

Historians and Archivists: Educating the Next Generation

Is the Past Still Prologue?: History and Archival Education

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TRADITIONALLY THE DISCIPLINE OF HISTORY was the foundation on which archival training was based. In 1909 Waldo Gifford Leland, one of the early leaders in the development of American archives, stated, "Of special knowledge, aside from technical matters, the archivist should have a training both historical and legal."¹ In 1938, two years after the founding of the Society of American Archivists (SAA), the Committee on the Training of Archivists in its famous Bemis Report said, "It is the historical scholar who dominates the staffs of the best European archives. We think it should be so here, with the emphasis on American history and political science."²

The centrality of history to the prepara-

tion for archival work has been continually restated by archivists.³ Essential as historical knowledge and training have been in the education of archivists, however, some individuals argue that its importance has been devalued in recent years.⁴ An indication of this subtle change is found in the

³There is an extensive body of literature dealing with the education of archivists. See, for example, Solon J. Buck, "The Training of American Archivists," *American Archivist* 4 (April 1941): 84-90; Karl L. Trever, "The Organization and Status of Archival Training in the United States," *American Archivist* 11 (April 1948): 154-63; Ernst Posner, "Archival Training in the United States," in *Archives and the Public Interest: Selected Essays by Ernst Posner*, edited by Ken Munden (Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1967; essay originally published in 1954); Richard C. Berner, "Archival Education and Training in the United States, 1937 to Present," *Journal of Education for Librarianship* 22 (Summer/Fall 1981): 3-19; Jacqueline Goggin, "That We Shall Truly Deserve the Title of Profession: The Training and Education of Archivists, 1930-1960," *American Archivist* 47 (Summer 1984): 243-54; James M. O'Toole, "Curriculum Development in Archival Education: A Proposal," *American Archivist* 53 (Summer 1990): 460-66; Michael Cook, *Guidelines for Curriculum Development in Records Management and the Administration of Modern Archives: A RAMP Study* (Paris: UNESCO, 1982); Michael Cook, *The Education and Training of Archivists: Status Report of Archival Training Programs and Assessment of Manpower Needs* (Paris: UNESCO, 1979); Ruth W. Helmut, "Education for American Archivists: A View from the Trenches," *American Archivist* 44 (Fall 1981): 295-303; William L. Joyce, "Archival Education: Two Fables," *American Archivist* 51 (Winter-Spring 1988): 16-23; Frank Boles, "Archival Education: Basic Characteristics and Core Curriculum," *Perspectives: The American Historical Association Newsletter* 28 (October 1990): 1, 9-11.

⁴See, for example, Marilyn H. Pettit, "Archivist-Historians: An Endangered Species?" *OAH Newsletter* (November 1991): 8-9.

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¹Waldo G. Leland, "American Archival Problems," *Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1909* (Washington, D.C.: American Historical Association, 1911), 348.

²Samuel Flagg Bemis, "The Training of Archivists in the United States," *American Archivist* 2 (1939): 157.

wording of the SAA Education Directory. The 1983 edition told prospective archival students that “training in research methods, and experience in conducting original research is *essential* if the archivist is to fully discharge his or her professional responsibilities [emphasis added].” The 1986 directory, however, told prospective students that “training and experience in conducting research in primary and secondary sources are also *helpful*” in becoming an archivist [emphasis added]. In three short years, historical training had gone from being “essential” to being “also helpful.”

Concerned about this trend in recent years, the Joint AHA/OAH/SAA Committee on Historians and Archivists sponsored a proposal to the Bentley Historical Library’s Research Fellowship Program for the Study of Modern Archives. Four archivists with backgrounds in history assembled at the Bentley Library during July 1991 to study the situation and prepare a paper to generate further discussion. Two historians also joined the team for part of the discussion. The result is this paper.

In reviewing this paper, readers should note what the study group was and was not supposed to do. The team was charged with assessing whether or not historical content and skills still had a central role to play in the education of archivists. The team was instructed not to deal with such specifics as the outline of a curriculum or the content of model courses. The team also was instructed not to recommend a specific degree as the necessary product of all archival education. In keeping with the purpose of the Bentley fellowships, the team’s effort was to advance the level of discourse on the subject while hoping that others would take the ideas presented and use them in a wide variety of situations and settings.

