are open to the patrons, 86 percent (78 percent for public and 91 percent for private) of all institutions report that entrances to the

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 37.

	TYPE OF COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY									
	Public		Private		Large		Small		All	
	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mean	Median
Hours Open to Public	21	21	14	.3	38	40	36	38	17	4
Average Inquiries	20	9	16	6	*25	11	*11	5	18	8

Figure 11. Patron hours and inquiries per week by type of college or university

PATRON USAGE	TYPE OF COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY									
	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mean	Median
Students	*41%	26%	*27%	20%	*40%	30%	*28%	20%	33%	25%
Faculty	19%	10%	13%	10%	17%	10%	15%	10%	16%	10%
Administrators	*13%	6.5%	*25%	15%	17%	10%	20%	10%	20%	10%
Other Staff	7%	2.2%	10%	4.5%	8%	5%	9%	2%	9%	2.4%
Community	*17%	5.4%	*7%	3.5%	11%	5%	13%	5%	12%	5%
Outside Patrons	*5%	3%	*15%	10%	*8%	5%	*15%	10%	11%	5%
Others	0%	0%	3%	.35%	0%	.1%	3%	.5%	2%	.2%

Figure 12. Type of patron by type of college or university

FIRE PROTECTION	TYPE OF COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY				
	Public	Private	Large	Small	All
None	5%	10%	5%	9%	8%
Smoke Detectors	36%	29%	37%	27%	32%
Sprinkler System	15%	17%	19%	11%	17%
Chemical System	5%	4%	7%	2%	4%
Fire Extinguisher	87%	73%	86%	77%	79%
Other	13%	2%	9%	5%	7%

Figure 13. Kinds of fire protection devices by type of college or university

ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROLS	TYPE OF COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY				
	Public	Private	Large	Small	All
Closed Stacks	76%	80%	84%	75%	78%
Doors Locked	78%	91%	84%	86%	86%
Regulated Temperature	40%	44%	41%	44%	43%
Regulated Humidity	32%	31%	29%	35%	32%
Filtered Flourescent	39%	33%	34%	38%	36%
No Windows/Covered	79%	74%	81%	68%	75%

Figure 14. Security and environmental controls by type of college or university

	TYPE OF COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY				
	Public	Private	Large	Small	All
Physically in Library	92%	87%	88%	96%	89%
Reports in Library	90%	77%	81%	86%	82%
Should Report in Library	76%	86%	77%	90%	82%

Figure 15. Physical and administrative location by type of college or university

stacks area could be locked. Size does not appear to be a factor. Beyond that, only 8 percent of all respondents note having any special security equipment, such as alarm systems for all doors, ultrasonic alarms, infrared detectors, elevator locks, cameras, burglar alarms connected to campus security, or special keys separate from library or building master keys. Only 5 percent of public institutions, and 10 percent of private, report such equipment. The survey suggests that perhaps private institutions are slightly more security-conscious than public ones.

Adequate safety features may ultimately be more important than security systems in protecting collections. Figure 13 indicates available fire protection equipment. Public and large institutions generally have more adequate fire protection than archives at private or small campuses. Almost all institutions report that their fire protection systems are checked at least once a year and nearly 60 percent report semi-

annual checks. Heat detection systems and fire hoses are the most frequently mentioned items other than those listed in the table.

For the ongoing conservation of the collections (Figure 14), 43 percent of all institutions can regulate the temperature in their stacks separately from the rest of the building or search room and offices, and just over 30 percent can regulate the humidity. A surprisingly large number of institutions report having filtered fluorescent lighting, as opposed to incandescent or unfiltered fluorescent lighting. Although 44 percent have no windows in their stacks, more than half of those that do, report covered windows. Size of institution is not a factor. Only a very small percentage—nearly the same for public and private schools—have temperature and humidity control, filtered lighting, and no windows (or covered windows) in their stacks.

Nine of every 10 archival repositories are located in college and university libraries, although a somewhat lower

percentage report to the library administration (Figure 15). A small number of archivists report to the campus president and fewer still to the history department. Nearly the same percentage of all respondents not only notes that the archives reports within the library but also thinks that is ideally where it *should* report: 82 percent. Private or small institutions agreed with that statement in greater numbers than public or large institutions. Such a high correlation between what is and what people think ought to be suggests that most archivists feel comfortable with the present arrangement (or perhaps they are unwilling to hazard a contrary opinion that might be reviewed by their supervisors).

