

Commentaries & Case Studies

DEAN DeBOLT and JOEL WURL, *Editors*

The Commentaries and Case Studies department is a forum for sharply focused archival topics that may not require full-length articles. Commentaries and Case Studies articles generally take the form of analyses of archivists' experiences implementing archival principles and techniques within specific institutional settings, or short discussions of common theoretical, methodological, or professional issues. Members of the Society and others knowledgeable in areas of archival interest are encouraged to submit papers for consideration. Papers should be sent to Managing Editor, *The American Archivist*, Society of American Archivists, 600 S. Federal, Suite 504, Chicago, IL 60605.

L'il Abner Revisited: The Archives of Appalachia and Regional Multicultural Education

ELLEN GARRISON

For several decades archivists have argued for outreach programs primarily because of the benefits which accrue to the repository, while others have scoffed at outreach efforts as undignified self-promotion, incompatible with the loftier mission of archives. The experience of the Archives of Appalachia, however, illustrates a different and more compelling rationale for outreach programs: their impact on the society which archivists seek to serve. The archives' programs involving school curriculum, which utilize archival resources to promote cultural self-esteem, have had a broad social effect in a region where loss of cultural

identity is a significant educational problem.

Founded in 1978, the Archives of Appalachia at East Tennessee State University was built on numerous field recordings, interviews, and documents collected by university faculty in the preceding twenty years. In a short time it began to attract scholarly researchers from as far away as the University of Edinburgh. While the works produced by these scholars enhanced the understanding of Appalachian culture, they offered little of use to public school teachers. Yet the archives, inspired by the belief of its creator Dr. Arthur H. DeRosier that "before

Ellen Garrison, director of the Archives of Appalachia from 1982 to 1986, is now archivist of the Center for Popular Music at Middle Tennessee State University. This article is based on a paper delivered at the 1986 annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists.

people can appreciate others, they must first learn to appreciate themselves," had a commitment to supporting the multicultural education programs then taking root in the region's elementary and secondary schools.

Multicultural education, which first appeared in black and Chicano ghetto schools in the 1960s, grew out of studies that demonstrated a significant relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement. These schools, whose students were handicapped from birth with a negative self-image born of ethnic stereotyping, found that programs stressing cultural heritage not only served to develop a sense of belonging to a historical tradition, but also helped create a positive self-image for students and an environment in which learning was possible.

In 1978 Appalachia's children, too, suffered from the effects of generations of negative stereotyping. The well-documented shortcomings of the region's public schools—low achievement scores, lack of community support and a sound financial base, high drop-out rates—resulted in part from the distortion and perversion of Appalachia's proud cultural heritage by novelists, historians, photographers, sociologists, and "do-gooders" from nineteenth century missionaries to twentieth century Vista workers.

Consider, for example, Mary Nolle Murfree, one of the most popular writers of the 1880s, whose stories painted a romantic portrait of the picturesque Highlander, strong, proud, independent, but in his childlike innocence helpless to cope with the modern world. She was succeeded in the early twentieth century by sociologists, folklorists, and countless settlement school workers, and folk festival organizers who ennobled and perpetuated only the quaint in native customs and crafts. Other authors like Arnold Toynbee saw in the mountaineer not a

"noble savage" but a throw-back, an eerie reminder of the country's recent past and of the tenuousness of the new industrial culture.

What nineteenth century novelists and social scientists had begun on a small scale became, with the advent of the mass media in the mid-twentieth century, a national industry. No stock character has so persisted in movies, comic strips, radio, and television as the "hillbilly," alternately the object of derision and fear. One has only to think of L'il Abner and Snuffy Smith, or Marjorie Main as Ma Kettle and Fess Parker as Davy Crockett, "Deliverance," and "The Dukes of Hazard" to conjure an image designed to elicit laughter and scorn.

The same stereotype has all too often carried over into the Appalachian educational system, which has been historically rooted in missionary zeal to uplift and reform the poor, ignorant mountaineer. With their self-esteem already damaged by popular stereotypes perpetuated by the mass media, Appalachian students have frequently encountered in the region's schools the same condemnation of their culture and lifestyle. Thus for many of these children, the school environment has been not only alien but also hostile.