We began our deliberations by trying to explain the perceived shift away from history. We concluded that this shift can be attributed to four factors: (1) structural changes in where archivists are trained; (2)

changes in the work of the archivist, brought about by technological changes in the way information is created and controlled; (3) changing requirements for archival employment; and (4) the archival profession’s increasing definition of itself as distinct from either history or library science.

While the study and practice of history remained a common path into the archival profession, the emergence of university-based graduate archival education programs in the 1960s created a second major point of entry into the profession. The shift in the profession was both dramatic and swift. A 1971 survey of archivists conducted by Robert Warner and Frank Evans, revealed that 51 percent of respondents had M.A.s or Ph.D.s in history or a social science, while only 12 percent had library degrees. By comparison, a 1989 SAA survey of archivists revealed that 36.3 percent of respondents had an M.L.S. degree, either alone or in combination with a subject master’s.⁵

Technology also has contributed to the shift away from history. There has been a change in what is taught to archivists, as archivists increasingly identify themselves as part of the information management profession. The development of standardized formats, coupled with the automated access to information, has provided many benefits, but this development also is widening the breach between the archival profession and the history profession. Specific and detailed course work in automation, for example, often is seen as being incompatible with “real” history courses in history-based programs. This serves to estrange history education from the perceived current needs of archival education.

Changes in the archival marketplace also have contributed to the shift. With the

⁵Anne P. Diffendal to Gregory S. Hunter, 31 March 1992. In the latest survey, 17.9% reported holding a Ph.D. or an Ed.D., while 31.5% had an M.A., M.S., or other subject master’s.

growth of archival repositories under the control of library administrators, particularly in the college and university archives field, archivists increasingly find it necessary or desirable to hold an M.L.S. degree. While a history background still is a plus, long-term career advancement probably will involve moving within a library hierarchy.

A fourth change has been the archival profession's increasing definition of itself: what it means to be an archivist and how one marks entry into a profession that is distinct from, and not a stepchild of, history or library science. This change is evidenced by the growing appointment of archival instructors to full-time faculty positions; the more than eight hundred archivists who have chosen to become members of the Academy of Certified Archivists; the intense discussion of a separate graduate degree in archives, the Master of Archival Studies;⁶ and a growing recognition of the need for research independent of other disciplines on issues of professional concern, such as that which takes place at the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Fellowship Program at the University of Michigan.⁷ One consequence of this new assertiveness is the profession's focus on a graduate educational regimen that stresses what archivists need to know about their own discipline rather than what librarianship or history can offer to the archivist from their distinct bodies of knowledge.

The changes in the skills needed by archivists to cope with modern information technology and the management of archival

programs, of necessity, have lessened archivists' reliance on traditional historical study as a major component of archival education. Some archivists have not viewed this state of affairs positively. As Fredric Miller told the 1986 annual meeting of the National Council on Public History, "I am concerned that the new [SAA Education] guidelines stress administrative skills . . . while minimizing historical knowledge or methodology. I still don't understand how budgeting becomes a part of the archival core but not historiography."⁸ Are archivists, some ask, becoming primarily technicians who achieve competencies in specific skills rather than professionals who can make judgments about the subject matter components of archival work?

The drift away from the traditional mooring of archival training in history may suggest that the discipline of history is not as important as our predecessors thought. We do not think that is the case. Rather, we believe the study of history does matter and has an important place in preparing archivists for their distinctive professional role. The next three sections of this report will analyze the continuing contribution of history to archives.

Section One: The Archivist's Perspective

Archivists are archivists not principally because of what they do, but rather because of how they think. Just as lawyers think like lawyers and accountants think like accountants, so archivists think like archivists. They bring to their work a particular perspective that serves as the basis for all their professional activities and distin-

⁶Terry Eastwood, "Nurturing Archival Education in the University," *American Archivist* 51 (Summer 1988): 228-53.

⁷See, for example, Richard J. Cox, "American Archival Literature: Expanding Horizons and Continuing Needs, 1901-1987," *American Archivist* 50 (Summer 1987): 306-23; and "A Research Agenda for Archival Education in the United States," in *American Archival Analysis: The Recent Development of the Archival Profession in the United States* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1990): 113-63.