Access to archival material is frequently a function of the sophistication of the finding aid used and the physical

location of the material in the storage area (Figure 16). To determine what kind of finding aids are most frequently used by archivists at the record group level, the researchers asked respondents to check one of four categories for their principal finding aid. About half of both public and private institutions rely on a card catalog, but a substantially greater number of small than large institutions tend to use it as their principal finding aid. Close to half of the large institutions use container lists, but only one of five small institutions report such finding aids. Fifteen percent of the surveyed institutions have item-based finding aids, but this research tool is more than twice as prevalent in private institutions and is used almost three times as often in small than in large institutions. More than two-thirds of all institutions arrange processed records on shelves ac-

PRINCIPAL FINDING AID	TYPE OF COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY				
	Public	Private	Large	Small	All
Card Catalog	49%	52%	44%	60%	51%
Computer	6%	0%	5%	0%	3%
Container	36%	29%	44%	19%	32%
Item	9%	19%	8%	22%	15%
Physical Arrangement on Shelf	64%	70%	67%	69%	68%

Figure 16. Principal finding aid by type of college or university

TYPE OF COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY									
Public		Private		Large		Small		All	
Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mean	Median
*\$30,996	\$23,500	*\$13,321	\$4,000	*\$35,472	\$21,050	*\$7,915	\$3,967	\$21,006	\$7,500

Figure 17. Annual budget by type of college or university

according to the classification scheme of the repository, leaving space on the shelves for additions to ongoing series.

Archival budgets, including personnel, supplies, expenses, and capital, vary widely with an annual average for all institutions of \$21,000, but with half of the institutions indicating \$7,500 or less (Figure 17). The difference in funding between public and private institutions is significant, with large, public institutions tending to have much larger budgets than small, private ones. The average for large and small are \$35,000 and \$8,000, respectively.

Allocation of staff time among a number of archival functions is noted in Figure 18. It appears that while for all institutions about 30 percent of staff time is spent on arrangement and description of records, archivists at private institutions spend considerably more time in reference work and somewhat more time in preservation and conservation activities than their counterparts at public colleges or universities. At public institutions, on the other hand, staff members spend more time on appraisal and acquisition of records, records management, supervision of staff, and professional activities. Staff at small institutions spend more time on reference, but less on supervision and professional activities. A scattering of respondents also mention responsibility for exhibitions and displays, oral history, fund raising, and teaching. Canadian institutions spend 20 percent of their time dealing with research visits and 17 percent of their time dealing with external inquiries.<sup>19</sup>

Finally, to determine archivists' perceptions of their own problems, respondents were asked to rank a number of items according to their needs

(Figure 19). The greatest problem for all institutions combined is lack of space, followed closely by the backlog of unprocessed acquisitions. Canadian archivists also list additional space and equipment as their first priority.<sup>20</sup> Adequate staff training and expertise is ranked first by fewer than 20 percent. Encouraging greater use of the collections apparently is of limited concern to archivists, but private and large institutions are relatively more concerned with this than public or small colleges or universities. The Canadian survey may provide an explanation: "some archives deliberately avoid giving their services wide publicity for fear the public demand would overwhelm their limited resources. Most archives are stretched to the limit now".<sup>21</sup> Other concerns include preservation and conservation, equipment, and institutional commitment to maintaining an archives.

From this review of responses to the survey, what generalizations can be made about college and university archives? A significant determinant is whether the archival repository is at a public or private institution. A typical archives at a public university was established within the last 15 years on a campus whose 1979-80 enrollment was nearly 11,000 students. The archives is staffed by one full-time professional and a few student assistants and has no volunteers or personnel on grant money, but perhaps has a part-time clerical worker. The professional probably is a member of the Society of American Archivists and a regional archival association and might also be a member of a regional library or historical association. The professional has a master's degree either in library science or history and has taken an archival course as well as

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 35.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 41.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 38.

