Nurturing Archival Education in the University

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Abstract: This article examines curriculum for graduate archival education in the university. In the light of the history of archival education and the development of archives in North America, the author advocates and defends the concept of an autonomous degree for archivists by evaluating the experience of the Master of Archival Studies Program at the University of British Columbia and by offering a philosophy of curricular development. The premise of his argument is that subjects long recognized as constituting a core of archival knowledge form the basis of the archival curriculum onto which knowledge of other disciplines may be grafted.

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IN HIS MEASURED ASSESSMENT of the archival profession in the United States in the mid 1980s, Richard Cox concludes that "archivists should strengthen their educational foundation, theory, and public profile by forming full master's-level archival administration programs."[1] One such program was established at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada in 1981. Elsewhere I have written about the origins and early aims of the program.[2] This article will evaluate the experience of the first seven years of the program in the light of enduring issues addressed in the literature on archival education and the current condition of archives in North America, and offer some reflection on the philosophy and practice of archival education.

The Most Vital Question

The celebrated Italian archivist Eugenio Casanova observed that "the question of training of the archivist is one of the most difficult that comes up. There is always the risk of demanding and doing too little or presenting exaggerated pretentions."[3] Indeed, no question is more important for any profession than the education of its members, for, however it is acquired, professional education fashions the outlook of practitioners and the image they present to society. Cox's plea for full master's level programs simply calls for archivists to join the ranks of many other professions which have found a place in the modern multiversity, where, as library educator Jesse H. Shera puts it, "the professional school must possess a program of study that has intellectual content, that presents a definite theoretical structure from which emerges a body of scholarship, and that is organized in a systematic way."[4] For at least three-quarters of a century, we have regularly heard appeals for university education of North American archivists, but, unlike other professions of comparable educational needs, archivists have not had a distinctive place created for them in the university to pursue the most vital activity of defining, refining, organizing, and disseminating a body of knowledge to would-be practitioners. This failure to penetrate the university is explained as much by persistent doubts which archivists and others hold about the very possibility of defining a body of professional knowledge of sufficient intellectual content and theoretical rigor to support creation of university programs, as it is by circumstances less amenable to the profession's control. The existence of these doubts is woof in the weave of the history of archival education in North America.

Reduced to its essence, the "vexed question"[5] of archival education involves a quest on the one hand to define the body of knowledge which archivists ought to possess and on the other to create the conditions under which they ought to acquire that knowledge. Putting the two together inevitably becomes, quite like archives work itself, a matter of theory and practice. Ideas about the conceptual orientation of archival education and the practical means of advancing it were imported to North America from Europe in conjunction with the concept of concentration of archives devoted

[1]Richard Cox, "Professionalism and Archivists in the United States," *American Archivist* 49 (Summer 1986): 244.

[2]Terry Eastwood, "The Origins and Aims of the Master of Archival Studies Program at the University of British Columbia," *Archivaria* 16 (Summer 1983): 35–52.

[3]Quoted by Ernst Posner, "European Experiences in Training Archivists," *American Archivist* 4 (January 1941): 26, n. 1.

[4]Jesse H. Shera, *The Foundations of Education for Librarianship* (New York: Becker and Hayes, 1972), 347. In what might be taken to be a considerable caution for archivists, Shera goes on in the next sentence to say: "All too often, regrettably, library education, from the days of Dewey, has not exhibited these characteristics, often not held them out as objectives, and the consequences for librarianship have been little short of disastrous."

[5]A phrase used in 1925 by British archivist Hubert Hall and quoted in Posner, "European Experiences," 26.

to support of historical research.[6] At the turn of this century, when few developed archival repositories existed in the United States and Canada, particularly government archives of the type created in Europe, and when the university training of North American historians was only beginning, promoters of archives began to voice concern about the training of the archivists who would staff the repositories which they so earnestly desired to bring into being and see grow.

From the outset, advocates of archivists' educational cause presumed that the formation of the profession would properly take place in the university. In a brief and often quoted statement made in 1909, Waldo Gifford Leland looked forward to the day "when courses will be given in our universities or in our library schools to prepare students for archival work."[7] Since Leland's time, the library school has evolved from its origins as a trade school outside the university to an autonomous place in the constellation of professional schools in the modern university, but the archival profession has neither followed the model of library science nor attached its studies firmly to the historical camp in the university.[8]

Part of the explanation for the failure of North American archivists to create a standard education for the profession comparable to that which has evolved in Europe and comparable to other professions is precisely that ideas about the education of archivists brought from Europe did not travel well to the pioneer archival environment of North America. This is not the occasion to go into the entire history of archival education, but it may serve present purposes to characterize the knowledge upon which, with variations according to circumstances, European archival education has been built. It is very much a business of building something of many parts. The substance of what might ideally be conceived of as integral to the making of the classical European archivist—the model for early North American ideas on archival education—may be broken down into four parts: historical knowledge including knowledge of the auxiliary sciences of history, legal or juridical knowledge, linguistic knowledge, and archival knowledge.

Historical knowledge, with rather less emphasis on the auxiliary sciences of history, is the requirement of archivists that has traveled best. Leland, who first visited European archives in 1907, advocated study of history, particularly the history of administration, for archivists, but did not think that American archivists would need "profound knowledge of chronology, diplomatics, and paleography."[9] Leland's vision did not begin to be realized for thirty years until the Society of American Archivists's first Committee on Training of Archivists recommended that archival training "might easily be grafted on to graduate instruction in American history" by having doctoral candidates write a thesis using archival sources to afford them "training in such problems of diplomatics and paleography as can be associated with American history," and having them take a course

[6]Ernst Posner, "Some Aspects of Archival Development Since the French Revolution," in *Archives and the Public Interest: Selected Essays of Ernst Posner,* ed. Kenneth Munden (Washington: Public Affairs Press, 1967), 25–27.

[7]Waldo Gifford Leland, "American Archival Problems," in *Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1909* (Washington, 1911), 348.

[8]For surveys of the early period in the development of library education, which in many ways is more applicable to the current situation of archives, see Sarah K. Vann, *Training for Librarianship before 1923: Education for Librarianship Prior to the Publication of Williamson's Report on Training for Library Service* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1961), and Carl White, *A Historical Introduction to Library Education: Problems and Progress to 1951* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1976).

[9]Leland, "American Archival Problems," 348; Rodney A. Ross,"Waldo Gifford Leland: Archivist by Association," *American Archivist* 46 (Summer 1983): 265.

"on the history of archives, and on archival practice past and present" combined with "a voluntary practicum."[10] It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the committee pointedly designed this first recommendation with the needs of the recently established National Archives of the United States and state government archives in mind. The first Archivist of the United States, R. W. D. Connor, who was a member of the committee, had the considerable problem of creating a staff of archivists comparable to those of national institutions in Europe in the absence of any scheme for their training. Like Connor, the committee members were all historians, who quite naturally and reasonably looked for a place for the training of archivists in conjunction with historical studies in the universities, which by the 1930s were producing a plentiful number of graduates with advanced degrees.[11]

The committee made a separate recommendation for archivists in smaller government archives for whom "two years of graduate work in history or political science" and "a selected course from the school of library instruction" was proposed. The committee entirely ignored archivists in the historical manuscripts tradition. Although a somewhat different scheme of education was conceived for the two types of government archivist, both would rely on historical study as the fundamental element of "a sound preparation for [their] archival careers."[12] In effect, the committee proposed that archivists of both types be *educated* in history and *trained* in their professional craft in part by university study and in part by apprenticeship. Ever since, archivists in North America have struggled with the apparently separate but complementary concepts of education and training, the former exclusively preappointment and the latter chiefly postappointment or somehow grafted on to preappointment education in another discipline. Self-contained programs of archival studies and archival schools such as developed in Europe did not emerge in the United States and Canada. For the past fifty years many archivists have been—not without reason—willing to accept the outcome and even make a virtue of what must have seemed to the SAA's committee to have been a necessity in 1938.[13]

The committee in effect judged the European notion of legal studies as an integral part of the intellectual making of archivists to be outdated. "It is the historical scholar, now equipped with technical archival training, who dominates the staffs of the best European archives."[14] In putting little emphasis on legal studies, the committee underplayed the concept of the legal and administrative basis of archives in favor of the scholarly justification for preservation of archives as the sources for the study of history. It also somewhat misrepresented the European situation. Even though legal or juridical studies began in the era before

[10]Samuel Flagg Bemis, "The Training of Archivists in the United States," *American Archivist* 2 (July 1939): 159–60.

[11]Donald R. McCoy, *The National Archives: America's Ministry of Documents, 1934–1968* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978), 38–44.

[12]Bemis, " The Training of Archivists," 159–60; cf., Jacqueline Goggin, "That We Shall Truly Deserve the Title of 'Profession': The Training and Education of Archivists, 1930–1960," *American Archivist* 47 (Summer 1984): 247.