⁸Fredric Miller, "A Jigsaw That Works? Trends and Issues in Archival Education," unpublished paper delivered before the National Council on Public History.

guishes them from related professionals.⁹ In recent years, a number of efforts within the profession—including the progressive refinement of guidelines for archival education programs and the articulation of competency areas for individual certification—have led to the specification of the components of the archival way of thinking. This perspective differentiates archivists from everyone else who comes into contact with the records. Creators and users have their own perspectives on records which are more narrowly focused, but archivists take a broader approach that encompasses the views of both creators and users. This archival perspective results from the special kind of knowledge archivists possess.

Archival knowledge may be divided into four main categories: knowledge of the organizations, institutions, and individuals that produce records; knowledge of the records themselves; knowledge of the current and possible uses of records; and knowledge of the principles and techniques best suited to managing archival records.

1. Knowledge of the organizations, institutions, and individuals that produce records. Because archivists live with the tangible documentary remains of human activity, they develop a particularly valuable perspective on that activity. They can see influences and patterns that may not have been apparent to the participants themselves. Archivists can see how an organization has conducted its business by looking at the records produced in the conduct of that business. The records of a nineteenth-century orphanage, for instance, may have been kept in large ledger books: the name of each child was entered down the left-hand margin and a variety of other information (date and place of birth, date of

entrance and discharge, parents, guardians, disciplinary notes, information about job placement, and so on) was entered in separate columns across the open book. By the twentieth century, that same orphanage kept its records in an entirely different way. The fat case file had replaced the ledger book: a variety of individual documents relating to each child (birth certificates, psychological evaluations, tests and other school materials, medical records, disciplinary reports, personal letters, etc.) were placed in the case file.

Through contact with these records, the archivist develops a particular way of looking at the organization and its activities. In each instance, the records creator (i.e., the director of the orphanage) is interested only in the care and supervision of the children committed to it. A subsequent user of the records also has a narrow purpose and perspective: was a particular child in this orphanage at a particular time, and what were that child's circumstances and experiences? The archivist possesses a perspective broader than either of these. The archivist sees in the changing forms and content of the records a larger significance about the organization and how it operated. Not only has the record itself become more complex, more highly differentiated, and perhaps more "informative" with time, but the processes that produced the record have likewise become more complex and articulated. The record has changed, and so have the activities of which the record is a record. The archivist "looks through" the particularities of the specific records at hand and sees larger insights that ultimately help to explain those records, the human activities that produced them, and the information they contain. The archivist thus sees how organizations and individuals reveal themselves, whether intentionally or not, in the records they create and receive.

2. Knowledge of records. If archivists know something about the circumstances that produce records, they also come to learn

⁹For a fuller discussion of the archivist's perspective, see James M. O'Toole, *Understanding Archives and Manuscripts* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1990), chapter 3.

something in detail about the records themselves. They know what records are made of, how that has changed over time, and how the media available to create records affect the kinds of records that may be made. When recordmaking materials are scarce and relatively expensive, for instance, certain kinds of records are more likely to be made than others: records will tend to be created by governments or other official bodies, which have the resources to make and maintain them, rather than by individuals, who will generally lack such resources. When records must be produced by hand, the process of records creation will be slow, and relatively fewer records will be created; when, by contrast, records can be produced mechanically or electronically, multiple copies of records may be created simultaneously or in several different places.

When recordmaking becomes more democratic—when more people have the resources, leisure, and perceived need to create records—the nature of the documentary record changes in several significant ways. The amount of recorded information increases exponentially; the media available for the making of archivally valuable records expands; and the kinds of records creators become more diversified and, therefore, so do the records themselves. Historical collections expand to include not only official records of various kinds but personal papers as well.

3. Knowledge of the uses of records.

Archivists not only know about the organizations producing records and the records thus produced, but they also know the broad possibilities of how those records may be used by different people with different interests. Like the other aspects of the archivist's knowledge, this kind of knowledge is broader than that of anyone else who comes into contact with the records at any point. The original creator usually has a single purpose in mind in creating records: the director of an orphanage wants to keep track of the children committed to her care;

the writer of a diary wants to record personal thoughts and experiences. Similarly, any secondary or subsequent user of the records has a particular purpose in mind: was this person (an ancestor, perhaps) ever in this orphanage, and what was that experience like? Did the keeper of this diary say anything about his feelings as a soldier during the Second World War?