Multicultural education holds the promise of building bridges rather than barriers between Appalachia and the classroom. The Archives of Appalachia, as part of its commitment to serve the region's people, embarked soon after its creation on programs to support multicultural education by making its resources available for classroom use.

The first step was the creation of slide/tape programs examining not only various aspects of Appalachian culture, but also the complex relationship between the region and the larger world. These programs neither glorify nor denigrate Appalachia, but rather analyze the roots of local traditions and values and the adap-

tation—and sometimes exploitation—of the region's lifestyle.

"Hands All Around," for example, begins with the European origins of quilting; expands to show the role of quilting in the practical, aesthetic, and social lives of Appalachian women; and concludes with comments on the relationship between the national revival of quilting and the current interest in ecology and recycling, values long cherished by Appalachians.

"Country Music in the Tri-Cities" traces the evolution of the Appalachian musical tradition into today's billion dollar country music industry, which was born in near-by Bristol, Tennessee. Three programs—"Long Steel Rail," "Harvesting the Hardwoods," and "Come All Ye Coal Miners"—explore the personal, social, and economic impact, both positive and negative, of the development of a modern transportation system and the exploitation of the region's natural resources.

Other programs examine, through interviews and photographs, the evolution of two local communities, one a mining town founded in the late eighteenth century that has survived repeated "boom and bust" cycles and has now become the site of a toxic waste dump, the other a late nineteenth century railhead that has become the center of the country's forty-fourth largest metropolitan statistical area. The stories of the two communities, told by both long-term residents and recent immigrants, demonstrate the viability and adaptability of the region's lifestyle.

To date, these programs have been seen by over three thousand elementary, high school, and college students in twenty-six schools, as well as by numerous civic clubs, senior citizens centers, and home demonstration circles. To fa-

cilitate their integration into Appalachian studies units, the archives in 1981-1982 developed teaching packets for each program that include hands-on classroom activities and suggestions for individual and group projects along with study questions and bibliographies.

These packets also help develop skills in using documentary source material. Students viewing "Harvesting the Hardwoods," for example, are asked to write captions for six photographs from the program as a preview exercise and later, to assume they are one of the individuals portrayed in the program and write a letter to a relative either encouraging or discouraging him from moving to a lumber camp.

In the summer of 1983, these programs and packets became the nucleus of the archives' day-long presentation at the Appalachian Consortium's Southern Highland Institutes for Educators held on four college campuses in the region. Each institute offered twenty-five local teachers an opportunity to spend two weeks studying Appalachian history and culture and planning curriculum and lesson plans to integrate multicultural education into their own classrooms. The archives has remained in touch with many of these teachers and has been invited to conduct in-service programs in five local systems thanks to these contacts.

So ripples from the archives' efforts to support Appalachian multicultural education continue to spread. Ultimate success of these efforts cannot yet be measured, but initial results indicate that both the archives and the regional populace have benefitted. Through outreach programs, documentary resources have been used to heal the wounds of generations of stereotypes, helping the region's youth not only to build but also to control a better future.

Primary Sources and Senior Citizens in the Classroom

PATRICIA L. ADAMS

Archivists, historians, museum educators, and teachers have encouraged the use of primary sources in the elementary and secondary schools and have put together facsimiles of archival documents for classroom instruction. The aims and goals of these facsimile units are similar, whether produced by a state archives, a historical society, a school district, or even a business archives. They share an assumption that standard, textbook history is dull and lifeless and needs the supplement of primary source documents. The units' main goal, therefore, is to teach students how to analyze and interpret historical documents. Most importantly, producers of facsimile units hope to instill in students an appreciation of history on a personal level. Most focus on local history or on national historical events and periods. Facsimile packets usually include background historical information for the teachers, suggested readings and special projects, vocabulary lists, and questions that require analysis of the documents.

One educational project, "Past and Future Coming Together," combined the use of primary sources with the use of senior citizen volunteers in the classroom to provide that personal view of history. The project grew out of a collaborative oral history project begun in 1984 by a local community arts council, a group of senior citizens, the Office of Volunteer Services of the St. Louis city schools, and three fifth grade classes. Because of the success of this project, the Office of Volunteer Services applied for and received a

grant in 1985 from the Missouri Committee for the Humanities (MCH) to implement a pilot project on using seniors in classrooms, combined with producing lesson plans on national and St. Louis history.