[13]An eloquent example is Herman Kahn, "Some Comments on the Archival Vocation," *American Archivist* 34 (January 1971): 3–12. Samuel Rothstein, "A Forgotten Issue: Practice Work in American Library Education," in *Library Education: An International Survey*, ed. Larry Bone (Champaign: University of Illinois Graduate School of Library Science, 1968), 200, reveals that librarians moved from making virtue of necessity to almost total eclipse of practical work as part of library education in the university. Archivists might remember Kahn as they transcend his world—by preserving a strong element of experiential learning in archival education.

[14]Bemis, "The Training of Archivists," 157. He speaks also of how "historians began to supersede jurists" as archivists in the nineteenth century in Germany and of the "changing emphasis from a legal background to historical training after the fashion of European practice" (pp. 155 and 157).

the concentration of archives, they persist to this day as a fundamental element in the intellectual makeup of continental archivists.[15] Archivists' legal study is closely associated with their study of the history and administration of institutions, both government and otherwise. Pulling away from legal studies, which have no doubt been judged to have little application in the historical manuscripts tradition, seems to have caused the profession to neglect the history of institutions and administration as a specific study to be developed for archivists in the making.[16]

Knowledge of languages, a third substantive area in European archival training, has rarely been insisted upon for archivists in North America. Although the committee saw "competent knowledge of French and German" as "indispensable for adequate study of archival practice abroad,"[17] knowledge of languages other than English has rarely been justified for North American archivists, who have little need to read non-English documents. And such knowledge is usually acquired in preparatory education rather than as part of archival education. Even if recent patterns of immigration and growing sensitivity to the multilingual inheritance of North Americans suggests that archivists will be more likely to need knowledge of languages in the future, one may still agree with Ernst Poser that the uncomplicated linguistic nature of North American documents coupled with the apparent inapplicability of the auxiliary sciences of history made North American archivists a breed of lightfooted scouts as compared to the heavily armored knights which European archivists had become.[18]

The crux of the question is reached when we come to archival knowledge. Immediately a significant conceptual problem arises. Archivists, like all other professionals, rely on knowledge not entirely of their own creation. Discussion of the nature and scope of archival knowledge is no doubt perilously divorced from consideration of the other knowledge, much of it acquired in the course of their general education, which archivists must possess and which they use in the course of their work, but nonetheless such a body of knowledge must be conceived and characterized. Solon Buck characterized the archivist's knowledge as an "applied science" and, forty years ago, presented a good general account of the scope of a single introductory course for archivists.[19] In a course first offered at Columbia University in 1938-39 and the next year in tandem with Posner at American University, Buck responded positively to the injunction to work at grafting archival studies onto historical studies, and from 1941 Posner carried on the work alone.[20] There is little doubt that the experiment did not evolve as Leland predicted in 1909 or as Posner himself hoped it would, in large part

[15]Elio Lodolini, *Archivistica: principi e problemi*, 4th ed. (Milan: Franco Angeli, 1987), 243–45; Robert-Henri Bautier, "Les Archives," in *L'histoire et ses méthodes* (Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1961), 1120. A charming evocation of the origins, at least in writing, of the European juridical approach to archives is found in Lester Born, trans., "Baldassarre Bonifacio and His Essay De Achivis," *American Archivist* 4 (October 1941): 221–37. If American societies are not quite so juridical as European ones, they are litigious, which brings the law in the front door as it accompanies documents coming in the back door of archives.

[16]Gordon Dodds, "The Compleat Archivist," *Archivaria* 1 (Winter 1975–76): 84, alludes to this: "The archivist's almost unique position in the understanding and writing of administrative and institutional history requires quite naturally and easily a comfortable knowledge of law."

[17]Bemis, "The Training of Archivists," 159.

[18]Ernst Posner, "Archival Training in the United States," in *Archives and the Public Interest: Selected Essays of Ernst Posner,* 64.

[19]Solon Buck, "The Training of American Archivists," *American Archivist* 4 (April 1941): 85. The sentence in question is worth quoting in full: "It is an applied science rather than a pure science, of course, and like medical science, it is compounded of parts of many other sciences or fields of knowledge, together with certain principles and techniques derived from practical experience." We shall take issue only with the last phrase.

[20]Ibid., 84–90; Posner, "Archival Training, "65–69.

because events outside academia blunted it. As revealed by Posner in his account of training in the United States written in 1954, the National Archives evolved its own training scheme which ultimately resulted in the atrophy of the promising experiment at American University and its potential as a model for other universities. As Posner perceptively noted, the very success of the National Archives in appointing persons well educated in American history but not necessarily possessing any professional knowledge, none of which was required for appointment, and then training them as part of their civil service advancement led to the understandable conclusion, to which the National Archives has been wedded ever since, "that institutional training of a preappointment character seemed by no means a necessity for the successful dispatch of archival business."[21] In large measure, the National Archives's recipe of success has been emulated by government and other archives in Canada and the United States in the post-Second World War period.

Reviewing the situation in 1970, Frank Evans and Robert Warner reported that 86 percent of the archivists responding to a questionnaire revealed that they held an academic degree, and 64 percent held an advanced degree. Of those totals, nearly one-half had undergraduate degrees and almost two-thirds graduate degrees in history.[22] Despite that, Burke and Warner concluded that archivists' "record of professional education and training leaves much to be desired," for something less than one-half of the respondents had even a single course or any formal training in archives administration.[23] Clearly, either universities were not offering courses or, if they were offered, prospective archivists were not taking them, and evidently employers did not require them. The vision of almost every commentator on archival education seems not to have been realized as late as 1970. In fact, many North American archivists writing about the preparation and formation of archivists before 1970 stressed the need for practical training. Posner reacted sharply to the suggestion that the university study he was developing should, as state archivists advised, concentrate on the "more practical aspects of archival administration" at the expense of archival history and theory. He was convinced that theory "should constitute an important component of the archivist's intellectual armor."[24]

Posner's call for a measure of theory in archival education has found little sympathy among North American archivists. Frank Burke believes that no archival theory has been written in the United States and "little, if any, in the rest of the world." One recent commentator on the matter suggests that it is pretentious for archivists to speak of "high falutin' archival theory." John Roberts reduces the question to either one of historiography or procedures, thereby reserving to historical study everything which has intellectual substance and assigning the rest to the realm of technical matters. "Archivy is post-historiographi-

[21]Posner, "Archival Training," 63.

[22]Frank B. Evans and Robert M. Warner, "American Archivists and Their Society: A Composite View," *American Archivist* 34 (April 1971): 169. For comparable Canadian statistics compiled a decade later, see *Canadian Archives: Report to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada by the Consultative Group on Canadian Archives* (Ottawa: Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, 1980), 43–47. This visionary report has had untold effect on Canadian archives. Part of the story is told in Terry Eastwood, "Attempts at National Planning for Archives in Canada, 1975–1985," *Public Historian* 8 (Summer 1986): 74–91. How far and how fast Canadian archivists have come since 1945 may be seen by comparing recent statistics with a national study in the early 1950s that found that less than one-half the people doing archival work at the Public Archives of Canada had even a high school education (Canada, *Report of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences* [Ottawa, 1951], 238).

[23]Evans and Warner, "American Archivists," 169.

[24]Posner, "Archival Training," 66–67.

cal," he intones, and enjoins archivists to remain faithful and dependent servants of Clio and keep their place as technicians, albeit thoughtful ones.[25]

On the last score, Roberts writes, "there is plenty to think about, but little of it has to do with theory." Indeed there is plenty to think about, for Roberts himself makes a fundamental and pernicious error throughout his article. If theory is but extended exploration of the nature of things, then to begin by defining things by the uses to which they are put, which is nothing but the pragmatism this author seems to abhor in his fellow archivists, is nonsensical. To say that archives derive their definition and meaning from consideration of the historiographical uses to which they are put as sources of evidence of the past is to put the cart squarely before the horse. Anyone who thinks that historiography can be imported without modification into archival science might read German archivist Hans Booms's article on appraisal, in which he exposes the failure of just such an attempt in his examination of the history of the theory of appraisal in Germany, and in which he concludes that trying to gain "value standards for appraisal by constructing a futurology of potential issues in historical scholarship"—an idea often touted in North America—"has proven less effective for dealing with archival appraisal than that which relied upon the central value standard of the state." Burke and Roberts might be asked why Booms's article cannot be classed as a theoretical one in archival science.