FUNCTION	TYPE OF COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY									
	Public		Private		Large		Small		All	
	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mean	Median
Reference	*19%	15%	*34%	26%	*22%	20%	*30%	25%	27%	21%
Appraisal	16%	11%	10%	10%	12%	10%	15%	10%	13%	10%
Arrangement	30%	30%	30%	30%	32%	30%	29%	26%	30%	30%
Records Management	10%	4%	8%	2%	11%	5%	8%	1%	9%	3%
Preservation	5%	2%	7%	5%	5%	2%	7%	5%	6%	5%
Supervision	* 9%	6%	* 5%	1%	* 9%	6%	* 4%	0%	6%	5%
Professional	6%	4%	4%	0%	* 7%	5%	* 3%	0%	5%	3%
Other	5%	0%	2%	0%	3%	0%	4%	1%	3%	1%

Figure 18. Staff functions by type of college or university

NEED	TYPE OF COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY				
	Public	Private	Large	Small	All
Reduce Backlog	35%	31%	27%	40%	33%
Increase Space	33%	38%	30%	44%	36%
Increase Staff	17%	20%	18%	18%	19%
Increase Use	3%	9%	11%	3%	6%

Figure 19. Staff priority by type of college or university

attended archival workshops. Reimbursement to attend professional meetings averages about \$160 a year or less than 50 percent of the archivist's expenses. The entire annual budget including salaries, supplies, and expenses, but excluding overhead and indirect costs, is \$23,500.

The archives at this typical public university has slightly less than 1,000 cubic feet of records occupying 80 percent of the available stack space. About 20 percent of the holdings are unprocessed. Included among material housed in the archives are iconography, sound recordings, campus publications, memorabilia, faculty papers, student organization records, alumni papers, and administrative records of the institution. There is an even chance that the archives also is responsible in part for records management. The archives is

supervised and open to patrons 40 hours a week with students, faculty, community users, and administrators comprising the major users—in that order. Nine inquiries are handled per week. Fire extinguishers and smoke detectors provide the major protection against fire hazards. Neither the temperature nor humidity in the stacks can be controlled by the archivist. Lighting is unfiltered and there are no windows in the stacks. The archives is physically housed in, and administratively reports within, the library. The primary finding aid is a card catalog and material is arranged in the stacks according to a specific classification scheme. The staff spends most of its time on arrangement and description, reference, and appraisal, and it considers the size of the unprocessed backlog and lack of space to be its main problems.

Archives at private colleges and universities differ in some important respects from those at public institutions. The typical archives at a private institution was established more than 25 years ago on a campus whose 1979-80 enrollment was 3,000 students. While the archives may not be staffed by a full-time professional, the person in charge of the archives on a part-time basis has more formal education than his public counterpart, but less archival training. The archivist belongs to both regional archival and library associations, but probably not to the national associations, with less than \$100 supplied by the institution for attendance at professional meetings. The budget for the archives is slightly more than \$4,000.

While the size of holdings, percentage of unprocessed backlog, available stack space, and kinds of material collected do not differ from those of public institutions, the ranking of patron usage is different, with students and administrators making nearly equal use of the collections, followed by outside patrons and faculty. Only six inquiries a week are received. Environmental and safety controls are generally comparable with those of public institutions, and, as with public ones, the archives in private institutions report to, and are housed within, the library. The private institution has no records management pro-

gram. The staff spends most of its time on the same major activities as its public counterparts, but a somewhat larger proportion of time on reference. On other matters private institutions appear to share the same general characteristics as public institutions.

The current status of college and university archives in the United States aptly parallels the reported status of Canadian archival repositories. Even though that survey asked somewhat different questions, there is enough overlap in responses to both surveys to suggest common concerns. The first is that "Archives do not appear to rank highly in the priorities of their sponsoring bodies . . . [F]ew . . . have realized the significant cultural and administrative advantages of a fully functioning archival program. In Universities . . . archives are seldom seen as central to their operating objectives or to their efficient management." Perhaps the most alarming for the present and the immediate future are the Canadians' findings, implicitly suggested in their report on college and university archives, that "virtually all archives are sensitive to budget cuts and if such cuts should be implemented, we suspect that some repositories would have no alternative but to close".<sup>22</sup> No college or university archives, public or private, large or small, is immune from this threat.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., pp. 58-59.