The project generated ten units of written materials that were linked to the curriculum objectives of the city's schools in social studies and language arts for grades five through eight. The units presented national historical trends in the context of local history and used the life experiences of senior citizens from the community to enhance the material. Teachers and seniors attended workshops designed to develop specific skills for application in the classroom, one of which dealt with using primary sources in the classroom.

The major premise behind the development of the project was that national historical trends are evident in local history, and individuals who have experienced the effects of these trends and events can make history meaningful and vivid to students in a way that textbooks never can. By sharing their memories and experiences with the students, seniors would act as primary sources, illustrating the effects of history on the daily life of ordinary people. The publication "Past and Future Coming Together" (St. Louis Public Schools, Office of Volunteer Services, 1986) identifies five aims for the written curriculum units: 1) enabling students to recognize the relationship between textbook history and the daily events and experiences that af-

**Patricia L. Adams was formerly archivist of the St. Louis Art Museum and is now associate director of the Western Historical Manuscript Collection at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. She would like to thank Sheila Onuska, project director for "Past and Future Coming Together," and Katharine Corbett and Mary Seematter, consultants from the Missouri Historical Society, for their insights and comments. This article is a revised version of a paper presented at the meetings of the Midwest Archival Conference, October 1986, Hudson, Wisconsin.*

fect their own and others' lives; 2) prompting seniors to place their lives into a larger historical framework; 3) developing the practice of the humanities-related skills of inquiry, analysis, writing, and critical thinking and listening; 4) promoting intergenerational communication; 5) providing background information and activities to help seniors and teachers integrate the sharing of life experiences with curriculum objectives.

Ten topics were chosen for the project: "schooling" (education), "getting around" (transportation), "working" (labor movement), "shopping" (economics), "hanging out" (recreation), "getting well/staying well" (health), "celebrating" (religion and rituals), "living and loving" (family), "connecting with history," and "going to meet the future." The topics were selected because they were a common part of daily life, regardless of age, sex, ethnic background, or education. Also, they reflected the experiences and imaginations of students in the fifth through eighth grades.

Each unit had a specific activity requiring a humanities skill. The special activities required students to listen and think critically, examine and interpret primary sources, use library resources, compare and contrast the past with the present, and organize and communicate what they had learned. Students interviewed seniors about education in the "old days" for the schooling unit, an exercise requiring interactive and writing skills. To develop map reading skills, the transportation unit required students to plot their leisure time activities on a map of the city and to indicate if they walked, rode a bike, took public transportation, or used an automobile. In the economic unit, students were given copies of undated ads from the 1940s reflecting the prices and availability of goods during

World War II. As the documents were not dated and did not refer to the war, the students had to analyze them and determine their context.

The written materials guided the teacher and students through each of the units with questions, suggestions, and ideas, and included background information to give the seniors a historical context for their experiences. For example, the labor unit began by asking teachers and seniors to familiarize themselves with the background information, a summary of labor legislation passed since the 1930s. Questions at the end of the unit were designed to remind the seniors and teachers of all aspects of their own work experiences.

The first activity in the labor unit directed students to contrast current help wanted ads with those from a local 1935 newspaper. Students compared the number and types of jobs available, wages, qualifications, benefits, and job titles that appeared in one paper but not the other. Class discussion concerning the Depression followed, and teachers asked students for the most striking differences between the current and fifty-year-old ads. Teachers made sure the students were aware of how earlier jobs were specified by gender, age, race, and marital status and how regulations governing minimum wages and number of hours worked had changed.

After the discussion, students prepared questions to use in oral histories with the seniors focusing on work experiences in the past fifty years. The seniors gathered personal documents and artifacts to take to the oral history interview, such as pay stubs, news clippings, company newsletters, union cards, certificates, name tags, photos, or tools of their trade.

The next activity was an assembly line where one group of students collectively

made paper airplanes, and another group made them individually. Students compared their experiences and products as entrepreneurs versus factory workers and shared their conclusions with the seniors. At the end of the unit students determined what the most important changes in work had been over the last fifty years.