Even F. Gerald Ham in his widely and justly acclaimed article makes it sound like archives are no more than sources for the study of history, things to be collected pursuant to as yet undefined criteria. Perhaps Ed Finnerty, Kurt Vonnegut's fictional character whom Ham adopts, is searching on the edge for his center, and perhaps archivists' answers will be found at our center and not on some fuzzy fringe. The problem would appear to be so widespread that, until archivists in the United States and Canada reorient themselves theoretically, put themselves upright, they are unlikely ever to see or believe that there is any intellectual substance to their profession worthy of study in the university. Ascribing to historiography all that is theoretical is both wrong and crippling to the intellectual development of archivists. When European historian-archivists created the kernel of archival theory in the last century, they created something new and distinct from historiography in its potential if not its larger purpose. That is an old story. It is how new disciplines arise. If archival theory springs from the rib of Clio, it now has a life of its own, one, alas, as Burke says, withered in the United States (and also in Canada) where archivists have wasted time and energy trying to deny it exists or can be developed. If librarians have been searching for a century for Shera's "definite theoretical structure," for as long archivists have had one on which to build. Only error of the first water prevents them intellectually and psychologically from seeing and doing that.[26]

It is one thing to say, as Burke does, that little or no archival theory exists, but quite another to say that none can exist. Burke is almost certainly correct to surmise that a place for the study of archival theory in academia is a precondition to its elucida-

[25]Frank Burke, "The Future Course of Archival Theory in the United States," *American Archivist* 44 (Winter 1981): 42; John W. Roberts, "Archival Theory: Much Ado About Shelving," *American Archivist* 50 (Winter 1987): 74, 70.

[26]Roberts, "Much Ado," 73; Hans Booms, "Society and the Formation of the Documentary Heritage: Issues in the Appraisal of Archival Sources," ed. and trans. Hermina Joldersma and Richard Klumpenhouwer, *Archivaria* 24 (Summer 1987): 92; F. Gerald Ham, "The Archival Edge," *American Archivist* 38 (January 1975): 5–13. For librarians' struggles, see Michael Buckland, *Library Services in Theory and Context* (New York: Pergamon, 1983).

tion and dissemination and that it will be closely linked with study of how we gain knowledge of the past, but the outcome will be a distinct epistemology of archives.[27] For evidence that the effort is possible, we might look to a recent work by Italian archival educator Elio Lodolini, which admirably traces the history of the theory of archival science, or put more simply, the theory of archival knowledge (the meaning of science originally being simply knowledge) from country to country the world over. As Roger Ellis and Michel Duchein have remarked in reviews of Lodolini's book, it is a substantial work of archival theory in its own right.[28] Certainly, Posner was correct that the history of archives is fertile ground for the development of theory, which he himself demonstrated in his study of ancient archives and which Burke rather overlooks when he says Posner produced no theoretical works. Burke dismisses the simplest characterization of theory as statements of some universality on which to base action in the field. His vision of an almost complete divorce of so-called pure theory from practice in the field misconstrues entirely how archival science has developed. It is not a question of creating rigid laws, which in any event do not exist even in the physical sciences, to explain reality, but rather a question of recognizing patterns in the generation and management of archives in any given legal and social reality and in any time. This involves something less than propounding a straitjacket for practitioners and something more than thoughtful professional planning or teasing out a few guiding principles. For archivists, it consists of adapting the knowledge of other scholarly disciplines, including history, to the study of the nature of archives and the methods of treating them.[29]

As to library science as a study for archivists and library schools as a location for the preparation of archivists, the outlook taken early in deliberations on archival education was very definite. While the SAA Committee on Training was quite prepared to see students aspiring to be archivists take an unspecified course in library science, it issued a stern warning against the danger of turning archives—and by implication archival education—over to librarians, who "tend to put emphasis upon cataloguing and administration, on mechanics rather than archival histology and the sacred *principe de provenance*, to which they are usually oblivious."[30] Following the European model, archival education was kept distinct from library education, but in the process archival education in North America was removed from the academic and epistemic realm and assigned to one which ever since has been preoccupied with rather arid notions of training. The emphasis was placed on knowledge other than professional knowledge and how it is generated and acquired. It is not surprising,

[27]Burke, "Archival Theory," 44–46, in which he is taken to support the overall argument of this essay, even if against his will.

[28]Elio Lodolini, *Archivistica: principi e problemi*; reviewed by Duchein in *La Gazette des archives* 128 (1985): 95–96 and by Ellis in *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 8 (October 1986): 151.

[29]In the preface to *Archives in the Ancient World* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972), Posner says: "This essay in archival history is not limited to the techniques required and used for the keeping of archives. Archives administration is so intimately connected with the governance of secular and religious affairs and with individual's conduct of business that it must be viewed within the context of cultures in which the archives originated and which now they help to bring back to life. An effort has been made, therefore, to picture archival developments against the background of the societies of which they were a part." Justly this is a theoretical approach. Richard Cox, "On the Value of Archival History in the United States," *Libraries and Culture* 23 (Spring 1988), observes: "Archival history is a gateway through which to examine some fundamental questions about the nature of records and information" (42). A kind of study of the epistemology of social history which might suggest paths of investigation to archival theorists is Christopher Lloyd, *Explanation in Social History* (Oxford, Eng.: B. Blackwell, 1986).

[30]Bemis, "The Training of Archivists," 157.

then, that archivists, like librarians, went through a stage in which people of the requisite background were found and trained by apprenticeship and study on the job.[31] As Posner explained in 1954, archivists have acquired knowledge of the theory, history, and practice of archives administration "on the job either by the method of learning the work by doing it or by reading professional literature or by taking courses available on the program of a local university or by a combination of these methods." If it generally has been agreed that archivists must have a "good general education and solid knowledge of American history," the nature and scope of the professional knowledge they must possess is still, as Posner judged more than thirty years ago, "by no means certain" in North America.[32]

Since 1954, the methods of acquiring professional knowledge which Posner described have flourished. It is no longer true, as Leland lamented, than anyone can be an archivist. Few people without at least one university degree are appointed to an archival position in a reputable repository in Canada or the United States. Single courses of the sort Buck outlined have proliferated in library schools and history departments. But the vital elements in the making of a profession are still missing: a standard means of guaranteeing that every archivist possesses the requisite professional knowledge and a standard setting for dissemination of that knowledge. The archival profession is, as Cox argues, still an occupation in the process of professionalization. Its goal will be reached only when archivists grasp firmer control over their domain, especially the intellectual domain of their formation. The effort to bring into being the "full masters-level" archival education programs which Cox calls for is absolutely vital to the advancement of the profession. If such programs can be successful, there finally will be a refutation of the often-held supposition that the archival field, even if combined with related areas of study, does not, in the words of the SAA Committee for the 1970s, "constitute a sufficient intellectual discipline to merit a separate degree program."[33]

The decision of the Committee for the 1970s to continue endorsing the tactic of grafting archival education onto master's or doctoral degrees in "the fields of history, library science, and social studies in general" is reflected in the 1977 SAA "Guidelines for a Graduate Minor or Concentration in Archival Education," which mandated the status quo in the name of gradualism towards a standard of education for the profession.[34] In the years since the 1977 guidelines, the question of education has invaded almost every facet of professional discourse, as may be best calibrated by attention to the desperate need for more and better education for archivists reflected in recent national, state, and provincial needs assessment studies in Canada and the United States.[35] And yet, as Margaret Child reveals in her analysis of state assessment reports, though there is a need for education "in virtually every aspect of archival management," almost all such education is "intended to perfect the skills of trained

[31]Vann, *Training for Librarianship before 1923*, 191, concludes that "it was a period of cautious but positive progress in the direction of professionalism." This might be taken to characterize the progress of archival training in the United States and Canada to this day.

[32]Posner, "Archival Training," 63.

[33]Philip P. Mason, "The Society of American Archivists in the Seventies: Report of the Committee for the 1970's," *American Archivist* 35 (April 1972): 210.

[34]*American Archivist* 41 (January 1978): 105–06.

[35]See, for example, New York State Historical Records Advisory Board, *Towards a Usable Past: Historical Records in the Empire State* (Albany, 1984), 59, and Alberta Archives Council, *Alberta's Archives: Needs Assessment and Planning Study Report* (Edmonton, 1988), 26–33. The national studies are Lisa Weber, ed., *Documenting America: Assessing the Condition of Historical Records in the States* (Atlanta: NASARA, 1984), 47–48, and *Canadian Archives*, 76–83.

archivists or to bring the performance of those who lack formal training up to a generally perceived standard of adequacy." Child found "little or no recognition of the fact that the competent archivist of the future might need skills, information, and perceptions different from the competent archivist of the past."[36] In short, if continuing education might be advanced by short courses and workshops, it seems hardly likely that such methods can both provide basic education and move archivists through changing times, let alone advance theory and practice. Because the predominant focus of much recent discussion and activity, including discussion of certification, has been on continuing and remedial education, the needs of people entering the profession now and who will enter it in the future have been neglected.

Whereas North American archivists, who derived their early intellectual outlook from admiring assessment of the education of their transatlantic colleagues, have failed to embrace and promote the idea of autonomous archival studies, in Europe "autonomous and self-contained programs of professional education can and do thrive," as William Orr concluded.[37] It is precisely the "self-contained" quality of European archival education which distinguishes it from that in North America, where archivists still try to fashion their professional education by grafting an outmoded notion of training onto education in other disciplines. In so doing, they miss the essence of the struggle European archivists have been engaged in for more than a century to identify their discipline and distinguish it from that of historians and librarians, the "archivists' war of independence," as Lodolini characterizes it.[38]

Justifications of the status quo on account of the diversity of North American archives and arguments for a melding of historical and library studies to educate archivists are not persuasive.[39] The same diversity has not prevented other professions from fashioning education to meet the manifold conditions in which practitioners must operate. Indeed, the essence of every profession is found in the application of its knowledge in diverse circumstances. Insistence upon training for a specific job stultifies the capacity for professional adaptability on which the field is increasingly coming to rely.