The archivist knows that the particular use of the moment does not exhaust the possibilities for using that record. The archivist is committed to managing the record in such a way that those immediate uses, and an almost infinite number of other uses besides, will be possible. Later administrators may ask different questions of the orphanage records, and each generation of researchers will ask different questions of the diary in the course of addressing what seem to be the scholarly questions of the day. Archivists know that the uses of records will inevitably change, and they do what they do in order to make that open-ended process of use possible and, indeed, easy.

4. Knowledge of archival principles and techniques. The previous three categories all relate, in one degree or another, to the period before any records actually come through the door of the archival repository. They deal with the nature of the records and the roles they play in human activity. Once the records are actually acquired by the archives, however, archivists must have and apply a more specialized knowledge of the archival principles and techniques best suited to the care and management of those records. This knowledge includes such concepts as provenance, original order, and the life cycle of records. More broadly, it also includes the theoretical underpinnings of such archival tasks as appraisal, arrangement, description, reference, outreach, and selection for preservation. These archival principles and techniques relate less to historical content than the other three areas of knowledge.

The archivist's perspective, then, is founded on four categories of knowledge, three of which have a clear historical dimension. Understanding the institutions, organizations, and individuals that produce records is incomplete without understanding the history of those entities. To accomplish this, archivists rely not only on formal historical study as traditionally defined, but also on the historical components of related disciplines like anthropology and sociology. Understanding the records themselves is incomplete without understanding the history of recordkeeping and the changing role it has played in human affairs. Understanding the uses of records is incomplete without understanding what those uses have been, what they have not been, and thus what they might possibly be. If archivists are to develop a proper professional perspective, we believe they must draw heavily on the methods of history and selected areas of subject knowledge.

Section Two: Archives and Historical Method

In the course of learning and practicing their profession, archivists derive a number of important skills from historical method. Among these are the following: how to frame research questions; how to identify sources that contain information relevant to answering those questions; how to verify and evaluate the sources thus identified; and how to fit those records into a historiographical context.

1. Framing historical questions. Understanding historical inquiry is necessary for the archivist less for the particular questions that are framed (and the potential answers to them) than for knowing the process by which researchers frame those questions. By asking questions of archival records, the archivist's work is advanced at several stages. In appraisal, question framing is useful because it helps evaluate the present and future values in records prior

to their acquisition by the archives. Understanding the nature of the questions historians ask enables the archivist to evaluate the significance of particular groups of records. In description, it helps identify the points of intersection between the archival holdings and the kinds of research they will support. In reference, mutual understanding of question framing techniques improves the communication between archivist and researcher.

Other user groups (administrators, lawyers, genealogists, etc.) may frame questions different from those of historians, but the reasons for asking questions of archival collections will be essentially the same. Theirs may perhaps tend to be questions of fact rather than questions of interpretation, but they are no less historical in nature. All those other groups may ask different questions, looking for different answers, but they are all "historical" in that they deal with information from the past. That information will be useful in the present, and it may be put to some kind of immediate, practical purpose (and thus not for purposes of historical understanding in the scholarly sense). Even so, these other kinds of researchers are still asking questions that, at least in part, deal with the past. For that reason, the archivist should understand how historical questions are framed.

2. Identifying sources. Like the historian, the archivist must be able to identify source materials containing information that will help answer the questions once framed. For the historian, this is a fairly unambiguous process, even if it is not always successful: one asks the question, and then one goes out and finds the sources that answer the question. If the questions are simple (especially factual) ones, finding the sources which contain the answer may be a simple process. The question "When was Abraham Lincoln born?" may be answered by recourse to a very particular record or kind of record (a family Bible record or county birth records, for instance). More involved

questions, like "What were Lincoln's evolving views on slavery between 1845 and 1865?" will require recourse to more and different kinds of records, and the answer will not be quite so clear or straightforward. Not every question will have an answer, of course, and not all answers will be adequate, complete, entirely satisfactory, or even true. Still, in the process of seeking these answers, historians instinctively make the connection between the questions framed and the sources that will approximate answers to them.

