

Doing the Best We Can? The Use of Collection Development Policies and Cooperative Collecting Activities at Manuscript Repositories

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Abstract

Written collection development policies and cooperative collecting activities are two tools that archivists are encouraged to use in the course of creating and adding to their repositories' collections. Written collection development policies are advocated as a way to ensure that collections have a coherent and well-defined focus, while cooperative collecting practices are seen as a way to ensure that related materials are not scattered among far-flung repositories and that repositories' scarce resources are not needlessly squandered on unnecessary competitiveness for collections. However, not only are there numerous impediments to the effectiveness of either of these tools, many repositories do not use them. A survey of manuscript repositories reveals some of the reasons why more repositories do not engage in these practices, while quantitatively demonstrating the benefits they offer to repositories that do.

Introduction

Archival work is a perfectionist's worse nightmare. One of the first lessons is that nothing is ever as exact in archival practice as it is in theory. If it isn't a lack of funds, staff, or time that prohibits the application of ideal archival theory, it is the discovery that "textbook" collections rarely exist, and many judgment calls and creative applications of archival theory are required before the first cubic foot is ever processed.

Archival collecting is no exception. Most of the literature on written collection development policies and cooperative collecting activities lists the benefits of each practice, accompanied by many caveats and cautions as to why these tools may not work ideally. In addition, not only are these tools imperfect, they are not widely used: a report issued in 1998 by the Council of

State Historical Records Coordinators (COSHRC), based on surveys of over thirty-five hundred repositories in twenty-one states, found that less than 40 percent of them had a collection development policy.¹ When survey respondents were asked to assign a rank between 0 (not a priority) to 3 (a major priority) to seventeen activities, creating acquisition policies received an average score of 1.21 (1 being a “minor priority”), making it second-to-last among survey respondents.² The COSHRC study revealed a similar lack of interest in cooperative collecting activities. When asked to rate the usefulness of six cooperative activities, respondents gave coordinated collecting policies an average ranking of 1.14 (1 being “of some use”). Only shared storage facilities ranked lower.³

In the less-than-ideal world of archival work, these results are perhaps not surprising. But the question remains: Why don’t more repositories engage in these activities? Also unanswered is how these tools are actually being used by manuscript repositories and what tangible benefits they bring, despite their limitations. In order to more fully explore archival collecting activities, a sample of manuscript repositories in the United States was surveyed regarding their use of collection development policies, their cooperative collecting activities, and some of the reasons behind their actions. The results not only provide measurable evidence of the benefits these tools offer, and confirm some of the impediments to their use, they provide some food for thought regarding past assumptions as to which problems are inevitable when collecting, and which ones might be somewhat ameliorated if only more repositories devoted the necessary time and resources to these collecting tools.

Literature Review

Collection Development Policies

Most authors point to F. Gerald Ham’s 1974 SAA presidential address calling for “activist archivists” (who play a role in selecting which records to acquire, and even actively solicit them) as the beginning of the archival focus on col-

¹ Victoria Irons Walch, comp., *Where History Begins: A Report on Historical Records Repositories in the United States* (Council of State Historical Records Coordinators, May 1998), 16. The text of the report is also available at <<http://www.coshrc.org/surveys/HRRS/hrrsmain.htm>>.

² Walch, *Where History Begins*, Figure 14 “Ranking of priorities from Question K.1,” Tables-35. Although creating acquisition policies would not be a priority to the repositories that already had them, other survey results suggest an overall lack of interest in them. When asked to describe the most pressing problem that their repository faced, only fifty respondents mentioned selection criteria and acquisition policies. The top responses were space and storage concerns (630 respondents); access and finding aids (595 respondents); staff, including the lack of time (568 respondents); processing backlogs (465 respondents); and storage conditions and environmental controls (423 respondents). These responses overwhelming dealt with current holdings rather than the policies necessary to guide future acquisitions (Walch, *Where History Begins*, Table K.2.a, Tables-36).

³ Walch, *Where History Begins*, 23.

lecting strategies; an interest that grew out of the changing nature of archival collecting in the 1970s and 1980s. Describing then-current archival collecting practices as random, fragmented, uncoordinated, and even accidental, Ham noted that “the real cause of concern is that there doesn’t seem to be any concern [that] our present data gathering methods are inadequate or that our fundamental problem is a lack of imaginative acquisition guidelines or comprehensive collecting strategies for all levels of archival activity.”⁴ He proposed an overall program of collection management as the solution to the five problems forcing archivists to change their collecting practices (structural changes in society that make organizational records increasingly important; the volume of twentieth-century records; the fact that, despite their bulk, individual records now hold less informational value than previously; the fleeting nature of some archival records, such as those of short-lived activist groups that often no longer exist by the time their records would be deemed historically important by former standards; and technology).⁵

When Ham took up the subject again in 1984, budgetary constraints had been added to the mix of factors “forcing archivists to replace their essentially unplanned approach to archival preservation with a ‘systematic, planned, documented process of building, maintaining, and preserving collections.’”⁶ Although Ham felt that “only by controlling what comes through their doors can archivists solve the major problems in modern record administration,” collection development policies were not among the six elements of collection management that he chose to discuss in more detail.⁷ Instead, he left it to other authors such as Jutta Reed-Scott and Faye Phillips, whose articles appeared at the same time as his, to address the role of collection development policies in collection management.

Reed-Scott’s discussion of the several components of a comprehensive collection management program referred to collection development policies as “an important first step” in collection planning, which is the first step in collection management. Even though repositories without institutional mandates on what to collect would “find the process of establishing collecting goals difficult and time-consuming,” Reed-Scott argued that written collection development policies “are needed by all archives,” for not only do they “sharpen the focus of the collection strategy and concentrate accessions in a clearly defined

⁴ F. Gerald Ham, “The Archival Edge,” *American Archivist* 38 (January 1975): 5, 7.

⁵ Ham, “The Archival Edge,” 8–10.

⁶ F. Gerald Ham, “Archival Choices: Managing the Historical Record in an Age of Abundance,” *American Archivist* 47 (Winter 1984): 13.