To argue for a reconciliation of historical and library studies and against autonomous archival education is, though superficially more sophisticated, also unconvincing. The proper education of archivists must be rooted in inquiry into the nature of archives as records and as institutions and of the archivist's role and function as preserver and communicator of archives and manager of institutions. Archivists' inquiry into the nature and administration of their materials

[36]Margaret Child, "Consultant Report: Statewide Functions and Services," in *Documenting America,* 47–48.

[37]William J. Orr, "Archival Training in Europe," *American Archivist* 38 (Winter 1981): 38. It is not a question, as Orr suggests it is (p. 39), of subordination or not of archival programs to other faculties. Archival studies cannot spring into the university all at once without a place to land. The important point is a measure of autonomy for the archivists who would instruct and articulate the curriculum, and this may be done best by creating a new degree wherever instruction for it is placed.

[38]Elio Lodolini, "La guerra d'indipendenza degli archivisti," *Archives et bibliothèques de Belgique* 57, 1 and 2 (1986): 269–93. Particularly fascinating is Lodolini's exploration of the ways in which librarians the world over classify knowledge of archives, a brilliant evocation of the confusion lying at the heart of attempts to incorporate archival knowledge in either historical or library science.

[39]For the former view, see for example, Ruth Helmuth, "Education for American Archivists: A View From the Trenches," *American Archivist* 44 (Fall 1981): 297. For the latter, see Lawrence J. McCrank, "Prospects for Integrating Historical and Information Studies in Archival Education," *American Archivist* 42 (October 1979): 443–55. McCrank attempts to suggest that a "dual degree" in history and library science somehow transforms the archives field from being outside the circle of historical and library study to somewhere inside it, although the precise place is never clear, except perhaps when he says that "the crucial decision is in the selection of a graduate program truly capable of an archives specialization" (453).

and institutions, though it will draw on knowledge of other disciplines, cannot be advanced from an amalgam of inquiry into history and library science, even if completed by a course or two on archives, because the essence of the matter will only be realized by giving archival studies a distinctive focus to create the archivist's own disciplined study. The knowledge which archivists need to do their job and on which their techniques are based must be distinctive because the nature of archives, a centuries-old form of documentation, is distinctive, and therefore archival education must be distinctive. Most insidious of all are arguments that archives—and therefore archivists as we have known them—will disappear or be fundamentally transformed into something else in the technological information age. Perhaps autonomous, self-contained archival education is needed above all to guard against just that event, to honor the accomplishments on which the profession in North America has been built and to foster protection of archives whose integrity is beleaguered more than ever in a modern world awash in documents and only too ready to think of information as but another consumer commodity.

Since the French Revolution, archivists as preservers and communicators of society's documentary memory consistently have allied themselves with historians who are interpreters and communicators of our political, social, economic, technological, and cultural experience. Calling for independent archival education does not call for archivists to sever "the umbilical cord that connects us with the mother body of the historical profession," to use Posner's words.[40] That connection is inextricably part of the exercise of archivists' duties. Indeed an important purpose of defining, refining, and disseminating a body of archival knowledge in the university is to strengthen archivists' connection with all manner of scholars who use archives. For once, Posner tripped up in his imagery. The fetal image is inappropriate. Archivists are not completely dependent on history or any other discipline. They are children and servants of many disciplines, and that is their glory, not their intellectual disability. Moreover, if archivists are the poorer for having no distinctive place in the university, so is the university the poorer for not having had a strong archival presence in the midst of its scholarly endeavors. Archivists will give in return to the university what they take from it.

Reflections on Seven Years

If there is a need for autonomous archival education, can such education be properly realized? Is the dream of a respectable place for archivists in the community of scholars merely one of Casanova's exaggerated pretensions? The seven years' experience of the Master of Archival Studies (MAS) program at the University of British Columbia may be regarded as a first test of archivists' capability of making their independent way in the university. And it is very much a test of archivists' collective capability, not merely of the particular individuals involved, because ultimately university study of archives relies heavily on what archivists in the field have accomplished in the way of scholarship.

The MAS program exists because of an act of faith, in the first instance on the part of the now retired director of the then School of Librarianship, Roy Stokes, who in the mid 1970s brought to the stage of open discussion his long-held idea of offering a program of studies specifically for archivists. The same act of faith was then made by colleagues primarily in the School and the Department of History to which Stokes immediately turned for support. Something of

[40]Ernst Posner, "What, Then, Is the American Archivist, This New Man?" *American Archivist* 20 (January 1957): 7.

these origins are revealed in an earlier article,[41] but one aspect of the developmental stage of the program in the university should be emphasized. It was recognized, as the calendar description of the program would later say, that the archival profession is only "beginning to develop in Canada" but "is closely linked with a growing emphasis on Canadian historical and literary studies."[42] Documents prepared to justify the need for the program took heed of a 1975 study which called for Canadian universities to develop programs of education for archivists as part of the effort to improve the preservation and availability of sources for Canadian studies generally.[43] Associating professional archival education with the areas of scholarship served by archives, however, did not prevent academic scrutinizers of the program from doubting that there were sufficient academic grounds—enough intellectual substance—on which to establish a graduate program. In the final stage of approval of the program, the university's Senate Curriculum Committee reporting on the program recommended that it *not* be approved. The senate rejected its committee's recommendation and took a chance in spite of the doubts expressed about the academic worthiness of the case for educating archivists in the university.[44]

There is little doubt that the establishment of the program coincided with a desire of Canadian archivists. In 1976 the Association of Canadian Archivists, founded only in 1975, called for "a master's degree in archival science" to be established in a university.[45] A national study of archives published in 1980 strongly argued that "the future development of the Canadian archival system depends on improved opportunities for training, education, and research in archival science" but that "current provisions for education of archivists in this country are inadequate: in comparison with any other profession, they are nonexistent." The study found that there was "a strong preference for a master's program in archival science" among heads of archival institutions over other educational alternatives, and that an initial program, wherever it was established, could probably meet the needs of the nation, whose archives would generate an estimated forty-five new positions over five years.[46] As it happens, the MAS program admitted thirty-eight students in its first five years.

For its part, the university recognized these propitious circumstances. As the calendar description of the program put it, "there is certain to be an increasing need for specialists in the field, not only because archival repositories themselves will need staffing . . . but because archivists are needed in many areas of activity," prime among them, it was noted, records management.[47] The program also aimed to serve the needs of government archives, librar-

[41]Eastwood, "Origins and Aims."

[42]This and other statements from the calendar remain unchanged since 1981. University of British Columbia, *Calendar, 74th Session, 1988–89* (Vancouver, 1988), 165.

[43]T. H. B. Symons, *To Know Ourselves: The Report of the Commission on Canadian Studies* (Ottawa: Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, 1975), vol. 2, 83.

[44]"Senate rejects advice, approves new program," *UBC reports*, 28 February 1979, p. 2; University of British Columbia, University Archives, Records of the Senate, Minutes, 14 February 1979. The chairman of the committee defended the recommendation on the grounds that approval of the MAS program would, though it formally satisfied university requirements, undermine the master's degree "credential," and that the courses in the proposed program were "not really graduate courses." In rebuttal, Stokes said that the sponsors of the proposal were aware that it would have to meet "high academic standards" or "the University would be vulnerable to the charge that it was doing nothing but educating expensively for unemployment." We work still to convince some people that the MAS is not a second class degree.

[45]"Association of Canadian Archivists: Guidelines Towards a Curriculum for Graduate Archival Training leading to a Master's Degree in Archival Sciences, 1976," published as Appendix 1 to Eastwood, "Origins and Aims," 44–51.

[46]*Canadian Archives*, 76, 79–80.

[47]*Calendar*, 165.

ies, and other institutions on a national scale. In spite of the increasing specialization of archives and records work, the program proposed a common education for students no matter in which area of the field they would ultimately find employment.

In 1981 the program as outlined in the calendar was but an empty vessel to be filled with two academic years of instruction culminating in a thesis. It was located in the School of Librarianship—since 1984 the School of Library, Archival and Information Studies—and jointly administered with the Department of History, which simply means that faculty members of the school and the department, which are both in the Faculty of Arts, participate in the processes of admission, teaching, supervising, and examining students and governance of the curriculum. Thus, the designers of the program obviously saw close links between archival studies and library science on the one hand and history on the other. Yet these links clearly have been realized less by having MAS students take courses in the two established disciplines than by placing the program in their ambience. Candidates for the MAS degree are required to take no library science courses and only one history course. At the inception, there were, and still are, four required elements augmented by electives. Students must take a core of archival studies courses (amounting to 35 percent of the total credits), complete a graduate-level course in Canadian history (10 percent), do a practicum (5 percent), and write a thesis (25 percent). In recognition of the interdisciplinary nature of archival studies, the remaining 30 percent was assigned to electives in any subjects taught in the university for which students are eligible, including, of course, offerings in library science and history.