Archivists, too, need to make the connection between questions and the sources that may answer them. This is most apparent in the process of appraisal, where the archivist makes deliberate decisions about which records will survive and which will not. The ability to determine a record's significance (and thus its archival value and worth) in answering historical questions is a necessary one for archivists. Researchers will have to live with the results of the archivist's decisions in this, and the archivist must take this responsibility seriously. In doing appraisal, therefore, the archivist should be looking for records that answer the widest range of potential questions.

What is more, archivists who move in the direction proposed by those advocating a more active and deliberate shaping of the historical record through the documentation strategy process find that the historical skills of identifying sources become all the more important. Those archival theorists who argue for this approach are, if anything, increasing the usefulness of historical understanding because the analysis of a subject or geographical area to be documented necessarily has a historical dimension to it. Thus, understanding what is involved in identifying sources is becoming more critical for archivists rather than less.

3. Evaluating and verifying records. The archivist generally does not have the same responsibility as the historian to evaluate the information contained in records

or to verify that information. With the obvious exception of fakes and forgeries, the archivist cares less about whether the information in archival records is "true" in any absolute sense. Such considerations usually are more appropriate to the historian, who asks of all historical sources: "Are they authentic? Are they integral? Are they reliable?" The archivist must still draw on this aspect of historical method, however, by evaluating and verifying information about records at least on the provenance level. Are these really the records of the office or individual from whom they have been collected? Beyond that, the archivist has some responsibility to point researchers in the direction of other collections or materials that may help to evaluate and verify the information contained in records. Even so, this responsibility stops short of interpretive assessment of the records.

In certain institutional settings (business archives and religious archives, for example) the archivist may also assume duties that are not strictly speaking archival, taking on the role of a generalized historical resource. The archivist regularly may be required not only to preserve and organize records but also to conduct research in them and even to interpret them in response to internal administrative inquiries. The archivist may be required, in effect, to take off the "archivist's hat" and, for a time, to put on the "historian's hat." In such institutional archives—and these are a large and growing percentage of the profession—the historian's ability to evaluate and verify records will be crucial for the archivist.

4. Historiographical context. The final aspect of historical method necessary for archivists is the ability to understand the historiographical context in which all historical work takes place. This understanding should begin with a recognition that there will necessarily be different schools of historical thought, that no one work of history will present either "The Truth" or

"The Whole Story." Though the same is generally true of research in many disciplines, all historical writing is inevitably partial and grounded in its own times. Historians are accustomed to the idea that all historical work may well have to be redone at some future time, and archivists, too, must understand this. For archivists in particular, this may mean that certain archival tasks will have to be repeated in order to support changing historiographical interests. For instance, once historians decided that nineteenth-century immigrant women were legitimate objects of historical study, archivists found it necessary to describe their holdings again in order to highlight their relevance for such study. On the other hand, some archives have collected certain materials years before historians expressed much interest in them.¹⁰

Archivists should also possess some sense of the particular schools of historical thought and writing that will have significance for their collections. For many American archivists, this will include a sense of the schools of history writing in this country from the middle of the nineteenth century to the present. This understanding will be useful to archivists in selecting records for preservation in archives (perhaps in collecting records that will fill historiographical gaps or support new and different kinds of research). It will also improve the reference interchange because both historians and archivists will be placing themselves and their current research in the same intellectual context. Finally, archivists will inevitably need to know the particular historiography that is relevant to their own collections. For some archivists, this will be the historiography of the New England town; for others it will be the historiography of a particular nineteenth-century eth-

nic group. Regardless of its precise content, this kind of historiographical knowledge is what may be called "repository specific," and it will be acquired largely on the job after the archivist begins work in that repository.

Section Three: Historical Content

In addition to historical method, there is a certain amount of historical content that an archivist must know in order to function professionally. A key point, however, is that "historical content" is not the same as "history courses." Part of the development of a unique archival perspective is the realization that academic history is only one part of the mix of historical content that archivists must possess.