The use of primary source material was an integral part of the "Past and Future" program. Because the teachers and seniors had little or no experience with primary sources, they attended a workshop, led by the author, on identifying and interpreting primary sources. They learned about the types of primary sources available in their homes, archives, libraries, and historical societies that would help them discuss the changes in daily life.

Teachers and seniors were shown documents and artifacts that complemented the curriculum units. For the schooling unit they compared a parochial elementary school report card from 1957 and a public high school report card from 1968 and pointed out the differences in subjects, types of characteristics graded (such as church attendance, neatness, absences), and handwritten versus computer printed cards. They listened to an oral history tape of a woman describing her quarantine during a polio epidemic during the 1930s and contrasted that with an immunization card from the 1960s which recorded both polio shots and oral vaccine. For the recreation unit they examined photos of dances, bowling, parties, and summer camps. To show how individual lives connect with history, they listened to a vivid entry from a pacifist's diary dated 9 December 1941, which described her fears that Japanese planes would fly over St. Louis, and that the FBI would arrest her for her beliefs. The seniors and teachers

nodded their heads in recognition as they scrutinized the materials, commented on their own experiences, and laughed over old photos.

Seven classrooms and ten senior citizens participated in the project during the 1985–1986 school year. As a requirement of the MCH grant, the project issued a final report, which included all curriculum units and lesson plans. The project is under review by the St. Louis Public Schools for possible continuation.

In evaluating "Past and Future Coming Together," the project staff reached several conclusions. The supplemental written materials—questions, teacher's instructions, etc.—did not reflect what actually happened in the classrooms. These materials are an ideal, and do not themselves teach, as was hoped. Although the lesson plans were structured, teachers needed more direction in using them, especially for activities involving primary sources. Most teachers did not have the analytical skills with primary sources the project assumed they would have. Nor were the seniors sophisticated in analyzing primary sources. One workshop was not enough to develop this skill, nor were the guidelines in the lesson plans. Teachers needed to be led through each document used in the classroom.

The problems indicated several areas of improvement. An additional workshop on using the lesson plans could be added for both seniors and teachers or teachers might be required to write lesson plans of their own. Teachers and seniors need to work together more closely; unfortunately the teachers often regarded the time when seniors were in the classroom as free time for themselves. These solutions would require more coordination and communication between the project staff, teachers, and seniors. The lesson learned from the first year is that the interaction between all

three groups needs to be as structured as the written lesson plans.

In spite of problems, there were successes. Students did learn some St. Louis history, and they gained an awareness of primary sources and how they are used to write and interpret history. Teachers reported that students enjoyed the seniors and benefited from the seniors' experiences. The project expanded the students', teachers', and seniors' perceptions of what history really is.

The "Past and Future" project raises concerns for all those involved in producing facsimile packets or doing outreach to promote the use of primary sources in the classroom. Mass-produced mail order facsimile packets assume that teachers will follow the instructions and students will gain an appreciation of primary sources; this cannot be assumed. The skills of analyzing and interpreting primary sources are not easily learned by reading a set of guidelines. Archivists need to work closely

with historians, museum educators, and teachers by providing workshops, seminars, and manuals, such as Kathleen Roe's *Teaching with Historical Records*,¹ on how to incorporate primary sources into curricula. Further, facsimiles do not provide the same tactile and historical experiences as originals and may seem just like dull, lifeless textbooks to students.

The teachers in the "Past and Future" project agreed that seniors enhanced the primary sources they brought in and those used in facsimile form. Since not every classroom can have seniors bring in primary sources, perhaps more consideration should be given to taking students to the sources themselves—to the archives. Not only will students get to study the "real" thing, they will learn what archives are and the importance of what archivists do. Indeed, an appreciation of archives at an early age might manifest itself as taxpayer or donor support in adulthood.

¹Albany, N.Y.: Office of Cultural Education, State Archives, 1981.

Bibliographic Access to Archival Literature

MALVINA B. BECHOR

One of the archival profession's most serious problems is the difficulty practitioners have in getting timely and effective access to archival literature. As in other fields, in recent years there has been a great increase in the number of journal articles, monographs, and reports produced, but there has not been a corresponding increase in effective finding aids to obtain access to these materials efficiently. The problem is especially acute in areas of rapid change, such as automation and conservation, where timely access to current materials is really needed. There have been recent efforts in this direction by NAGARA, the National Archives, and the Society of American Archivists, but there are still no plans for guides with the timeliness and comprehensiveness of those for allied professions such as in the library field or the historian's *America: History and Life*.