To instruct the curriculum, the school was given one new faculty position to hire a person to chair a joint committee administering the program, teach some of the required archival studies courses, assist in the supervision of theses, and administer the practicum. The advertisement for the position called for a person with a graduate degree, experience in positions of increasing responsibility in the field, and success as a university teacher. I filled the position on 1 July 1981. Before coming to the university, I had been an archivist for eight years at the Provincial Archives of British Columbia, had been president of the Association of Canadian Archivists and actively involved in professional affairs, and had taught a course in archives administration for two years in the Department of History at Simon Fraser University.

From the outset, it was planned that other faculty members of both the school and the department, and visiting or sessional lecturers from the field, would take part in instruction of MAS students. Initially two courses were developed by the department exclusively for MAS students. Thus, since the inception of the program, at one time or another, three history faculty members have taught part or all of a required course in Canadian historiography and historical methods, and another an elective course in oral history and genealogy. A library science faculty member has taught a required course in archives and automation. The chief conservator at the university's Museum of Anthropology has taught a required course in preventive conservation of archival materials.[48] In addition, the school hired a full-time visiting professor for one or two terms every year from 1982–83 to 1986–87, to teach and assist in other aspects of the program, including selecting students for admission and supervising and examining theses. Finally, from the program's incep-

[48]The individuals involved are professors Roderick Barman, David Breen, Robert McDonald, and Peter Moogk in history; Professor Peter Simmons in library science; and Miriam Clavir in conservation.

tion, sessional lecturers from the field have taught courses each year.[49]

Over the course of the first years of the program, it was recognized that a second archival specialist was needed, but during that period the university experienced a severe reduction in its budget. On 1 July 1987, nevertheless, a second full-time archival professor, Luciana Duranti, joined the faculty of the school. This mixture of archival studies faculty and other full-time faculty with visiting and sessional lecturers from the field has brought a broad variety of expertise and perspectives to bear on instruction of students.

Candidates for admission to the program must possess a bachelor's degree in a relevant discipline with at least good second class standing (high B average) in the last two years of undergraduate study, promise of superior professional performance as attested by academic referees and a personal interview, and reading knowledge of a foreign language. The annual number of applicants has exceeded thirty every year except one, and in 1988 increased markedly to more than fifty. Applications are received from all regions of Canada, and from the United States and other countries. About 60 percent of the applicants reside in British Columbia at the time of application, although some have taken studies outside the province. On average, eight students have been admitted each year. Including the class of twelve to be admitted in September 1988, eight classes totalling sixty-four students have been admitted to the program. Thirty-nine have come from British Columbia (60 percent) and twenty-five from outside the province. Twelve have possessed a master's degree and one a doctoral degree upon admission, and two others had done graduate study with only a thesis to complete. Thirty-nine (60 percent) have majored in history in their first and/or subsequent degrees. Other fields represented are English (five); sociology/anthropology (four); Canadian studies (four); classics/Latin (three); two each from political science, history of art, and science; and one each from education, music, and radio and television arts. Forty-one women and twenty-three men have been admitted.

These figures reflect that the program, despite not being well known outside archival circles and not being well tested by the experience of graduates obtaining and accomplishing work in its early years, has been able to attract large numbers of very good applicants. Of those admitted, excluding the four who withdrew before completing the program, one in four has done previous graduate work, and all came with first class (A) or very high second class (B) averages in their previous degrees. The vast majority either hold at least one degree in history or a closely related discipline or bring knowledge of disciplines applicable to or needed as background for archives work. Because archivists may draw upon a wide range of knowledge, it is advantageous to be catholic about acceptable qualifying studies so long as students have a sound general knowledge of Canadian history and institutions.

As important as the academic attainments and abilities of candidates are in the process of admission, the personal qualities of applicants are also closely scrutinized. On the whole, students admitted to the program have carefully considered their choice of careers. Many have worked in an archival repository or used archives in their previous studies. By self-selection, they come dedicated to their studies and committed to a career as an archivist, and perhaps avoid, before starting, the pitfall described by one student in a dual history M.A. and M.L.S. program who spoke of being "caught in a no man's land, a void, between the two

[49]Visiting professors were Hugh Taylor (for four separate terms) and Lilly Koltun (for a calendar year). Sessional lecturers were Harry Chapin, Jerry Davison, and Reuben Ware.

professions."[50] Intuitive experience of eight years of admissions suggests that most applicants to the MAS program readily connect archives work with their interest in history, and they frequently see a promising field for exercise of their intellect. Working conditions and salary, though often investigated, seem to play a lesser part in their decision. The rising number of applicants would suggest that a distinctive professional program presenting the likelihood of a job at its completion is very attractive these days.

MAS graduates have had an excellent record of obtaining work in the field. Thirty-six students have completed course work up to April 1987; of these, twenty-two have now completed the thesis also. At the beginning of 1988, of these thirty-six, twenty-three held permanent positions in the fields of archives (nineteen) and records management (four), and twelve were working full-time on contract, usually of one year's duration. The other student has worked on a freelance basis since graduating. Whereas when the program began, some archivists expressed doubts about whether there would be enough jobs for these students, now, even as Canada has just moved from a lengthy period of economic recession which began in 1982, some privately express the view that there are not enough MAS graduates. Estimating a job market is almost impossible, but given the past success, the number admitted is being increased modestly.

As important as admissions and job placement are, the vital question is what students learn. The original curriculum has evolved in an ad hoc manner over the past seven years, and, with the advent of a second archival studies faculty member last year, will be thoroughly revised in the coming year. Slowly, the processes of defining and refining a curriculum unfolds. Nothing new has been invented; much that is familiar has been explored pedagogically.

The core of archival studies courses in the original design consisted of two academic-year-long (twenty-six weeks each) courses, Introduction to Archives and Advanced Archives (the one offered in the first year, the other in the second), supplemented by more specialized courses of thirteen weeks' duration in records management, automation, and preventive conservation.[51] At the outset, the introductory and advanced archival studies courses attempted to cover the field of professional knowledge in much the way Buck conceived it in 1938 or in Posner's terms of theory and practice in historical perspective. The introductory course concentrated on an exploration of the nature of archives and their arrangement, description, appraisal, accessibility and use, all laced with study of the historical development of archival institutions and practices in Canada and elsewhere, most particularly the United States because one of the chief sources of literature in English on archives is this journal and also because the border between our two countries has been no barrier to ideas which rule the creation, maintenance, and use of records and archives. The methods of instruction have varied. Lectures, seminars, visits to archival repositories, and academic or practical assignments were used to bring the world of archives' and archivists' practices alive for students and to prepare them for an extensive summer practicum. The limitations of a single course of twenty-six weeks treating such matters must be obvious. Much can be done but the pace inevitably becomes far too fast; therefore, at any number of critical junctures important matters are all too easily passed over superficially. Very early on it

[50]Quoted by Cox, "Professionalism and Archivists," 244.

[51]Eastwood, "Origins and Aims," gives the admission standards and an outline of the pattern of courses (pp. 51–52), and *Calendar*, a full description of all courses (p. 256). None of the required ones have changed since 1981.

became obvious to me as the instructor and to students that one course in the first year on the central core of archival knowledge is insufficient. Time enough to cover and absorb the subject is vital, and there was just not enough of it.

Finding a focus for the advanced course proved to be difficult. The course has largely been a seminar, with some guest speakers from the field. The primary goal has been to get students to appreciate what is involved in designing and implementing facets of an archival program. A broad range of topics usually related to the administration or management of archival programs have been addressed, from the design of archival information systems to the design and implementation of public programs.

In the first year, in addition to the introductory archival course, students must also take a course on records management and one on automation and archives, and in the second, one on conservation. These courses might be characterized as technical in the sense that each aims to impart discrete knowledge of the areas of its concern; but, like other archival studies courses, they all must place technical data and practices in a conceptual framework related to the role and functions of the archivist. Study of records management is not a flirtation with a sister discipline's putatively inferior technique, but rather an exploration of the archivist's interest in Morris Radoff's "one world of records" or Jay Atherton's "records continuum."[52]

Nor is automation merely a tool of the archivist; it is a phenomenon to be understood and coped with for all its effects on records keeping, information retrieval, and management use. Above all, it is a thing to be known, not feared. It is not enough to set up a single course on automation, though that is necessary, for the advance of automation permeates life and therefore the very objects of archivists' work. In the meantime, the basic concepts and practices of automation and application to archivists' work must be conveyed and increasing attention paid to study of machine-readable archives. A library school brings knowledge and facilities of automation and its application to the control and retrieval of information which are precious to archivists and in a combination not duplicated or even comparable anywhere in the university. For this reason alone, it is wise to associate archival studies with a library school.