⁷ Ham, “Archival Choices,” 13. Ham’s six elements were interinstitutional cooperation in collecting, disciplined and documented appraisal, deaccessioning, prearchival control of records (i.e., records management), reducing the volume of records, and the analysis and planning for processing records once they have been acquired.

area,” making them “vital tools” in dealing with donors, the policies also “facilitate coordination of cooperation among local and regional archives.”⁸

Phillips focused specifically on collection development policies, providing archivists with an eighteen-part model policy based on components advocated in library literature adapted to the needs of archival records. Phillips saw the adoption of a model policy as aiding “in improved quality of manuscripts collections, decreased competition, and more careful use of limited resources.”⁹

However, the archival profession needed more than guidelines on how to construct a policy; it needed to be convinced that such policies could be adapted to all types of repositories and collections. John Grabowski, writing in 1985, noted that the utility of Phillips’s model “presupposes knowledge of use of collections, type of material to be collected, and parallel programs,” making it of “only general use at the outset of a program” to establish collections such as a regional ethnic archives.¹⁰ That same year, Joseph Anderson, discussing collecting policies at social history archives, similarly observed that the definition of a collecting policy as a “statement of specific, long-term goals,” assumes that “those who create collecting policies live in a stable world where the records potentially available within their collecting universe are known and the archive’s ability to acquire a portion of those records is predictable.”¹¹

While such a definition might work well for institutional archives, Anderson argued, for archivists at manuscript repositories, “knowledge of the records in their collecting universe is seldom complete.” This forces them to define their initial collecting parameters and determine which collecting strategies are best suited to the repository’s goals and resources “in order to develop a coherent, well-focused collecting program.”¹² In his discussion of the creation of a regional ethnic collecting program, Grabowski similarly concluded that, while broad guidelines are essential when first collecting in a new subject area, time and experience are needed to achieve “a finer focus:” “Only an evolutionary process can provide information concerning the collection types, research trends, and parallel solicitation programs that will permit the full definition of a collection policy.”¹³

Grabowski and Anderson saw additional limits to the usefulness of collection development policies—donor pressure, competition between repositories,

⁸ Jutta Reed-Scott, “Collection Management Strategies for Archivists,” *American Archivist* 47 (Winter 1984): 24–25.

⁹ Faye Phillips, “Developing Collecting Policies for Manuscript Collections,” *American Archivist* 47 (Winter 1984): 30–42. The quote is from page 42.

¹⁰ John J. Grabowski, “Fragments or Components: Theme Collections in a Local Setting,” *American Archivist* 48 (Summer 1985): 314, n. 27.

¹¹ R. Joseph Anderson, “Managing Change and Chance: Collecting Policies in Social History Archives,” *American Archivist* 48 (Summer 1985): 297.

¹² Anderson, “Managing Change and Chance,” 297.

¹³ Grabowski, “Fragments or Components,” 313.

and serendipity. As described by Grabowski, “pressure from donors, trustees, and faculty has traditionally wrenched institutional policies off course, and in many instances the spirit of interinstitutional competition has often lured curators beyond the rational limits of their collections.”¹⁴ For Anderson, the cyclical collecting approach of “exploration, acquisition, and assessment” allows the repository to “better respond to chance and opportunity, which are inevitable and important factors in any collecting program.”¹⁵

These limitations notwithstanding, by the 1990s collection development policies and collection management strategies were moved to the shrine of archival theory—something that all repositories should have. Their actual use and development, however, was all but ignored as archivists’ attention turned to other issues and challenges.¹⁶ In 1992 the need for collection development policies was codified in Section III of the Code of Ethics for Archivists, which states that archivists shall acquire materials of long-term value “in accordance with their institutions’ purposes, stated policies, and resources.”¹⁷ How to address the limitations raised by Grabowski and Anderson, and whether it is even possible, remained unanswered.

Cooperative Collecting Activities

Archivists have been even less optimistic about the chances of success for interinstitutional cooperation—one of the six strategies to deal with the joint problem of abundant records and limited resources discussed by Gerald Ham in 1984.¹⁸ Although adopted from cooperative activities among libraries, cooperation among archival repositories takes a much different form. As noted by Anne Kenney in a 1983 discussion of statewide archival networks, the unique nature of archival collections means that there are no cost savings to be realized from copy cataloging. In addition, there is “no economic incentive to make joint acquisitions because archival collections are not usually purchased anyway.”¹⁹

¹⁴ Grabowski, “Fragments or Components,” 305.

¹⁵ Anderson, “Managing Change and Chance,” 298.

¹⁶ The one exception is Faye Phillips’s 1995 article applying her model collection development policy to the often-voluminous records of members of Congress: “Congressional Papers: Collection Development Policies,” *American Archivist* 58 (Summer 1995): 258–69.

¹⁷ Society of American Archivists, “Code of Ethics for Archivists and Commentary,” *Provenance* 11, nos. 1 and 2 (1993): 9–10. The Code of Ethics is also available from the SAA web site at <http://www.archivists.org/governance/handbook/app_ethics.html>. Interestingly, only the commentary that accompanies the Code of Ethics specifies that acquisition policies should be in writing.

¹⁸ Ham, “Archival Choices,” 13.

¹⁹ Anne R. Kenney, “Network Funding and Structure,” in Richard A. Cameron, Timothy Ericson, and Anne R. Kenney, “Archival Cooperation: A Critical Look at Statewide Archival Networks,” *American Archivist* 46 (Fall 1983): 429, 431.

Still, most authors agree that there is room for some form of cooperation, such as “informing repositories specializing in other geographic and subject areas of the location of archival materials on their subject, and encouraging the deposit of such materials in those repositories,” as suggested by Linda Henry in 1980; and the “informal exchange of donor information,” or even a “formalized . . . central lead or contact file,” as proposed by Richard Cameron in his 1983 examination of state archival networks.²⁰

However, these same authors and others were quick to note the almost insurmountable challenges to even the most basic level of cooperative activity. Not only are repositories faced with “a lack of accountability and of an authority to compel cooperation,” as suggested by Kenney, they are also faced with the fact that, as noted by Cameron, “while there are rewards to be gained through cooperation . . . it is unlikely that the rewards will be sufficient to change our well-established patterns of behavior and accelerate our cooperative efforts.”²¹ The “well-established patterns” referred to by Cameron are those long-cited by many authors as impediments to cooperation: competition among repositories for collections.

As acknowledged in the Commentary to the Code of Ethics of Archivists, “institutions are independent and there will always be room for legitimate competition.”²² The inevitability of competition not only results from each repository looking after its own interests, but from the very nature of archival materials. In 1961 David Duniway noted that “not all conflicts between [repositories] are based on competition.”²³ Tracing the life span of a hypothetical individual, Dunway discussed the many different repositories that the individual’s papers might appeal to and be appropriate for. In 1983 Frank Burke similarly described “full cooperation and parcelling out of collection areas” as an “unattainable goal,” because “the personal papers that we so avidly solicit because they are ‘just right’ for our acquisition policy also happen to be ‘just right’ for another institution’s acquisition policy because we are dealing with the written remains of complex personalities who led complex lives.”²⁴

Even Reed-Scott, who, like Phillips, saw part of the solution to competition for collections being, as described by Phillips, “alleviated by usable, well-defined, written collecting policies,” allowing “established goals and purposes [to] be met without competition and by communication among collecting

²⁰ Linda Henry, “Collecting Policies of Special Subject Repositories,” *American Archivist* 43 (Winter 1980): 60; Richard A. Cameron, “Statewide Archival Networks: Implementing the Strategy of Cooperation,” in Cameron, Ericson, and Kenney, “Archival Cooperation: A Critical Look at Statewide Archival Networks,” 425.

²¹ Kenney, “Network Funding and Structure,” 429, 431; Cameron, “Statewide Archival Networks,” 428.

²² Society of American Archivists, “Code of Ethics for Archivists and Commentary,” 10.

²³ David C. Duniway, “Conflicts in Collecting,” *American Archivist* 24 (January 1961): 55.