In saying this, one must be careful not to oversimplify "academic history" or to infer that it is monolithic and homogeneous. Historians' understanding of what they do, how they do it, what they learn from it, and why it is important have all come a long way in the last few decades. The motto "History is past politics," which motivated the first professional American historians, is unacceptable today, when history seems to be so much more than that. The growth and diversification of subject matter—a broadened and more inclusive definition of who and what are legitimate objects of historical inquiry—has been impressive, and most historians view this trend as a positive one.

The blessing has not, however, been entirely unmix. As Thomas Bender has noted, one casualty of progress may have been a unitary vision of American history.¹¹ Historians of today also have diminished faith in the scientific and objective

¹⁰For example, the Bentley Historical Library entered items under the subject heading "Negroes in Michigan" as early as the 1940s, long before the topic became one of wide historical interest.

¹¹Thomas Bender, "Wholes and Parts: The Need for Synthesis in American History," *Journal of American History* 73 (June 1986): 120–36. See also the responses to Bender in "A Round Table: Synthesis in American History," *Journal of American History* 74 (June 1987): 107–30.

character of their work. The knowability of history has become problematic to successive professional generations, which find sure understanding to be a "noble dream"—noble, perhaps, but a dream nevertheless.¹² What is more, the widespread challenge to the very idea of a common American core of knowledge or tradition seems to cast doubt on the ability to achieve any coherence in our understanding of the past.¹³

Despite the shifting ground of the American historical profession and the increasing difficulty of defining core historical knowledge, archivists still need to try to identify that core knowledge and to make appropriate accommodation for it in their own professional education and development.

1. Core historical knowledge. What kind of history should archivists know? In the course of employment, all archivists will necessarily develop historical knowledge that may be termed "repository specific"—that is, knowledge of a particular organization, institution, political jurisdiction, or subject matter to which their collections relate. For the most part, this kind of historical knowledge is acquired on the job, and it develops in large measure through a dialog with the archival records themselves. Beyond this, archivists still must understand the broad contours of the history of the nation in which they are working. Discussing three specific archival functions will help make this clear.

In appraisal, historical knowledge, both general and particularized, allows the archivist to put specific records into some

context. Appraisal seeks to judge current and potential value in archival records, a value that is always relative. Assessing the records created by specific people, in specific places and times, cannot proceed without understanding what was going on around those records creators.

Description also will benefit from historical knowledge, since description is the activity that seeks to identify the points of intersection between researcher interest and the contents of archival collections. Especially in facilitating subject access, historical knowledge will help flag those aspects of the content of archival collections which should be brought to the attention of potential researchers.

In terms of reference and access, historical knowledge not only allows the archivist to keep up with current research interests, but it also provides a broader vision of possible research. The archivist with a broad view of possible research can play an active role in moving research forward, defining topics hitherto unexplored but for which ample documentary evidence exists.

To be of most value to archivists, the core historical knowledge should be broad, including not only the dominant groups ("Great White Men") but also knowledge of other racial and ethnic groups and of women. It also should encompass the historical period during which most of the anticipated collections of archival records will fall.

2. Particular historical content. As stated earlier, historical content is not the same as traditional history courses. In addition to knowledge about international, national, and local history, archivists must possess knowledge about the development of societies, cultures, institutions, and technologies in order to perform their mission. This is interdisciplinary historical knowledge in its finest sense.

Among all the possibilities for additional historical content, two areas are of partic-

¹²Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream: The "Objectivity Question" and the American Historical Profession* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

¹³This debate also has occurred recently on the primary and secondary levels. In New York State, historian Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., dissented from the report of a statewide curriculum review committee precisely because he believed that the new curriculum proposals would diminish the common elements of American history.

ular importance to archives: the history of organizational structure and development, and the history of technology and record-keeping.

In terms of organizational structure and development, archivists can learn a great deal from the recent work of a number of professions. In appraising records, as well as developing arrangement systems, archivists try to reflect the structural realities of the organization or institution they seek to document. Archivists cannot do this unless they first understand the history of organizational development.