Finally, archivists as preservers must have a basic understanding of the science and techniques of preventive conservation in order to treat their materials and engage productively with conservators in the exercise of physical preservation of the vulnerable artifacts which the two professions exist to protect. Hence, study of conservation is integral to the intellectual makeup and professional outlook of the archivist.

The other required course in the first year is Canadian historiography and general methods of historical study. The rationale behind this course is essentially the thinking of the Bemis committee: no duty of the archivist is far removed from historical sensibility, and to cultivate that sensibility is in the broadest sense the purpose of required study of history in the program. Archivists can never know all the history they might be called upon to know by all the professional exigencies which they may face over a career, but they should understand the historiographical traditions and the scholarly methods historians use to build their knowledge.

Everyone who has praised the value of the study of history in the intellectual making of archivists is right, but like other sensibilities of archivists, the historical one permeates their habit of mind and therefore

[52]Morris Radoff, "What Should Bind Us Together," *American Archivist* 19 (January 1956): 3–9; Jay Atherton, "From Life Cycle to Continuum: Some Thoughts on the Records Management-Archives Relationship," *Archivaria* 21 (Winter 1985-86): 43–51.

is cultivated throughout a properly designed and instructed archival curriculum. As Sir Hilary Jenkinson, who is frequently misunderstood for his dictum that the archivist should not be a historian, said, "the idea (which has sometimes been suggested) of a fundamental antagonism between the two is absurd."[53]

The practicum and the thesis represent the heart and soul of the MAS program because they express the two sides of archival education, the essence of which is the interplay between practice and theory, expressed here in an order reversed from the usual because students experience the practicum before the thesis. The acid test of knowledge in an applied science is action. Students go through the entire first year of studies wondering whether all that they have learned will enable them to do anything—they often doubt it. They are given a chance to measure the value of their learning on an extended practicum which has recently settled on a sixteen-week duration thanks to a subsidy offered to most students by the federally funded Canadian Council of Archives.[54] From the beginning, all students have been paid a wage while doing their practica. All over the country they work in all kinds of repositories, experiencing all the basic functions performed by archivists. The practicum draws archivists in the field into the educational exercise, a vital connection. By and large, students return with intimidating demands for more learning on the one hand, and an eagerness to complete their education and get on with a job on the other. The challenge of the second year is then to carry instruction into new realms and capitalize on students' first taste of practical experience.

During the second year every student begins work on a thesis. So, a great many chickens come home to roost: Frank Burke's theoretical paucity, the Committee of the 1970s's lack of intellectual substance, the familiar tension between theory and practice, and the fuzzy and hortatory focus of so much archival literature in North America with which it is all too easy to fall into step. The problem of writing an archival studies thesis, no different in kind from any other academic thesis, is easy to state but its solution difficult to characterize in a few words. The problem is essentially to define a clear goal for research and to adopt a distinctive scholarly methodology to focus that research even further, until in the writer's conception a thesis emerges which is much more than an extended term paper. It has been accepted by everybody that archival specialists must be the principal supervisors of theses, but of course students avail themselves of the advice and learning of faculty members in other disciplines. By reason of the great numbers of MAS students as compared to the limited number of archival specialists on faculty, thesis writers have had to be independent and resilient, not a bad thing.

Not counting the class to complete coursework in April 1988, twenty-two of the first thirty-six students (not counting failures or withdrawals) have presented acceptable theses, eight of them awarded a first class mark. Only four of these twenty-two were completed within the two-year program of study. Most come sometime later, often after the writer has gone to work. Although faculty members from the library school and history department are the most frequent examiners, faculty from law, the history of medicine, the history of art, busi-

[53]Hilary Jenkinson, "The English Archivist: A New Profession," in *Selected Writings of Sir Hilary Jenkinson*, ed. Roger H. Ellis and Peter Walne (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1980), 258.

[54]On the origins of the Council, see Eastwood, "Attempts at National Planning." The Academic Internship Program of the Council offers subsidies to students from approved archival education programs. Some institutions have offered a wage to MAS students without subsidy at hand, a measure of support to the program gratefully received.

ness administration, English, geography, and religious studies have also participated. A list of the authors and titles of theses appears in the appendix. Abstracts of the first ten theses have been published in *Archivaria*.[55]

One cannot self-proclaim success of any venture, unless one wants to adopt the politician's mantle. It is perhaps enough to say that numerous theses have now passed academic scrutiny and their quality may be expected to improve to meet inevitably rising expectations, which students themselves tend to set by example more than anything else. Moreover, the authors have begun to produce articles from their work.[56] One graduate will soon see her thesis published by Scarecrow Press.[57] A precise measure of success will probably always elude us. In the most important sense, the value of the thesis is to the student, who experiences the process of defining, researching, and writing a scholarly essay. In that process, something else is measured, one other chicken comes home to roost, for the thesis is a severe test of the quality of the definition, refinement, and instruction of the rest of the curriculum. Course work and thesis study complement each other: refinement of the one assists refinement of the other, difficulties in the one point to difficulties in the other.

Most theses will probably fall into one of six areas of fundamental study discussed in the next section of this article. Two generalizations can be made about the thesis experience of the first seven years of the program. At first, most theses were general explorations of a topic or problem of interest to the student and the field; many relied heavily on published sources, often outside the literature directly on archives. Part of the reason for this is to draw other knowledge into the exploration of a question of interest to archivists, but it also occurs due to students' limited time and resources to pursue research far afield in archival repositories. Students are in residence taking a full load of five courses in each of three terms; only in the last term are they relatively free to do research and study for their theses, with only the last half of the advanced archives course carrying on into the final term. More closely defining the thesis topic has helped overcome these difficulties by more carefully focusing the student's research.

In another way, the nature of MAS theses has been clarified by experience. Obviously, students may use a wide methodology, from the heuristic to the social scientific. Developing a scientific instrument to collect and analyze data from the field puts archivists in the realm of the social or management scientist where the norms of research are well developed and rigorous. The applied science of archives administration, though aspects of it will al-

[55]Terry Eastwood, "Abstracts of Theses in Archival Studies at the University of British Columbia," *Archivaria* 21 (Winter 1985-86): 269–74. Theses may be purchased on microfilm from Canadian Theses Microfiche Service, National Library of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1A 0N4.

[56]With one or two articles added from nonthesis work done while at the school, they are: Laura Coles, "The Decline of Documentary Publishing: The Role of English Canadian Archives and Historical Societies in Documentary Publishing," *Archivaria* 23 (Winter 1986-87): 69–85; Christopher L. Hives, "History, Business Records, and Corporate Archives in North America," *Archivaria* 22 (Summer 1986): 40–57, "Records, Information, and Archives Management in Business," *Records Management Quarterly* 20 (January 1986): 3–8, 17, and "The Future of Business Archives in North America," *Business Archives* 52 (November 1986): 27–36; Robin G. Keirstead, "J. S. Matthews and an Archives for Vancouver, 1951–1972," *Archivaria* 23 (Winter 1986-87): 86–106; Richard Stapleton, "Jenkinson and Schellenberg: A Comparison," *Archivaria* 17 (Winter 1983-84): 75–85; and Shelley Sweeney, "Sheep That Have Gone Astray? Church Record Keeping and the Canadian Archival System," *Archivaria* 23 (Winter 1986-87): 54–68. Also to be noted are Richard Klumpenhouwer's work to translate Hans Booms (see n. 28 above) and the account by Shelley Sweeney, of the first class, "A Guinea Pig's Perspective on the UBC Master of Archival Studies Programme," *Archivaria* 18 (Summer 1984): 263–67.

[57]Heather Marie MacNeil, "In Search of the Common Good: The Ethics of Disclosing Personal Information held in Public Archives" (MAS thesis, University of British Columbia, 1987).

ways harken to the norms and methods of historical research, can be strengthened considerably by application of the rigors of social science methodology to the formation of the knowledge on which it is based. Considerable improvement in this area has been made with the assistance of library science faculty schooled in social science research methodology. Although it may be too much to expect that master's theses primarily aimed at the cultivation of students' scholarly outlook will add greatly to that knowledge, the scholarly rigor of them is what will ultimately distinguish them from the intelligent and thoughtful commentary which is the basis of so much published literature in the archival field, which is but the necessary discourse of professionals and not research-based literature. If early theses in the program resemble common archival discourse, increasingly their rigor and refinement has improved as the program and the field have matured. By requiring a thesis of all students, the degree is a scholarly as well as a professional one. Students must choose a path of research, execute a study, and write it up in a scholarly manner. If they carry on in that path, as is hoped, the program will create scholars who will contribute to the profession's body of knowledge.