No guide equivalent to *Library Literature* or *Index to Legal Periodicals* gives current and comprehensive indexing of archival periodical articles, and it is often difficult to track down useful information in the form of reports or catalogs put out by various archival institutions. *Planning for the Archival Profession*, a report issued in 1986 by the SAA Task Force on Goals and Priorities, suggests that archivists "develop a continuing program to

issue annotated bibliographies on archives management to inform practitioners of advances in the profession" and that they "encourage the inclusion of this information in automated data bases such as ERIC [Educational Resources Information Center]."¹

Some archival journal articles are indexed or abstracted in such sources as *Library Literature* or *America: History and Life*; however, these indexes tend to survey periodicals from a library or historical perspective. For example, the 1985 edition of the *List of Periodicals . . . Surveyed for America: History and Life and Historical Abstracts* states: "Each journal is surveyed for articles on the United States and Canada for *America: History and Life* and for the history of the rest of the world for *Historical Abstracts*."² The benefits to archivists of the analysis of archival journals by librarians or historians is thus indirect and somewhat marginal, as they are not being surveyed with the needs of the archival profession in mind.

In addition to the lack of a comprehensive guide to archival periodicals published by the archival profession, journals published by archivists often lack adequate indexing for specific titles. *The American Archivist* has cumulative indexes for volumes 1–20, 1938–1957, and volumes 21–30, 1958–1967, but none has

¹*Planning for the Archival Profession: A Report of the SAA Task Force on Goals and Priorities* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1986), 21.

²*List of Periodicals (revised 1985) Surveyed for America: History and Life and Historical Abstracts* (Santa Clara, Cal: ABC Clio, 1985), 3.

The *American Archivist* is indexed in *America: History and Life* (from 1954) as well as in *Library Literature*. Other periodicals of archival interest indexed by *America: History and Life* include *American Jewish Archives* (1954–), *Archives and Manuscripts* (1963–), *History News* (1963–76), *Prologue* (1969–), *Provenance* (1983–), and several foreign archival journals.

been published since, nor are there current plans to compile one. There are annual indexes by author and title for volumes 1–8, 1938–1945, and an annual index by subject, author, and title (integrated in one file) began with volume 45, 1982. There are no annual indexes for the intervening years.

There is a similar lack of adequate indexing for the journals of regional archival associations. *Provenance* (formerly *Georgia Archive*), which is published by the Society of Georgia Archivists, contains no annual indexes. There is an index on microfilm covering volumes 1–5, 1972–1977, which was done as a project by a graduate library school student. According to Sheryl Vogt, *Provenance* editor, there are plans to do a similar index on microfilm for volumes 6–10, 1978–1983, but there are currently no indexes available after 1977.

Prologue: Journal of the National Archives contains in the fourth quarterly issue an annual index by subject, author, and title, and there is a cumulative index for the first ten years, 1969–1978, on microfilm. While there are no plans to do any further cumulations, an automated bibliography citing all publications related to the National Archives and its holdings is in preparation and will later be updated.

In 1943 the *American Archivist* began publishing an annual bibliography on archival writings prepared by the National Archives staff. It generally appeared once a year into the early 1980s and resumed again in 1986. The bibliographies include various types of writing on archives, both monographic and serial. The original intent was to have rather comprehensive coverage. The introduction for “Writings on Archives and Manuscripts, July 1942–

June 1943” reads: This bibliography “represents an attempt to assemble for convenient reference a record of the majority of publications relating to archives and manuscripts that were issued during that period stated above.”³ These bibliographies became more selective with time. The one for 1969, issued in volume 34, number 3, July 1971, notes: “This selective bibliography comprises titles published during the calendar year indicated, with the customary addition of some titles issued, but not examined, earlier.”⁴