²⁴ Frank G. Burke, “Archival Cooperation,” *American Archivist* 46 (Summer 1983): 294.

areas,”²⁵ acknowledged that some competition remains inevitable. She noted that while “collection policies will facilitate coordination and cooperation among local and regional archives,” they cannot, by themselves, “halt this fragmentation [of collections due to the proliferation of repositories] or end the competition for collections.”²⁶ For most authors, Ham’s suggestion in 1984 that archivists “look beyond an essentially introspective and isolated approach to archival accessioning and consider how individual institutional efforts might contribute to a broader regional or national historical collecting process,”²⁷ sounds good in theory, but in practice seems like an unattainable ideal.

Even Burke’s assertion that cooperation in collecting is possible “if we concentrate on those research materials that do have a logical place: regional collections that should not leave the region; papers of municipal leaders that should not wander from the city; county records that do not belong in the state capital or anywhere but the county; or records of local businesses, important to the economy of the community, that do not belong in an unrelated university hundreds of miles away”²⁸ is debatable. Such seemingly local collections can still have broader audiences, such as the papers of an elected city official who was heavily involved with the activities of his political party for which there might be statewide or national interest, or the records of the local business that fit into the collection of small business records maintained by the department of special collections at a university hundreds of miles away. Local collections can also create grounds for competition between local repositories. Would the papers of a city labor activist be best suited in the local museum archives that focuses on the history of the city, or at the local university that has, among its collecting focuses, labor history in the region?

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The literature can be discouraging. While advocating written collection development policies and the use of cooperative collecting activities, it often offers little hope that the cited impediments can be overcome, and even less solid evidence confirming the purported benefits of these practices. The survey results confirm all of the impediments authors cite, but they also suggest that the situation may not be as bleak as it seems. Cooperation is possible, collection development policies can be written, and there are definite benefits to be realized when repositories invest in these practices.

²⁵ Phillips, “Developing Collecting Policies for Manuscript Collections,” 31–32.

²⁶ Reed-Scott, “Collection Management Strategies for Archivists,” 25.

²⁷ Ham, “Archival Choices,” 13.

²⁸ Burke, “Archival Cooperation,” 294–95.

Methodology

In March and April 2000 a survey regarding current use of collection development policies and cooperative collecting activities was sent to one hundred manuscript repositories in the United States.²⁹ The surveyed repositories were selected from a subset of the membership of the Society of American Archivists' Manuscript Repositories Section.³⁰ Membership in the Manuscript Repositories Section is intended for "curators and other employees of repositories that voluntarily collect and administer holdings not generated by the organization or its parent institution."³¹ The increased relevancy of collection development policies and cooperative collecting for repositories that voluntarily collect materials, rather than those that have an institutional mandate to collect records, made the members of the Manuscript Repositories Section a logical group to survey.³²

Of the one hundred surveys sent out, eighty were returned, although two surveys (one of which was only partially completed) were received after the results had been tabulated, and were not included in the final results.³³ Of the seventy-eight surveys included in the tabulated results, thirty-six (42.5 percent) were from manuscript and/or special collection repositories located at a college or university, eleven (14.1 percent) were from "other" repositories (including independent research libraries, nonprofit organizations, and a combina-

²⁹ The survey, the initial cover letter, and follow-up mailings were created using Don A. Dillman's *Mail and Telephone Surveys: The Total Design Method* (New York: Wiley, 1978). The author would like to thank Dorothy Christiansen, former head of the M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University at Albany, State University of New York, for being a pre-tester for the survey and for her input on both the survey and the initial cover letter. The author would also like to thank Philip B. Eppard, her advisor at the School of Information Science and Policy, University at Albany, State University of New York, for his input on the survey and initial cover letter.

³⁰ The author would like to thank Teresa Brinati, director of publishing for the Society of American Archivists, for providing her with a list of the members of the Manuscript Repositories Section as of February 2000. Because of budgetary and time constraints, and in an attempt to ensure a high response rate, after an initial review of the membership of the Manuscript Repositories Section, it was decided to select the sample from only a subset of the members in order to avoid the survey being sent to individuals to whom it would not be applicable or relevant. As a result of various weeding criteria, the original list of 382 individual members of the Manuscript Repositories Section was narrowed down to a subset of 150, from which a random sample of 100 names was selected.

³¹ Society of American Archivists, *Directory of Individual and Institutional Members 1998-99* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1998): iii.

³² Even using the Manuscript Repositories Section, there was the possibility that some recipients of the survey, particularly those in combined archives and special collection departments at colleges and universities, would engage in both voluntary and mandated collecting activities. Therefore, the cover letter that accompanied the survey asked any respondent whose repository also had an institutional mandate to collect the records of its parent organization to answer the survey questions based solely on the repository's collecting activities outside the records of its parent organization.

³³ The author is grateful to those who took the time to complete and return the survey. The survey was conducted for use in preparing a research seminar paper in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a master of library science degree, School of Information Science and Policy, University at Albany, State University of New York. This article is a revised version of that paper.

tion of historical societies and/or libraries and museums); nine (11.5 percent) were from local or regional historical societies, six each (representing 7.7 percent each) were from public libraries and religious organizations, five each (representing 6.0 percent each) were from state historical societies and museums, and one (1.3 percent) was from a genealogical society. Although repositories located at colleges and universities represent almost half of the respondents to the survey (and accounted for a similar percentage of survey recipients), this does not necessarily limit the usefulness of the survey results. The academic repositories that made up 14 percent of the respondents participating in the COSHRC survey collectively held more than half of all of the records reported in that survey,³⁴ making their participation in the present study a useful demonstration of how repositories responsible for so many records engage in collecting activities.

Survey Findings

The complete compiled survey results are included as Appendix A. The following discussion highlights the results.

Written Collection Development Policies

The first section of the survey asked for the reasons why manuscript repositories do or do not have written collection development policies, and about the characteristics of the written collection development policies of survey respondents. Fifty-one of the seventy-eight survey respondents (65.4 percent) reported written collection development policies; much better than the COSHRC study result of less than 40 percent.³⁵ Part of the reason for that may be the population surveyed in the present study: professional archivists perhaps familiar with the professional literature on the subject. While at only seven respondents' repositories (13.7 percent) were the collection development policies created at the same time as the repository, those seven policies were adopted in 1979, 1980, 1981, 1991, 1994, and 1999 (one respondent did not provide a year), all after the importance of collection management and collection development policies had begun to be stressed in archival literature. Among all fifty-one repositories with written collection development policies, almost three-quarters were created in the 1980s (17 respondents, 33.3 percent) and 1990s (20 respondents, 39.2 percent).

Among the respondents whose repository's written collection develop-

³⁴ Walch, *Where History Begins*, 10.