One other element of the program remains to be examined, electives outside archival studies. Originally there was both a philosophical and a practical reason for the existence of a sizeable component of electives: an interdisciplinary study could avail itself of courses in other disciplines in the university, and a new discipline in the university could lean on more developed ones. A component of electives also economized on the cost of mounting the program. The number of elective courses taken by students in fields outside archival studies proper has in fact shrunk as the diversity of archival courses has increased with the contributions of visitors and sessional lecturers and particularly the second full-time archival studies teacher. The more or less "serendipitous" shopping in the curricula of other disciplines has apparently paid inadequate returns considering the students' pressing need and desire to use the time available to the best effect to acquire the necessary professional knowledge. A better method is to spirit the learning of other scholars into the archival studies curriculum, either by bringing them in to teach courses dedicated to the needs of archivists or by having archival studies professors incorporate other knowledge in their own instruction. In several cases, the former tactic has been used, and will be in the future. More important, however, is the vital construction of a corpus of knowledge which archivists create from their own perspective, borrowing where necessary from other disciplines. In the next section, developing that theme, I offer insight into the philosophy which I believe is animating a revision of the MAS curriculum now under way and intended to be in place for the 1989–90 academic year.

Towards an Autonomous Discipline

If we step back from what might appear to be a somewhat rambling account of a great dough of courses leavened only with dashes of academic commonplace, what do we have? What will North American archival education present compared to the European historical, legal, linguistic, and archival knowledge?

The cast of modern archival studies rests on familiar foundations with certain important additions to take account of twentieth century conditions. Taking the four areas of knowledge discussed in the European model in reverse order, we may see archival knowledge or archival science as preeminent. Banal as it is to say, the focus of archival studies is the nature of archives, not even the nature of the archivist's duties, for everything flows from an understanding of the nature of the things unto which things are done. The whole simply unravels un-

less the nature of archives is comprehended clearly. This orients archivists to further study and to consideration of their role and function. The soft core around which much North American treatment of archives has been built is an insufficient first consideration of the nature of archives, which may *be* many things to many people but only one thing to an archivist, which may *express* many things to many people but only one thing to an archivist. Archives are the documentary expressions of the bodies, corporate or personal, which created them, and the archivist's primary duty is to preserve them in the context and with the composition given to them by their creators, insofar as that is possible, so that they will express to people who use and interpret them authentic memorial of the actions which brought them into being, whether those actions "provide the domestic foundations for or express the actual execution of a particular function."[58] The nature of archival "things," dictates the primary duty of archivists and their secondary (coming after, not less important) duty to communicate knowledge of the character of their holdings—in whatever form or medium they exist and from whatever source.

Around study of the nature of archives one therefore builds study of the preservation functions of appraisal, acquisition, arrangement, and description (the last of which archivists have always taken to include scientific aspects of information retrieval), and study of the organization and management of institutions and delivery of services to users. All this breaks down into four components: the nature of archives and the principles of arrangement and description; appraisal and acquisition of archives; the history, organization, and services of archives; and research use, reference service, and access. Each of these components is deserving of a course. Even though archivists will be bold enough to borrow knowledge from others wherever it is needed, all this is archivists' realm of theory and practice and certainly theirs alone to develop. No one else has given the slightest evidence of any but glancing interest in it, and we should not expect that to change. There is a lot more to it than intelligent reading of archival literature, central as that exercise is to the whole process. A methodical approach to each subject must be supplemented by reading in other literature, discussion, field work, and assignments to instill in the student the beginnings of the archivist's habit of mind, as placed squarely in a central core of professional knowledge but open to a broad range of intellectual horizons. As this is being done, the archivist's knowledge is embellished with the specialized (but not merely technical) courses such as records management, automation, and conservation. These are just that, embellishments, though important ones for the modern archivist, with the caveat that archival management is merely part of a continuum in which the many tasks are parcelled out to various people; so embellishment is not quite the right word in relation to archivists' study of societal recordkeeping. Every archivist who has had the urge to get in at the creation of records knows that.

Linguistic knowledge, if it will not involve learning ancient and foreign languages for the North American archivist, still comes into play in detailed study of what might be called the philological sciences of archives, primarily diplomatics, which, as Buck saw years ago, focuses on the forms of documents.[59] Archivists must "read" documents in particular ways to understand the reasons why they were created and the forms of action of which they

[58]Trevor Livelton, "Some Thoughts on the Archival Function and Method, With a Note on Their Relation to the Arsenal of the Forum" (MAS paper for ARST 500, Introduction to Archives, March 1988), 4.

[59]Buck, "The Training of American Archivists," 85.

are an expression. Historians also do this, and that is why diplomatics is an auxiliary science of both disciplines, but, given the varying purposes of the two, it is used somewhat differently by each. Certain kinds of archives such as court, financial, medical, and scientific records, for instance, lend themselves particularly to diplomatics, the principles and techniques of which should be understood by archivists as they apply to all archives. They may even have broader application in explorations of such things as the visual literacy needed to comprehend photographic, film, and broadcast archives in the archivist's terms. In any event, the composition of documents, how they are put together, is surely a valid study of archivists.[60] Form, which of course follows function, is a surer immediate means of identification than the function behind records, which is more difficult to construe. Ask any lawyer, doctor, or scientist, for instance, what document they have in their hands and they are likely to tell you instantly from perception of its form behind which lies an equally well-understood function. So study of diplomatics instrumentally assists the basic functions of identification, arrangement, description, and appraisal.

Legal knowledge is an absolutely vital and almost completely neglected area of study by archivists in North America. Modern society is governed by law in all its aspects. Even private life is governed by law. As Ronald Dworkin puts it: "We live in and by the law. . . . We are subjects of law's empire, liegemen to its methods and ideals, bound in spirit while we debate what we must therefore do." As documents arising from actions or preparing for actions (in administrative or private life) which have or may have legal significance (either directly or contextually), archives are suffused with and by law. If today we live by our actions before the law, we also stand by our (societal) past actions as carried to us by archives. As public officials (which all archivists are), who are responsible for preserving documents bearing legal significance and as facilitators of access to those documents for administrative and research purposes, archivists need to know the nature of the law and its influence on the documentation process. To appraise documents, archivists need to know which documents have a permanent legal value and which have only a temporary or potential legal value and how long it lasts. To identify documents, archivists need to know the forms which characterize types of legal documents. To arrange documents, archivists need to know the legal context in which they were created and their interrelationships. To describe documents, archivists need to know the precise terminology applied to each documentary form. To make documents available for research, archivists need to know the legal implications of communicating different kinds of information contained in the documents. This all means a specialized study of the law, not acquisition of a law degree.[61]

What of historical knowledge? Leland had

[60]Hugh Taylor explored such ideas in his course with MAS students entitled "Society and the Documentary Record." See also his "Information Ecology and the Archives of the 1980s," *Archivaria* (Summer 1984): 25–37. See also C. N. L. Brooke, "The Teaching of Diplomatics," *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 4 (April 1970): 1–9. The MIT study, Joan K. Haas, et al., *Appraising the Records of Modern Science and Technology: A Guide* (Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1985), moves along the lines addressed here. The study of Massachusetts court records, Michael Hindus, *The Files of the Massachusetts Superior Court, 1859–1959: An Analysis and a Plan For Action: A Report of the Massachusetts Judicial Records Committee of the Supreme Court* (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1980), does as well, but less clearly than the MIT study. Both may be analyzed carefully for theory, often unstated, lying beneath their surface.

[61]Ronald Dworkin, *Law's Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), vii. Gary M. Peterson and Trudy Huskamp Peterson, *Archives and Manuscripts: Law* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1985), and *Archivaria* 18 (Summer 1984), an issue devoted to "Archives and the Law," address questions of law as primarily related to the management of archival institutions not as related to the generation of records, though both necessarily touch on the latter matter, and constitute excellent contributions to the literature on the former, a vital subject in itself for archivists.

it precisely right eighty years ago. The archivist must study "the history of administration"—not quite the historian's administrative history, it must be insisted, but the archivist's own study of the evolution of the organization, mandates, functions, activities, and services of administration and the way it keeps its memory through analysis of its documentary processes and systems.[62] This study applies to both public and private administration of organizations of all kinds, large and small. Nor is it remote even from the so-called manuscript archivist, for the cast of the archivist's administrative study is translatable to the realm of personal affairs and archives. Another way of viewing this study is simply to see it as the archivist's particular path to understanding a country's institutions, government, and culture in the manner countenanced by the Bemis committee. The general knowledge all candidates for archival degrees ought to have is sharpened and focused in this study of the history of administration, which Karl Trever long ago took the trouble to show brings knowledge instrumental to many of the archivist's tasks, most particularly reference service.[63]

Only two areas of study need to be added to this somewhat modified classical European model. Archivists work in sizable institutions and are responsible either to manage those institutions themselves or find themselves managed. In either case, they need knowledge of management science, of its theory and practice as applied to their situation as much as is feasible. Management has invaded all walks of life. Many professions have drawn its precepts into their ken without impairing their essential mission. "Every profession is concerned with the use of knowledge in the achievement of objectives," in the words of Douglas MacGregor. One element of the knowledge they may all use is management science in order to improve their ability to predict and control events, circumstances, and human behavior in the service of large professional objectives and the more narrow institutional ones which realize those large objectives.[64] A profession which succeeds collectively to the extent to which archivists do and in the impecunious circumstances in which archives often find themselves is necessarily constrained to manage the objects of its societal responsibility with the greatest possible cogency and effectiveness.