For many years the coverage remained relatively timely. In the October issue of each year, beginning with volume 6 in 1943, coverage included materials published from July of the previous year through June of the current year. For example, the October 1943 issue included “Writings on Archives and Manuscripts, July 1942–June 1943.” Gradually, the bibliographies became less current as well as less comprehensive. No bibliography was published in the 1957 volume (volume 20), and in the 1958 volume (volume 21) coverage was for writings from June 1956–May 1957. “Writings on Archives, Historical Manuscripts, and Current Records: 1978” appeared in the summer of 1980 (volume 43, number 3) and was the last bibliography issued in the *American Archivist* preceding the compilation of 1983 writings printed in the summer 1986 issue. A separately published bibliography compiled by Patricia A. Andrews and Bettye J. Grier, entitled *Writings on Archives, Historical Manuscripts, and Current Records, 1979–1982*, was published by NARA in 1985.⁵

The *American Archivist* has also published bibliographies on specific subjects from time to time. Examples include a

³*American Archivist* 6 (October 1943): 273.

⁴*American Archivist* 34 (July 1971): 288.

⁵Patricia A. Andrews and Bettye J. Grier, comps., *Writings on Archives, Historical Manuscripts, and Current Records, 1979–1982* (Washington, D.C.: National Archives, 1985).

bibliography on college and university archives by Helen Chatfield in the January 1965 issue, a bibliography by the SAA Committee on Records Management in the July 1973 issue, and Julia Marks Young's "Annotated Bibliography on Appraisal" in the spring 1985 issue.

The National Archives staff, which collects in its library many publications of interest to the archival profession as a whole, has compiled other bibliographies in addition to the annual bibliography in the *American Archivist*. The intent in writing these bibliographies is often to serve the needs of the National Archives, but because of its large holdings and central position among American archives, its bibliographies tend to be of interest to a wider audience. An automated bibliography citing all publications related to the National Archives and its holdings, including monographs, periodicals, unpublished research papers, and finding aids—about 2,300 in all from 1934 to 1986—is in preparation. It will include writings for, by, and about the National Archives and will incorporate items listed in Frank Evans' 1971 bibliography (and, presumably, the 1975 edition).⁶

The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) also has published a number of bibliographies relating to archival issues. These of course include information on many foreign as well as United States archives. Of special interest are *Writings on Archives Published by and with the Assistance of Unesco: A RAMP (Records and Archives Management Program) Study and Archives Journals: A Study of Their Coverage by Primary and Secondary Sources. Writings on Archives . . .* was prepared

in 1981 by Frank Evans, and "includes monographs, treatises, special studies, and journal articles, as well as unrestricted field mission reports and documents in Unesco's Working Series—published between 1951–1982." The work on archives journals, also a RAMP study, was carried out by Brenda White of Capital Planning Information under contract with the International Council on Archives between September 1979 and January 1980. It includes "a list of journals on archives administration and records management currently published in the world, and with an indication of which are, and which are not being abstracted" and "proposals, including financial implications, for providing abstracting services for such publications as are now excluded or inadequately covered."⁸ The list is comprised of only about one hundred journals published in various countries, so it is far from complete.

The compiler concluded that the International Council on Archives should undertake any compilation of a list of journals on, or relevant to, archives management, and that there should be "a network of contributing abstractors in various parts of the world who will systematically scan agreed sectors of the journal literature and contribute abstracts of articles relevant to archives." She also noted that "secondary sources in related subject areas are not covering archives journals to any significant or useful extent; they are, however, abstracting articles on archives from journals in librarianship and information science."⁹ The *American Archivist* was the only U.S. journal covered in this study.

⁶Frank Evans, *Modern Archives and Manuscripts: A Select Bibliography* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1975).

⁷Frank B. Evans, *Writings on Archives Published by and with the Assistance of Unesco: A RAMP Study* (Paris: Unesco, 1983) (PG1-83/WS/5), preface.

⁸International Council on Archives, *Archives Journals: A Study of Their Coverage by Primary and Secondary Sources* (Paris: Unesco, 1981) (PG1/81/WS/10), 2.

⁹ICA, *Archives Journals*, 35, 32.

A promising development for archivists trying to keep abreast of recent developments in their field is the establishment of information clearinghouses. These information centers can compensate to some extent for the lack of current bibliographies, indexes, and abstracts. They provide a dissemination point for information gathered informally at conferences or workshops or knowledge regarding work-in-progress reports or in-house projects.