³⁵ For purposes of the survey, a written collection development policy was defined as a written policy "identifying the kinds of historical records [the repository] accepts and that it seeks to acquire."

ment policy was adopted after the repository's establishment, the most common reason for the creation of a written policy, cited by six of the sixteen respondents who were aware of a specific incident (37.5 percent), was a staff change and/or the hiring of a professional archivist. As indicated in the cover letter accompanying one completed survey, the respondent's answers about his/her repository's collection development policy were based on a mission statement he/she had created in order "to establish a direction and emphasis for our collection efforts" after joining the repository and finding "rather hodge-podge holdings."³⁶

The other factors leading to the creation of written collection development policies at responding repositories were a mix of external forces relating to broader organizational collecting activities, and repository-specific factors directly connected to the use for which written collection development policies are intended. With the exception of the one respondent who indicated that a collection development policy was created as required by a grant application, the responses overall reflect a solid understanding of the value that a written collection development policy can have for a repository. Two respondents each cited the beginning of active collecting activities at their repositories and a desire to refuse offered collections as the reasons for the creation of a written collection development policy. One respondent reported that his/her repository created a written policy in order to deaccession collections. The second most common reason for the creation of a written policy, cited by four respondents (25.0 percent) was as part of a wider organizational accountability project or activities designed to define collecting activities for the larger organization. While the exact motivation of the repository whose respondent indicated that the policy was created in connection with the development of a web site for the repository is unknown, it could be hypothesized that there was a need to clearly describe the focus of the repository within the public forum of the Internet. Finally, one respondent indicated that, while there was no specific incident that led to the creation of a written collection development policy at his/her repository, there was a sense that repositories for the type of materials the repository specializes in "were proliferating and the pie should be divided."

Similarly, the elements included in the written collection development

³⁶ The survey results also tentatively suggest that creating a written collection development policy is only possible if the professional staff at a repository has the time to do so—time allowed to them if there are clerical, paraprofessional, intern, and/or volunteer staff available to perform some repository functions. The information gathered in the last section of the survey sought to determine if repository size (the number of patrons served annually, staff size, and budget) has an affect on whether a repository has a written collection development policy. The results are of limited use because a number of respondents indicated that their reported answers to these questions represented their institution as a whole, not just the manuscript repository, and many did not provide any information regarding their organization's budget because the budget is not something they are involved with. However, there does appear to be some correlation between staffing levels and whether a repository has a written collection development policy. The connection seems to be based more on overall staff size rather than just the presence of a professional archivist.

Table 1 Eight Most Common Elements Included in Written Collection Development Policies (N = 51)

Element	Number of Respondents
Statement of purpose of repository and its holdings	47 (92.2%)
Geographical areas that are collected	43 (84.3%)
Subject areas that are collected	43 (84.3%)
Physical formats that are collected	38 (74.5%)
Clientele to be served by repository's holdings	30 (58.8%)
Chronological periods that are collected	29 (56.9%)
Types of activities to be supported by repository's holdings	27 (52.9%)
Strengths of existing holdings of repository	26 (51.0%)

policies of survey respondents reflect a clear understanding of the purpose of such policies. The eight most common elements (which appeared in over half of the respondents' policies) are listed in Table 1.

While only two of the fifty-one respondents who have a written collection development policy (3.9 percent) reported all eighteen elements that Phillips included in her model collection development policy (the average number of elements per respondent was 7.90), the most common elements demonstrate the intent of the creators of these policies to clearly define the types of materials to be collected, and why. Other elements, such as the identification of weaknesses in the repository's current holdings (17.6 percent of respondents), the procedures for reviewing and revising the policy (15.7 percent of respondents), or the identification of resource-sharing policies (7.8 percent of respondents), were less common, perhaps seen as somewhat ancillary to the primary role of the policy. In addition, some respondents indicated that certain elements of Phillips's model, such as deaccessioning policies, were included in separate policies maintained by their repository, not in the collection development policy itself. Library-wide policies and procedures and donation forms were also cited as including some of the elements listed in Phillips's model collection development policy.

Yet despite these results demonstrating professional awareness of the reasons for having a written collection development policy, the survey revealed that not everyone is convinced of the usefulness of, or need for, collection development policies. Table 2 lists the reasons given by twenty-seven survey respondents (34.6 percent) as to why their repositories do not have written collection development policies (and the reasons one respondent reported why his/her repository has a very outdated written policy).

Although the most common reason given by respondents was a lack of time to prepare a policy, almost as many respondents indicated that there was no written collection development policy because the repository did not want to be limited in the scope of what it could collect or because it was not felt that a

Table 2 Reasons Manuscript Repositories Do Not Have Written Collection Development Policies (N = 28; respondents could provide more than one answer)

Reason	Number of Respondents
Lack of time to prepare policy	9 (32.1%)
Do not feel written policy is necessary	8 (28.6%)
Policy has been drafted but not yet adopted	7 (25.0%)
Lack of staff to prepare policy	7 (25.0%)
Do not want to be limited by written policy	6 (21.4%)
Other ³⁷	6 (21.4%)
Collecting is not a priority	5 (17.9%)
Lack of leadership to advocate policy creation	4 (14.3%)
Lack of funds to prepare policy	1 (3.6%)

written policy was necessary. One respondent elaborated on the back of the survey that his/her repository is affiliated with a specialized institute that provides training in a specific field: "This . . . means that people assume that we are only interested in materials relating to [the field], making a formal policy unnecessary. Deciding whether to accept collections on a case-by-case basis works well in a small institution with limited staffing and storage space."

Three respondents echoed the views of Anderson and Grabowski (that repositories need time to refine their collecting focus), with two respondents citing their newness as the reason for not having a written collection development policy, and another respondent indicating that it was not felt that a written policy was necessary "at this time." As stated by one of these respondents, "We are early in our collecting activities and have not yet determined our final areas of specialization." It is unclear, however, why the initial collecting focus of each of these repositories, even if broadly defined and subject to revision, could not be in writing. While the written collection development policies of only 15.7 percent of respondents include procedures for monitoring, reviewing, and revising the policy and the repository's collecting program, the policies of thirty-nine of the fifty-one respondents with written collection development policies (76.5 percent) have, at some point, been revised. In addition, when asked to describe the specificity of their written policies, only one of the fifty respondents answering the question (2.0 percent) indicated that the policy was very specific without much room for interpretation. In contrast, over half of the respondents with written collection development policies (28, 56.0 percent) reported that, while the policy was relatively specific, there was some room for interpretation. Putting a collection development policy in writing does not per-

³⁷ "Other" reasons cited: plans exist to write a policy in the near future; policy preparation is to be part of overall strategic planning; the repository is a new department; the repository has just begun collecting activities and its final collecting focus has not yet been determined; the organization as a whole has a collecting policy, but not the individual manuscript division; and rapid changes in collecting practices due to changes in the "political" climate and the staff.

manently fix or restrict a repository's collecting options, so it is unfortunate that some archivists appear to resist written policies for fear of their constraints.