Finally, but not least by any means, because archival science is one of the disciplines in the family of sciences devoted to service of the world of information and knowledge generation in society, it has close links with library and information science. It is preposterous to suppose any longer that library and information scientists cannot or do not understand archivists' ways (or we theirs). And, even if they do not, it is our task to correct that misunderstanding in order to bring them into our world as we penetrate the complexities of theirs. There is nothing easy or superficial about the conjunction of disciplines of information science. Different things do need subtly different treatment, but concepts and principles of information control, retrieval, and delivery in the service of knowledge is the profession of them all. By not having a place in the university, archivists' particular place in the mix naturally has been underrated and even misconceived, and we

[62]One of the few to dwell on this point of distinction is Hugh Taylor, "Administrative History: An Archivist's Need," *Canadian Archivist 2* (1970): 4–9. That the history of administration and administrative history need not be rigidly separated is demonstrated by Bill Russell, "The White Man's Paper Burden: Aspects of Record Keeping in the Department of Indian Affairs, 1860–1914," *Archivaria* 19 (Winter 1984-85): 50–72.

[63]Karl L. Trever, "Administrative History in Federal Archives," *American Archivist* 4 (July 1941): 159–69. See also the insightful essay by Virginia Purdy, "Archivaphobia," *Prologue* 15 (1983): 115–19, which demonstrates how frustrated researchers are by the essence of archives as administrative creations.

[64]Douglas MacGregor, *The Human Side of Enterprise* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960), 3–4.

have too painfully and too slowly shown our competence to others.

By all means, one should think of archivists as historical scientists when they analyze the broad historical context of archives, as auxiliary scientists of history when they wrestle with their composition, as legal scientists when they comprehend their evidentiary value, as information scientists when they communicate knowledge of their holdings, and as management scientists when they organize and deploy themselves and their resources for action. It seems fruitless to waste terms when one—archivist—will do for every person who performs duties, wherever they are, in the common cause of the profession. All the science turned to the account of the archivist's art is as nothing without the archivist's knowledge of the nature of archives, the preservation functions which flow from that, and the knowledge which is accumulated during the exercise of those functions and which is communicated to the world, something archival administrators might bear in mind more than they sometimes appear to. Archival science is the indispensable substance on which other knowledge is brought to bear. Wielding all their learning, then, working archivists are the students of their archives, who create and communicate knowledge of them, not just "information" about them to the world.[65]

Within the broad context already outlined, graduate archival studies encompass both education and training. The two are complementary, but education comes first. By introducing students to a well-defined, refined, and organized body of archival knowledge, several educational objectives are served. Students gain an orientation towards the real world of which archives are a part. They may begin to select a professional path and to identify a field for their own research and the essential instruments and processes connected with it. Graduate education, even at the master's level, is distinguished from undergraduate study by a commitment to introduce students to the rigors of scholarly research in their chosen discipline. The educational aspect also forms the mindset, the professional awareness, and the self-confidence of the scholar of archival studies. Like all scholarly professional study, the aim of archival study is to inculcate a common theoretical and practical basic education in order to allow archivists to practice their profession with an appropriate degree of uniformity. No scholarly or scientific discipline adapts itself to circumstance with promiscuous pragmatism. Archivists strive to define and refine their methods and techniques so that their treatment of materials will serve all users of archives as objectively as possible. Educating would-be archivists, then, means drawing out students' intellect in order to engage it in the study of the nature of archival "things" and the activities that they will perform as professionals, and in order to lead them to see the conditions under which their practice may be regulated by precept and principle: by theory.

By contrast, training—a much-maligned and misunderstood word in our profession, it being often falsely associated with some robot-like process of learning the tricks of the trade—aims to introduce something into the students' intellect rather than draw it out. Training works on formation of intellectual capacities in association with specific experience and according to precise objectives. It is a molding according to a replicable pattern. Training is skill building, acquisition of practical knowledge, and development of specialization in a determined area. All professional education must attend to training in specified practical areas to build skills. Education and training must complement each other; training without education becomes arid and rigid and is

[65]Terry Cook, "From Information to Knowledge: An Intellectual Paradigm for Archives," *Archivaria* 19 (Winter 1984-85): 28–49.

death to the very ideals of professional formation.

In each of these six areas of study I have proposed there is true study worthy of the university. Cultivating archival knowledge and *grafting other knowledge onto it* in the process of educating people for the profession nurtures archivists' discipline and informs their practice. Put together with practical experience over a lifetime, this knowledge may be expected to mature and give return on the societal investment in archivists' learning. If that is pretension, let us have more of it, perhaps in a university in the United States. Certainly we have no grounds to demand and do too little for the people who would be archivists. Surely rightfully proud archivists, who have done much and, in respect to education, had far too little done for them, will not begrudge seeing more done for others who follow them. All of us will be the better for it.

Thus, a path out of the morass of archivists' vexation with themselves may be seen, but that path, alas, is not entirely of their own making. Both historians and librarians, in their own self-interest and in the service of the larger societal goals which they profess, could do worse—indeed have done—than help nurture an autonomous place, a distinct and protected haven for archivists in the academy as they have done in at least one place in North America. Archivists may not be as free from practical constraints as historians or as well-developed educationally as librarians, and they constitute a far smaller profession than both; but they have demonstrated by their truly remarkable accomplishments in North America that they can be counted on to be just as intellectually self-reliant and pedagogically adept as their parents and cousins when given a chance to overcome their own peculiar travails and doubts. The past may be prologue, but it is not shackle. Archives have matured; archival education has languished; the latter retards the former.

As we move a profession built on the educational vision of Leland, Bemis, Buck, and Posner forward, we may remember that one archivist's dreams for our profession may all too easily be taken by others to be pretentious rebuke, especially when they are burdened by responsibility and plagued by insufficient professional nourishment. So we must know ourselves very well if we are to join in educational fraternity. It may be useful to give a different cast, up to a point, to archival studies in the United States than they are being given in Canada. The importance of a place in the university to nurture identity and scholarship for the profession is undeniable. That it is not impossible to make headway in achieving this goal is clear from the experience at the University of British Columbia. I mean no rebuke but rather wish to issue a call to colleagues to search for and nurture essence and excellence in one of the vital places where professions in our society pursue those things, the university.

Appendix
Authors and Titles of MAS Theses, 1984–1988

(Theses are listed in the order in which they were submitted for examination.)

Laura Coles. "The Decline of Documentary Publishing in Canadian Archives, 1865–1984."

Martha Cameron. "Towards an Archives of Film."

Elizabeth Eso. "W. Kaye Lamb and the Provincial Archives of British Columbia, 1934–1939."

Gary Mitchell. "The Appraisal of Canadian Military Personnel Files of the First World War."

Christopher Hives. "Business Archives: Historical Developments and Future Prospects."

Debra Barr. "Analysing Photographs in Archival Terms."

Shelley Sweeney. "A Comparative Study of the Record-keeping Practices of Anglican, Baptist and United Churches in British Columbia."

Richard Stapleton. "The Archival Ideas of T. R. Schellenberg on Appraisal, Arrangement, and Description of Archives."

Walter Meyer zu Erpen. "A Study of the Archival Record and its Context: A Case Study of Nanaimo City Records."

Robin Keirstead. "An Archival Investigation of Hospital Records."

Rhonda Ljunggren. "*Camera Lucida*: The Moving Image as Evocative Document; Film Form, Film Meaning, and the Grammatology of Archival Selection."

Margaret Hutchinson. "Cartographic Archives: A Composite Resource."

Kathleen Barlee. "Cooperative Total Archives for Kelowna, British Columbia."

Glen Isaac. "University Student Records: Privacy and Research Access."

Daisy McColl. "An Administrative History of the Supreme Court of British Columbia with Particular Reference to the Vancouver Registry: Its Court Records, Their Composition, and Their Selection."

Diane Beattie. "The Informational Needs of Historians Researching Women: An Archival User Study."

Russell Martin. "Indexing Textual Archives: Issues and Problems."

Grant Mitchell. "Canadian Archives and the Corporate Memory: A Case of Amnesia?"

Anne Maclean. "The Acquisition of Literary Papers in Canada."

Heather MacNeil. "In Search of the Common Good: The Ethics of Disclosing Personal Information Held in Public Archives."

Victoria Blinkhorn. "The Records of Visual Artists: Appraising for Acquisition and Selection."

Linda Cobon. "Problems and Issues in the Arrangement and Description of Photographs in Libraries and Archival Repositories."