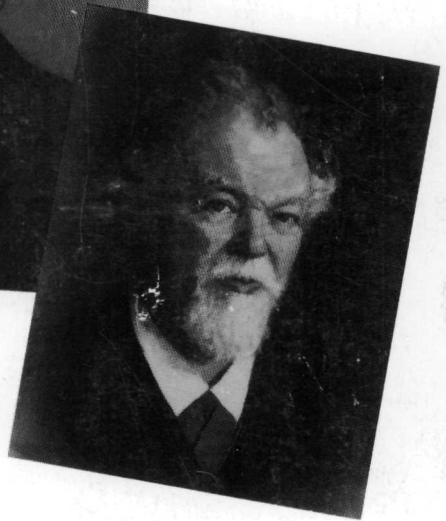


# The American Archivist

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## The American Archivist

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**Cover note:** *The Dutch archivists, (from left to right), Samuel Muller (1842–1922), J. A. Feith (–1913), and Robert Fruin (1857–1935) are internationally renowned for authoring **Handleiding voor het ordenen en beschrijven van archieven** (Manual for the arrangement and description of archives, 1898), which was commissioned by the newly founded (1891) Society of Dutch Archivists. The manual has been translated into German, Italian, French, English, and Portuguese. An article in *International Scene* discusses archival education in the land of these men. Photographs of the portraits of Muller and Fruin are courtesy of Stichting Iconographisch Bureau; the photograph of the portrait of Feith is courtesy of Rijksarchief in Groningen.*

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## From the Editor:

JULIA MARKS YOUNG

A journal issue that successfully focuses on one topic or theme often comes together naturally, almost serendipitously. It is the direct byproduct of heightened and concentrated scrutiny which a profession gives to a particularly controversial, essential, or rapidly developing issue or concern. So it is with this issue of the *American Archivist*, which focuses on archival education.

It has been fifty years since Ernst Posner taught the first graduate archival course in the United States at Columbia University in 1938. Although numerous authors have since written about archival education, there has never been an issue of the *American Archivist* devoted to the topic.

The articles that follow are not intended to present a comprehensive account of archival education, but rather to articulate and call to mind some of the many challenges and issues comprising the profession's ongoing effort to define, refine, and improve the preappointment and postappointment education of American archivists. These include the curriculum and structure of a

graduate degree program in archival science, the advantages and roles of full-time archival faculty, the development of educational opportunities in previously ignored fields such as management, the development of courses that focus on a fundamental archival function such as reference, ways in which professional associations—both national and regional—can better meet archivists' educational needs, archival training for public historians, and the marketplace for educated archivists. As American archivists strive to strengthen archival education, it is beneficial to examine the educational programs in other nations. Articles in International Scene provide views of education in Spain, the Netherlands, Italy, and France. And, finally, this issue appropriately includes the 1988 "Society of American Archivists Guidelines for Graduate Archival Education Programs," recently revised by the Committee on Education and Professional Development and approved by Council.

# The Forum

## To the Editor:

Admiration and thanks are due to Bruce W. Dearstyne for his copiously documented and perceptive article, "What Is the *Use* of Archives? A Challenge for the Profession" (*American Archivist* 50 [Winter 1987]: 76–87), and for his concept of the "Age of Archival Analysis" (p. 77).

In answer to Dearstyne's question as to what difference research in archives makes in the solution of practical problems, let me cite two random instances gleaned from the *New York Times*.

On Thursday, 15 October 1987 (p. A6) appeared an article headlined, "U.S., With U.N. Files, Tracks Down Nazi Suspect." In addition to discussing the Nazi suspect, the article notes divergent views as to the desirability of providing full access to the archives of the United Nations War Crimes Commission.

"Was Columbus a Whiner? You Could Look It Up," declared an article (p. A4) in the *New York Times* of 13 October 1987. The article dealt with the forty million documents comprising the Archive of the Indies in Seville, Spain. Information from the Archive was responsible for helping Mel Fisher (the treasure hunter) become rich. He located the Spanish galleon, *Nuestra Señora de Atocha*, which sank in 1622 with a cargo worth millions of dollars.

For his in-depth discussion of the fundamental questions about the relationship between archivists and researchers, we are

indeed indebted to Dearstyne.

This reader, however, has serious reservations about relying too heavily on the advice of researchers in the field in making decisions on discarding materials (pp. 85–86). Ruth W. Helmuth's concept of the "faith factor" applies here. She uses the term on the President's Page of the *American Archivist* (44 [Summer 1981]: 285) in her discussion of user studies and of the variegated steps involved in archival searching. In coping with studies showing holdings not used, she would call upon a faith factor to preserve these little-used materials for their intrinsic value to an institution.

Brooklyn College in the 1980s provides a pertinent example. The college's fiftieth anniversary celebrations created a surge of interest in pictures, clippings, manuscripts, old books of poetry, and sermons hitherto little requested.

To what extent can archivists anticipate future research and/or specific questions? They can only acquire and preserve materials which will document their repositories' purpose and scope. These the archivist will transmit to posterity and fulfill a historic function of linking the past to the present and giving vibrancy to both.

ANTOINETTE CIOLLI

*Retired,*

*Brooklyn College (CUNY)*

## To the Editor:

One of the difficulties of teaching archives-related subjects is the almost defensive posture one takes about the difficulties of access to archival literature. Library students in particular, used to a general abundance of and indexes to their literature, are appalled at the machinations necessary to gain access to our professional writings in order to write inclusive and intelligent research papers. Many students wonder if we are a separate, organized profession at all. Malvina Bechor's article, "Bibliographic Access to Archival Literature" (50 [Spring 1987]), helps to make the gap in our in-

dexing and literature more understandable, while offering concrete advice on bibliographic access. Her article is now required reading in my class. Thanks for making it available.

MEGAN SNIFFIN-MARINOFF  
*Simmons College*

P.S. Might I also note a citation missing from her list? *The Craft of Public History* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1983) by David Trask and Robert Pomeroy III is useful as a general tool.

### Editorial Correction:

Nicholas Burckel was editor of the Reviews section of the Fall 1987 issue of the *American Archivist*. On both the inside front cover and page 600 of the issue, however, incoming editor Glen Gildemeister was listed as Reviews editor. Burckel ably served as the *American Archivist* Reviews editor for twelve issues of the journal, 1985–1987, and we acknowledge his contributions to the journal and apologize for the error. Gildemeister assumed the Reviews editorship beginning with the winter and spring issue 1988.