Other, perhaps more legitimate, factors also limit the creation of written collection development policies. While only five respondents (17.9 percent) offered that collecting is not a priority as a reason why their repositories do not have written collection development policies, other survey results also suggest the influence that the level of collecting can have on whether a repository has a written collection development policy. First, the frequency with which a "lack of time" to prepare a written policy was cited suggests that, at those repositories, activities other than collecting are greater priorities. In addition, when asked to describe their repository's current collecting efforts, 22.2 percent of the repositories without written collection development policies (6 of 27) indicated that collecting is a priority,³⁸ compared to 43.1 percent of the repositories with written collection development policies (22 of 51). In contrast, although no one indicated that his/her repository was not currently accepting new collections, at 44 percent of the repositories with unwritten collection development policies (11 of 25), active collecting was not taking place, compared to 13.7 percent of those with written collection development policies (7 of 51).

Nonetheless, regardless of their current level of collecting activities, the survey results suggest that some archival professionals remain unconvinced of the need for written collection development policies, or do not believe that such policies can be adapted to the needs of manuscript repositories. One respondent indicated that a written policy was not in place because "collecting practices change so rapidly due to 'political' climate and changes in staff." While the latter part of the response directly discounts one reason for having a written policy—to create continuity in collecting regardless of staff changes—the first part suggests a certain resignation to elements beyond the archivist's control, which no policy, written or unwritten, can combat. The responses to the second part of the survey, however, suggest that while various "political" factors may never be totally conquered, a written collection development policy may help limit their power.

Using Collection Development Policies

The second part of the survey asked respondents in what types of situations their repository's collection development policy has been used, under what circumstances it has been ignored, and how it is disseminated.³⁹ Faye Phillips has

³⁸ Somewhat disconcertingly, included among these six were the two survey respondents who reported neither a written nor an unwritten collection development policy at their respective repositories.

³⁹ Of the twenty-seven survey respondents who did not have a written collection development policy at their repository, twenty-five (92.6 percent) did have some form of unwritten policy that identified the types of historical records that the repository collects.

Table 3 Reasons Manuscript Repositories Have Ignored Their Written and Unwritten Collection Development Policies to Accept an Out-of-Scope Collection (Respondents could provide more than one answer)

Reason	Total (N = 33)	Written Policy (N = 21)	Unwritten Policy (N = 12)
Potential impact of refusal on donor relationship	23 (69.7%)	13 (61.9%)	10 (83.3%)
Did not want to risk collection being destroyed if not placed in a repository	16 (48.5%)	12 (57.1%)	4 (33.3%)
Did not want to pass up opportunity	10 (30.3%)	7 (33.3%)	3 (25.0%)
Other ⁴¹	6 (18.2%)	4 (19.0%)	2 (16.7%)
Potential publicity value of the collection to the repository	5 (15.2%)	3 (14.3%)	2 (16.7%)
Value of collection as leverage for additional funding, staffing, and/or space	4 (12.1%)	3 (14.3%)	1 (8.3%)
Did not want collection to end up at another repository	2 (6.1%)	2 (9.5%)	0

noted that “many donors of twentieth-century materials are alive when their papers are received by a manuscript collection; therefore, a permanent and lengthy relationship must be established between the donor and the institution.”⁴⁰ The survey results reflect the awareness among repositories of the importance of this relationship, as well as on which side much of the power lies—that of the donor. Table 3 lists the reasons why both written and unwritten collection development policies have been ignored (or as one respondent put it, “shall we say bent?”) in order to accept an out-of-scope collection. Donors lead the list.

As shown in Table 3, repositories with unwritten collection development policies were more likely to ignore that policy because of donor relations than repositories with written collection development policies. As noted by one respondent whose repository has an unwritten collection development policy, “Occasionally we have to appease donors or accept one collection in order to get the collection we *really* want.” While such a statement could no doubt be applicable to a repository with a written collection development policy, other survey results suggest that the form of collection development policy may also be a deciding factor.

When respondents were asked if their repository had ever been pressured to accept a collection that fell outside the scope of its collection development policy, thirty-six of the seventy-six respondents with some form of collection development policy (47.4 percent) answered “yes.” Of the fifty-one repositories

⁴⁰ Phillips, “Developing Collecting Policies for Manuscript Collections,” 33.

⁴¹ “Other” reasons included the order of a superior or administrator (3 respondents); the collection was accepted by an administrator without consulting the policy; the research value of the materials; and “serendipitous interconnections” with other collections held at the repository.

with written collection development policies, twenty-eight (54.9 percent) had experienced such pressure, while eight of the twenty-five repositories with unwritten collection development policies (32.0 percent) had experienced such pressure.⁴² When asked how the situation was handled, fifteen respondents indicated that their repository had refused out-of-scope collections that it was being pressured to accept. Thirteen of them were repositories with written collection development policies (46.4 percent of 28), while only two were repositories with unwritten collection development policies (25.0 percent of 8). Once again, donors were a primary factor. Among repositories pressured to accept an out-of-scope collection, in the case of thirteen of the twenty-eight with written collection development policies (46.4 percent), and five of the eight with unwritten collection development policies (62.5 percent), the pressure had come from donors. As noted by one respondent on the back of the survey form, “often donors have very definite ideas of where a collection should be housed and it is often difficult to persuade them otherwise.”

Donors are not the only problem, however. Slightly more involved in pressuring repositories to accept out-of-scope collections were the administrators of those repositories. Of the thirty-six repositories pressured to accept out-of-scope collections, nineteen (52.8 percent) were pressured by administrators of the parent organization of the repository, representing fifteen of the twenty-eight repositories with written collection development policies (53.6 percent) and four of the eight repositories with unwritten collection development policies (50.0 percent). Among the “other” reasons reported in Table 3, four respondents indicated that their repository’s collection development policy had been ignored in order to accept an out-of-scope collection based on the order of a superior and/or administrator, or because an administrator had accepted a collection without consulting the archival staff. The influence of administrators in acquisition decisions was also cited by two respondents as one of the reasons why more cooperative collecting activities do not take place among manuscript repositories. One respondent noted that his/her repository did not have a collection development policy *per se*; instead, collecting is limited to the director’s circle of friends, and the resulting unwritten collection development policy is extremely broad. Another respondent opined that the biggest problem archivists face when collecting is “the demands from development officers who do not understand (or know) the Archives collecting policy or who simply do not want to walk within its parameters.”