A beginning point for this is the field of historical sociology, with its emphasis on the development of organizational structures and systems.¹⁴ The field of business history also is full of influential studies in the area of organizational development, such as those by Alfred D. Chandler, Jr.¹⁵ Joanne Yates has done some important work recently on the history of institutional communications, specifically the development of internal recordkeeping systems in nineteenth century businesses.¹⁶

One final aspect of organizational development with which archivists should be familiar is the development of "institutional culture." Anthropologists long have studied value systems and transmission methods in various cultures.¹⁷ In order for

the archives to be the keeper and transmitter of an institutional culture, the archivist must understand the theory behind what he or she is transmitting. Furthermore, one of the key contemporary uses of archives, especially in an institutional setting, is the preservation of stories and legends about past successful institutional figures, with the implication that current employees can

nedy, *Corporate Cultures: The Rites and Rituals of Corporate Life* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1982); Thomas J. Peters and Robert H. Waterman, Jr., *In Search of Excellence: Lessons from America's Best-Run Companies* (New York: Warner Books, 1982); John P. Kotter, *A Force for Change: How Leadership Differs from Management* (New York: Free Press, 1990); Daniel R. Denison, *Corporate Culture and Organizational Effectiveness* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1990); Mariann Jelinek, Linda Smircich, and Paul Hirsch, eds., "Organizational Cultural," a special issue of the *Administrative Science Quarterly* 28 (September 1983): 331-501; Joanne Martin and Caren Siehl, "Organizational Culture and Counterculture: An Uneasy Symbiosis," *Organizational Dynamics* 12 (Autumn 1983): 52-64; Jay W. Lorsch, "Managing Culture: The Invisible Barrier to Strategic Change," *California Management Review* 28 (Winter 1986): 95-109; Meryl Reis Louis, "Surprise and Sense Making: What Newcomers Experience in Entering Unfamiliar Organizational Settings," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 25 (June 1980): 226-51; Andrew M. Pettigrew, "On Studying Organizational Cultures," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 24 (December 1979): 570-81; Daniel R. Denison, "Bringing Corporate Culture to the Bottom Line," *Organizational Dynamics* 13 (1984): 5-22; Karl E. Weick, "Cosmos vs. Chaos: Sense and Nonsense in Electronic Contexts," *Organizational Dynamics* 14 (1985): 51-64; Rob Lucas, "Political-Cultural Analysis of Organizations," *Academy of Management Review* 12 (1987): 144-56; Manfred F. R. Kets de Vries and Danny Miller, "Interpreting Organizational Texts," *Journal of Management Studies* 24 (May 1987): 233-47; Y. Sankar, "Organizational Culture and New Technologies," *Journal of Systems Management* 39 (April 1988): 10-17; C. Marlene Fiol, "Managing Culture as a Competitive Resource: An Identity-Based View of Sustainable Competitive Advantage," *Journal of Management* 17 (1991): 191-211; Vijay Sathe, "Implications of Corporate Culture: A Manager's Guide to Action," *Organizational Dynamics* 12 (Autumn 1983): 4-23; Stephen R. Barley, Gordon W. Meyer, and Debra C. Gash, "Cultures of Culture: Academics, Practitioners and the Pragmatics of Normative Control," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 33 (1988): 24-60.

¹⁴Some archivists already have begun to draw on the work of sociologists. See, for example, Michael A. Lutzker, "Max Weber and the Analysis of Modern Bureaucratic Organization: Notes Toward a Theory of Appraisal," *American Archivist* 45 (Spring 1982): 119-30.

¹⁵In particular, see his *The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap, 1977).

¹⁶*Control Through Communication: The Rise of System in American Management* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989).

¹⁷Joseph Campbell helped to popularize much of this work through his very readable books and a Public Broadcasting System series with Bill Moyers. For more scholarly treatments, especially relating to organizations, see Terrence E. Deal and Allan A. Ken-

maintain this tradition of success or excellence. This, indeed, has become one of the major reasons behind the establishment and continued funding of institutional archives.¹⁸

In terms of the history of technology, archivists have become keenly aware over the last several years that recent technological changes are affecting archives and the records they already (or soon will) possess.¹⁹ In addition to the professional literature, meeting programs at SAA and regional archival organizations show an increasing number of technologically oriented sessions. All of this awareness, however, will not be truly effective without a solid grounding in the history of technology and its effect on recordkeeping.