Recently-formed clearinghouses serving particular areas of the archival profession include the Records Administration Information Center and the SAA clearinghouse for its Automated Archival Information Program. NARA's Office of Records Administration opened its Records Administration Information Center (RAIC) on 2 January 1986 to serve as a clearinghouse for information about records management concerns, primarily for federal employees. Its services are, however, also available to state and local government and professional organizations. RAIC operations are on a relatively small scale while the level of interest and types of questions are being evaluated.

The Society of American Archivists, under a two-year grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, began an Automated Archival Information Program in July 1985 that included a clearinghouse as one of its principal programs. The clearinghouse is intended to "compile and disseminate information about specific hardware and software currently in use by archival repositories, archival automation efforts, training opportunities, and a bibliography of recent articles about automation that would be useful to archivists."¹⁰

Other such specialized clearinghouses are available, but none currently serves the archival profession as a whole with quick access to current archival writings and new developments in the archival field. In recognition of the need of the American archival community for a central, expedient source for pertinent information or for news of what their colleagues in other archives around the country are doing, the National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators (NAGARA), under a National Historical Publications and Records Commission grant, in January 1985 began a study of the information needs of the nation's records community. Among the recommendations of the final report, *Information Resources for Archivists and Record Administrators: A Report and Recommendations*, prepared by Consulting Archivist Victoria Irons Walch was the establishment of an information center. NAGARA received a supplemental grant to continue its feasibility study of an archival information clearinghouse and hold a conference to plan implementation of a clearinghouse facility. The report also suggested that the National Archives Library, rather than the proposed information center, serve as a central national depository for printed materials related to archival issues, an arrangement analogous to the depository function the Library of Congress performs for published materials. Walch noted, however, that "both NARA as an institution and its individual staff members have had a consistently difficult time understanding and responding to the needs of the rest of the archival community whose programs operate on a much smaller scale."¹¹ Some staff education at NARA might be necessary before

¹⁰Victoria Irons Walch, *Information Resources for Archivists and Records Administrators: A Report and Recommendations* (Albany, N.Y.: NAGARA: 1987), 34.

¹¹Ibid., 27.

a greatly expanded role for its library would be feasible. The Library of Congress is more conscious of its central role in the library community than NARA seems to be of its position in the archival profession, though NARA has recently stated as one of its goals the greater dissemination of information on its research.

A major problem now plaguing the archival field is that people either do not know where to find the needed information or must contact several sources before they get it.

The possibility of an expanded role for ERIC in providing better bibliographic access to archival literature was noted both in *Planning for the Archival Profession* and in the NAGARA study. Walch writes: "While there is a widespread misconception among archivists that archives and records-related documents are not welcome in ERIC, the [Information Resources] clearinghouse acquisitions director is actually quite eager to have its coverage of the records community's products increase. An informal scan of the Information Resources Clearinghouse entries in [*Resources in Education*] for the last four years turned up several important archival documents, but they represent only a fraction of those produced by archivists that meet the criteria for inclusion."¹² ERIC interprets "education" very broadly, and their Information Resources (IR) Clearinghouse at Syracuse University welcomes archives and records-related materials.

Because of the small size of the archival profession, commercial publishers do

not find it worthwhile to compile an index such as *Library Literature* for archivists; ERIC, which has a federally-funded automated data base, could be a viable alternative. ERIC officials have expressed an interest in indexing archival journals and conference papers and in making arrangements with professional archival associations to receive their publications. ERIC publishes abstracts of a wide variety of documents, with subject and name indexes, in *RIE: Resources in Education*, as well as guides to the literature and annotated bibliographies on topics of current interest. The cost for photocopying by ERIC is far lower than that of the National Archives or other archival depositories because of their huge volume. If an archival clearinghouse is established at NARA as suggested in NAGARA's study, perhaps an arrangement could be made for photocopying to be done through ERIC.

The establishment of a national information center at NARA and greater utilization of ERIC each hold considerable potential for serving archival information needs. Regional and national associations of archivists would have to inform their members through such means as newsletters and professional meetings of the existence of these centralized information resources and encourage their use of and contributions to them. Such a combination of cooperative efforts could be a major breakthrough in gaining better access to and control of archival literature and other information of importance to the American archival community.

¹²Ibid., 10.