It seems unfortunate then that four respondents indicated that their repos-

⁴² The difference in the rate with which pressure was received is intriguing. While difficult to measure concretely, the explanation may be that repositories with unwritten collection development policies do not receive more pressure to accept out-of-scope collections because their policies, being unwritten, are broad and/or flexible enough to accept collections before the “being-pressured” stage is reached. For one respondent at least, his/her repository’s unwritten collection development policy is “so broad” that situations such as being pressured to accept out-of-scope collections “rarely, if ever,” arise.

itories lack written collection development policies because of a lack of leadership to create the policy, since, regardless of the source of the pressure, having a written collection development policy appears to make a repository somewhat more “pressure-proof.” Similarly, unwritten collection development policies appear to be less effective in enabling repositories to refuse out-of-scope collections or in justifying the acceptance of a controversial collection. Forty-one of the fifty-one respondents with written collection development policies (80.4 percent) reported having cited their repository’s collection development policy as a reason to decline a collection, compared to eighteen of the twenty-five repositories with unwritten collection development policies (72.0 percent). Among the twenty-eight repositories overall (37.3 percent) that have used their collection development policy to justify the acquisition of a controversial collection, four were among the twenty-four repositories with unwritten collection development policies answering that question (16.7 percent), compared to twenty-four of the fifty-one repositories with written collection development policies (47.1 percent).⁴³ As noted by Frank Boles in his 1994 article on the acquisition of Ku Klux Klan materials by the Clarke Historical Library, because such materials “fell squarely” within that repository’s draft collection development policy, the staff could respond to criticisms of the acquisition by maintaining that they were acting “as a result of a reasoned and defensible collecting policy rather than as conscious or unconscious agents of institutional racism.”⁴⁴

Yet despite these advantages, a written collection development policy does not make a repository totally immune from acquiring out-of-scope collections for the variety of reasons listed in Table 3. In fact, repositories *with* written collection development policies were more likely to cite the second most common reason (a concern that the collection in question would be destroyed if not accepted by a repository) than those without written collection development policies. While this seemingly altruistic act may spring from noble intentions, it is questionable whether accepting such collections, rather than assisting the donor in finding a more suitable repository, really serves the best interest of the collection, or the repository holding it.

Similarly, repositories with written collection development policies were slightly more likely to cite the third most popular reason for ignoring a collec-

⁴³ It should be noted, however, that a large number of respondents from repositories with unwritten collection development policies (10, 41.7 percent) did not know if their repository’s policy had ever been used to justify a controversial collection.

⁴⁴ Frank Boles, “‘Just a Bunch of Bigots’: A Case Study in the Acquisition of Controversial Materials,” *Archival Issues* 19, no. 1 (1994): 54, 55, 59. Interestingly, despite this use of the Clarke’s draft collection development policy, of the “lessons learned” from the experience, Boles did not stress the need for, or usefulness of, written collection development policies. Although “the general public does not truly appreciate the need for controversial acquisitions” and “archivists need to educate the public on this point or be prepared for public opinion to influence archival documentation activities in ways archivists will likely find uncongenial,” Boles did not mention the role that written collection development policies could play in this educational effort (Boles, “‘Just a Bunch of Bigots,’” 64).

tion development policy: a desire to not pass up the opportunity to obtain the collection, cited by ten respondents (30.3 percent made up of seven of the twenty-one repositories with written collection development policies answering the question [33.3 percent], and three of the twelve repositories with unwritten collection development policies [25.0 percent]). Unfortunately, it is impossible to know exactly what sort of motivations underlie such actions, and whether they were competitive in nature. Only two respondents [6.1 percent], however, indicated that they had, at some point, collected an out-of-scope collection specifically because they did not want the collection to end up at another repository. Also unanswered is how an out-of-scope collection can be important to a repository, although, as suggested by one respondent, “serendipitous interconnections” with other collections held by the repository can make an out-of-scope collection valuable. Perhaps a written collection development policy makes such fortuity easier to recognize.

Overall, while there may never be a complete cure for powerfully insistent donors, woefully ignorant administrators, archival altruism, and serendipity, the survey results suggest that clearly defined collection development policies, particularly in written form, can help, especially with donors. As Jutta Reed-Scott noted in 1984, collection development policies will assist repositories “in dealing with unwanted materials” by providing “a *documented* rationale for rejecting gifts that are outside of the overall collecting scope.”⁴⁵ It should perhaps be of concern, then, that although approximately half of the seventy-five survey respondents who indicated how they provide information about their collection development policy to donors reported routinely discussing their collection development policy with both solicited and unsolicited donors, fourteen respondents (18.7 percent) report that they do not usually discuss their repository’s collection development policy with solicited donors, while twelve (16 percent) reported that they do not usually discuss the policy with unsolicited donors.

In addition, almost one quarter of these survey respondents (17 of 75 [22.7 percent]) indicated that they do not mention their repository’s collection development policy with unsolicited donors unless the collection falls outside of the repository’s collecting focus. While it is difficult to measure the impact of this approach on donors, the higher reliance on this method by repositories with unwritten collection development policies (9 of 25 [36.0 percent] compared to 8 of 50 with written collection development policies [16.0 percent]) may help explain why those with unwritten collection development policies are also less successful at refusing out-of-scope collections. If a repository is more forthcoming about its collection development policy, it may help eliminate the risk that a donor (or even the repository’s administration) will view the mentioning of the policy only when the repository wants to refuse a collection as an afterthought or

⁴⁵ Reed-Scott, “Collection Management Strategies for Archivists,” 25 (emphasis added).

excuse, rather than a legitimate rationale. Boles's assessment of the acquisition of KKK materials by the Clarke Historical Library suggests that the controversy reached the level it did in part because the Clarke staff was "not forceful enough" in making the argument early on in the acquisition process that it was acting in accordance with its defined policy.⁴⁶ Perhaps similar observations could be made in situations when the case is not made soon enough as to why a repository will *not* accept an out-of-scope collection. How can archivists expect others to respect their repository's collection development policy when they themselves treat it as an occasional "tool" rather than an integral part of the repository?

It is encouraging then that eighteen of seventy-four respondents (24.3 percent) indicated that their repository's written collection development policy is included on their repository's web site, while another seven (9.5 percent) indicated that a summary of the policy is on the web site. In addition, five respondents reported plans to put the collection development policy on their web site in the near future. Although the survey did not ask whether or not respondents' repositories have web sites, the results still suggest an effort by repositories to make their collection development policies easily accessible and widely disseminated; a step that will not only make such information readily available to potential users and donors, but also to archivists at other repositories.

Cooperation in Collecting

It is important for archivists to be aware of the collection development policies of other repositories because, as noted by Jutta Reed-Scott, "the shared understanding of collection strategies will engender cooperative collection development."⁴⁷ Such sharing may also help eliminate some competition for collections. In his discussion of the Clarke Historical Library's acquisition of KKK materials, Boles noted that "when it became clear that there were two institutions . . . interested in obtaining the papers and possessing sufficient financial means to bid [on them], a face-to-face meeting which focused on collecting policies and current holdings led to a decision by the director of the Bentley [Historical Library] to withdraw in favor of the Clarke."⁴⁸

Perhaps Frank Burke summed it up best when he observed that "the nature of cooperation implies bowing to a more appropriate repository when the wrong collection comes our way as well as recognizing reasonable bounds for solicitation. Perhaps the archivist's code should include the Golden Rule."⁴⁹ Many survey respondents are apparently following that rule. When asked why

⁴⁶ Boles, "Just a Bunch of Bigots," 59.

⁴⁷ Reed-Scott, "Collection Management Strategies for Archivists," 25.

⁴⁸ Frank Boles, "Just a Bunch of Bigots," 58.

⁴⁹ Burke, "Archival Cooperation," 294–95.