The way for archival education to address this is twofold. The first method, integrating information science principles and techniques,²⁰ is beyond the scope of this study group. The second method is germane to this discussion, however, for we believe it necessary that archivists understand the history of technology (in its broadest sense) in order to be better prepared to face the technological future. Where did the computer come from? What were the key events in the development of information processing? Who were the indi-

viduals who shaped the industry? Answers to these and similar questions will be necessary to understand and deal with the automated records archivists will increasingly have to identify, preserve, and make available.

In addition, since archivists deal with recorded knowledge in all its forms, it is crucial that archivists have accurate knowledge about the history of recordkeeping and the various trends and developments that led to modern recordkeeping practices. Archivists, indeed, are the inheritors of all previous recordkeeping systems and technologies; even when others within society move to "newer technologies," archivists still must deal with the permanent information contained in the older technologies.

The type of historical content outlined in this section clearly is not the same as the content of a traditional graduate history degree. Educating professional archivists who embody the distinct archival perspective will require an innovative curriculum drawn from the strengths of several disciplines. Developing and implementing such curricula will be a major challenge for the archival profession in the next decade.

Conclusions

Although the link between history and archives has changed over time, important aspects of the archival profession continue to be informed by historical study. This does not mean that archival education must necessarily take place only in a history department. The administrative structure supporting archival education is a matter of secondary concern. It is not the case that archival students must begin their professional studies with a bachelor's degree in history, nor end it with a master's degree in history. Although undergraduate training in history has been and will likely remain the most common background of archival students, it is not the only acceptable, or necessarily the preferred, background.

¹⁸Archivists are beginning to become aware of the need to know more about institutional culture. The 1990 SAA annual meeting featured a session looking at the influence of institutional cultures on the development of archives. The 1991 annual meeting included a workshop on understanding and using institutional culture.

¹⁹Trudy Peterson, "Archival Principles and the Records of the New Technology," *American Archivist* 47 (Fall 1984):383-93. A recent effort to address these issues was a team project led by Avra Michelson and Jeff Rothenberg at the Bentley Historical Library during the summer of 1991. See Avra Michelson and Jeff Rothenberg, "Scholarly Communication and Information Technology: Exploring the Impact of Changes in the Research Process on Archives," *American Archivist* 55 (Spring 1992): 236-315.

²⁰We have in mind such things as system analysis, database design and searching, and computer programming.

What is of primary concern is that archival education, wherever it is taught and whomever it is taught to, be directed toward the development of a unique archival perspective toward information. The archivist's perspective stands apart from the perspective of a historian or the perspective of any other professional. However, the archival perspective is informed by the historical profession in critical ways, and students who successfully complete an archival curriculum must demonstrate a fundamental competency in the historical enterprise.

In particular, archival students should be competent regarding five areas drawn from history. First, archival students should be familiar with the methods of historical research. Historical method, including the ability to frame a historical question, identify sources, and evaluate and verify records, represents skills required by archivists to serve the needs both of professional historians and the many other individuals who seek information from archival records.

Second, archivists need an understanding of historiography. Historiography teaches archival students a critical point: that there are no fixed or permanent "historical truths." Rather, history, and by extension other disciplines, evolve both in terms of subject matter and interpretation, and archival practice must be prepared for such evolution. A general knowledge of historiography also helps define research strategies and techniques used by historians

and many other individuals who visit the archives.

In addition to an understanding of historical methods and historiography, students being educated to become archivists must become competent regarding a body of historical subject matter. This content-related material is drawn from the works of historians, historical sociologists, and historical anthropologists, and it may often require specialized studies undertaken by archivists themselves. This historical information can be categorized into three areas, composing the last three points where archival education and history overlap.

Archivists need to know about the history of organizational structure and development. Archivists need to learn about the history of technology and recordkeeping. Finally, archivists must know the broad contours of the history of the nation and topical areas in which they are working. Knowledge in these areas is essential if archivists are adequately to meet the challenges raised by the recorded information they examine and retain.

Today, archives is no longer a historical subdiscipline; rather it is an independent profession based on a distinct professional perspective. Archivists' independent judgment should not, however, obscure recognition of the continuing interdependence between the archival enterprise and a number of related disciplines, including history. Aspects of the historian's craft continue to make a vital contribution in the education of archivists.