Table 4 Reasons Collections Referred Elsewhere (Respondents could provide more than one answer)

Reason	Total (N = 75)	Written Policy (N = 49)	Unwritten Policy (N = 24)	No Form of Policy (N = 2)
Offered collection outside existing collections and/or collecting policy	68 (90.7%)	45 (91.8%)	21 (87.5%)	2 (100.0%)
Offered collection fit own collecting focus but was better suited to another repository's collecting focus	31 (41.3%)	23 (46.9%)	7 (29.2%)	1 (50.0%)
Did not meet appraisal criteria	15 (20.0%)	12 (24.5%)	3 (12.5%)	0
Lack of staff to process	12 (16.0%)	9 (18.4%)	3 (12.5%)	0
Other ⁵⁰	12 (16.0%)	10 (20.4%)	2 (8.3%)	0
Lack of funds to process	11 (14.7%)	8 (16.3%)	3 (12.5%)	0

their repositories have referred collections elsewhere, although the most popular reason by far (cited by 90.7 percent of the respondents answering the question) was because the collection was out-of-scope for the repository, the second most common reason, cited by thirty-one respondents (41.3 percent), was that, even though the collection was “in scope” for their own repository, it fit better into the collecting focus of another. An additional three respondents reported making referrals because of related collections held at other repositories. Once again, the existence of a written collection development policy appears to be an influential factor. As shown in Table 4, twenty-three of those referring in-scope collections to other repositories were among the forty-nine respondents with written collection development policies answering the question (46.9 percent) while seven were among the twenty-four respondents with unwritten collection development policies answering the question (29.2 percent).

The answers reported in Table 4 also suggest that some of the factors suggested in the archival literature as destined to increase cooperative activities, while certainly present, are not overwhelmingly influential. In 1983 Anne Kenney suggested that reduced competition for collections resulting from state networks “was probably inevitable anyway,” because “as repositories run out of storage room, they are less inclined to worry about whether some other agency scoops them on a collection.” Kenney echoed John Fleckner’s earlier observation that a “lack of storage space for ever larger collections” would be one of many factors increasing cooperative activities among archival repositories.⁵¹ Contrary to these suggestions, only two of the seventy-five survey respondents referring collections elsewhere (2.7 percent) reported doing so because of a lack of space, while eleven (14.7 percent) cited a lack of funds to process col-

⁵⁰ “Other” reasons included lack of funds to purchase (4 respondents); related collections elsewhere (3 respondents); lack of funds/space to store (2 respondents); to avoid splitting a collection, collection was not worth the resources to process and maintain, and unusual format (1 respondent each).

⁵¹ Kenney, “Network Funding and Structure,” 430; Fleckner, “Cooperation as a Strategy,” 457.

lections, and twelve (16.0 percent) indicated that collections had been referred elsewhere due to a lack of staff to process them. While only four of thirty-three respondents (12.1 percent) indicated that they had, at some point, accepted an out-of-scope collection as leverage for additional funding, staffing, and/or space, it certainly seems possible that *in-scope* collections may be acquired for these purposes, and that a lack of space is not the deterrent to collecting nor the catalyst for cooperation that it had been anticipated to be. Instead, as discussed above, once again, a determining factor appears to be the form of the collection development policy at the repository.

The frequency with which survey respondents indicated that their repositories refer collections to other repositories also suggests that repositories with unwritten collection development policies are more likely to keep any collection that is offered to them. Despite the fact that sixteen of the twenty-five repositories with unwritten policies (64.0 percent) reported referring collections elsewhere either very frequently or occasionally, more than one-third of them referred collections infrequently or never. This figure compares with nine of the fifty-one repositories with written collection development policies (17.6 percent) that referred collections infrequently or never. Repositories with unwritten collection development policies were also less likely to receive referrals from other repositories. The question remains, however, as to whether this is a result of the unwritten collection development policy (perhaps because other repositories are not aware of the repository's collecting focus, or unsure of it because it is not in written form) or some other factor, such as whether or not the repository belongs to some sort of collecting "understanding," which is another form that archival cooperation can take.

Only seven survey respondents (9.0 percent, all of which have written collection development policies) indicated that their repository is part of a formal (i.e., written) understanding regarding its collecting activities. In contrast, fifty respondents (64.1 percent) indicated that their repositories are involved in informal understandings. The uncertainty with which a number of respondents gave the number of repositories involved in the understanding (either not providing a number or giving a range) suggests that some of these understandings may be quite informal indeed. Yet, regardless of their form, the survey results suggest that being involved in some sort of understanding increases the frequency with which referrals are made to other repositories, and with which referrals from others are received, as summarized in Table 5.

One explanation for this might be that being part of a collecting understanding provides repositories with known repositories to make referrals to, increasing the likelihood that out-of-scope collections (or even in-scope collections that fit better elsewhere) will be routinely referred to other repositories. Thirty-five of fifty-one respondents (68.6 percent) indicated that when their repository makes referrals, they primarily are to others within the understanding. Therefore, it is unclear as to why only twenty-five of fifty-one respon-

Table 5 Rate with which Referrals Made and Received

Rate Referrals Made	Repositories Involved in Some Form of Understanding (N = 52)	Repositories Not Involved in Any Form of Understanding (N = 26)
Very Frequently	9 (17.3%)	1 (3.5%)
Occasionally	35 (67.3%)	14 (53.8%)
Infrequently	8 (15.4%)	8 (40.8%)
Never	0	3 (11.5%)
Rate Referrals Received		
Very Frequently	3 (5.8%)	0
Occasionally	26 (50.0%)	11 (42.3%)
Infrequently	22 (42.3%)	10 (38.5%)
Never	1 (1.9%)	5 (19.2%)

dents (49.0 percent) indicated that they primarily *receive* referrals from others within the understanding, although perhaps the referred donor does not always mention the referral. In any event, participation in some form of collecting understanding does increase the rate with which referrals are both given and received. It may also allow repositories to be somewhat less diligent in their surveillance efforts to locate collections and define (and defend) their collecting universe, knowing that if a related collection happens to be offered to another repository within their collecting understanding—perhaps simply because the donor knows of it or lives in the vicinity of the repository—there is a good chance of the collection’s finding its way to the “more appropriate” repository.

For those repositories not in cooperative understanding, there is some hope that wayward collections appropriate to them but offered elsewhere might still find them. Sixty-six of seventy-seven respondents answering the question (66.2 percent) reported routinely checking for related or similar collections at other repositories when a collection is offered to their repository. A few others indicated that they make checks only if the offered collection falls outside their own collecting focus, and the donor needs help in finding a repository more likely to accept it.

However, this method of hoping for referrals is only as good as the bibliographic and other information that the repository has available about its holdings. Of the forty-eight respondents who explained why their repositories hold partial collections, seventeen (35.4 percent) indicated an unawareness that part of the collection was held elsewhere at the time their part of the collection was acquired. Yet thirteen of those seventeen respondents (76.5 percent) reported that they routinely check for related collections held elsewhere when offered a collection. Unfortunately, a lack of awareness about collections held elsewhere does not necessarily mean a lack of effort in trying to locate them. With only 23 percent of the repositories participating in the COSHRC study having at least three-quarters of their collections described in one or more access tool, 41.2 percent reporting processing backlogs, and 48.4 percent listing a lack of

Table 6 Factors Limiting Cooperation Among Manuscript Repositories (N = 53; respondents could provide more than one answer)

Factor	Number of Respondents
Not enough time	35 (66.0%)
Not enough interest	32 (60.4%)
Not enough staff	28 (52.8%)
Not enough funds	19 (35.8%)
Usable methods do not exist	17 (32.1%)
Unique nature of archival materials	15 (28.3%)
Other ⁵³	13 (24.5%)

indexes and finding aids as “significant impediments” to the use of their collections,⁵² it is not surprising that even repositories that consistently search for related collections before making acquisitions may not find out about the primary collection until after its own collection is acquired.

While the responses to the third section of the survey show that many repositories are engaging in basic cooperative activities when it comes to collecting, the degree of cooperation is not overwhelming. Nor did forty-eight of seventy-five respondents (64.0 percent) feel that enough is being done in terms of cooperation among manuscript repositories when it comes to collecting. These respondents explanations (as well as those of five respondents who indicated that there is enough being done but answered the question anyway) are given in Table 6.

It is suspected that three of the top four reasons listed in Table 6 would be popular choices for most questions regarding why certain “necessary” and “good” activities are not taking place at any given repository. For example, if a repository staff member were asked why preservation actions were not taken on all collections, lack of time, lack of staff, and lack of funds would undoubtedly be among the top reasons. However, these reasons also indicate the general priorities given to these activities. There never seems to be enough time, staff, or funds to perform all of the tasks advocated in any basic manual on establishing and maintaining a manuscript repository. Archival practice is more about finding ways to give each collection less than optimal attention without endangering the physical longevity of the materials or compromising access to their intellectual content. As a result, when one particular activity is designated as a priority, it is at the funding and staffing expense of other activities.

Therefore it is perhaps not surprising that a lack of interest was the second

⁵² Walch, *Where History Begins*, Tables E.2 and E.3.a., Tables-18.

⁵³ “Other” reasons include competition, proprietorship, and professional differences (5 respondents); lack of knowledge of holdings of other repositories (4 respondents); influence of administrators and nonarchival components of organization in acquisition decisions (2 respondent); lack of leadership to produce cooperative agreements, and lack of desire (1 respondent each).

most common reason given, cited by thirty-two of the fifty-three respondents who felt that not enough is being done in terms of archival cooperation (60.4 percent). Another respondent put “lack of desire” in the “other” category. In contrast, only seventeen respondents (32.1 percent) cited a lack of useable methods for cooperative collecting, while fifteen (28.3 percent) cited the unique nature of archival materials as an impediment to cooperative collecting activities, suggesting that the impediments exist more with archivists than archival materials.

The competitive possibilities of archival collections, a lack of communication, and the influence of donors were also cited as impediments to cooperative activities. Although calling it by different names—proprietaryship, competition, and professional differences—five respondents agreed that, as one respondent put it, a “sense of competition dampens [the] spirit of cooperation.” However, when asked how often competition for collections occurs among manuscript repositories, only nine of the seventy-seven respondents answering the question (11.7 percent) said it takes place very frequently, while forty-three (55.8 percent) said it takes place occasionally, twenty-two (28.6 percent) said it takes place infrequently, and three (3.9 percent) said competition never takes place. Yet whatever its frequency, only ten of the seventy-six respondents answering the question (13.2 percent) indicated that competition is a “significant” problem, while fifty (65.8 percent) found competition for collections among repositories a minor problem, and seventeen (22.4 percent) said that competition is not a problem at all.

A lack of communication was cited by four respondents as a reason why more cooperation does not take place among repositories. As noted by Gerald Ham in 1984, one factor hampering cooperation is that repositories “have insufficient data about current holdings nationwide to permit the kind of [collection] analysis that . . . is an essential precondition or prerequisite for program planning and development.”⁵⁴ This situation has apparently not changed. As described by one respondent, cooperation is impeded in part because repositories “need to be aware of other repositories’ strengths, weaknesses, and collecting areas and have a means to communicate.” Unfortunately, even if a method of communication were found that could facilitate cooperation between repositories, the results from the third part of the survey suggest that, as with written collection development policies, there would remain many archivists who are simply not interested in engaging in cooperative collecting activities.

Conclusions

In the winter 1996 issue of the *American Archivist*, Lori Hefner discussed the records of the Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory: federal records frequently “alien-

⁵⁴ Ham, “Archival Choices,” 14.

ated” from federal control and collected by private manuscript repositories. Citing the Code of Ethics for Archivists and archival theory, Hefner asked “have the fundamental archival concepts of provenance, organic wholeness, and integrity of the records become secondary to ‘archival avarice’?”⁵⁵ Her comments seemed to all but accuse archivists at manuscript repositories of routinely engaging in unethical practices. Yet no strong reaction from the profession followed publication of Hefner’s article; no heated letters to the editor from archivists at manuscript repositories defending their collecting practices or bristling at the suggestion that they were anything but ethical in their professional conduct.

Several explanations are possible concerning this lack of reaction; one of the most compelling is simply that archivists have resigned themselves to the fact that archival collecting is one of the many nebulous areas of archival practice; collections are simply too multifaceted and repository collecting focuses too overlapping for clear collecting lines to be drawn. Concentrating more on existing collections than future acquisitions, accepting out-of-scope collections, and the existence of split and “alienated” collections are inevitable parts of the archival world; part of the cost of doing business with limited budgets and fickle donors. Survey respondents provided a variety of reasons for not following the letter of archival theory. Most of these reasons, while regrettable, are still valid; the existence of a less-than-perfect practice, just like the existence of competition for collections, more a fact of life than a critical problem that needs addressing.

As a result, the answers to many of the questions included on the survey seem overly obvious and unsurprising. There is no grand problem revealed that more collection development policies or cooperative collecting practices can solve, nor any startling discoveries that will result in new theories about these tools leading to entirely revamped collecting practices at manuscript repositories. Yet there is a certain nagging quality to the survey results, calling into question the seeming resignation of some archivists that there is nothing to be done to change less-than-ideal collecting practices, and that the tools championed as ways to address these issues are not worth the effort.

Although based on a small sample, the survey results clearly demonstrate the usefulness of written collection development policies (especially in dealing with one of the most unpredictable and untamable forces in archival collecting—donors), while engaging in cooperative collecting understandings was shown to increase the degree to which referrals for collections are made to, or received from, other repositories. Although no collection development policy or cooperative collecting understanding will totally eliminate the existence of out-of-scope collections, partial collections, or competition for collections, this

⁵⁵ Loretta L. Hefner, “Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory Records: Who Should Collect and Maintain Them?” *American Archivist* 59 (Winter 1996): 68.

does not mean that individual repositories should not make the necessary efforts to have a written collection development policy and to actively engage in cooperative collecting activities. What the survey did *not* find was that written collection development policies and cooperative collecting activities severely curtailed repositories' abilities to pursue their own best interests when collecting. Perhaps it is time for those archivists who are convinced that such tools are more a hindrance than a help to reevaluate the priority they have given to their collecting practices and begin to believe the claims found in the archival literature that such practices, even with their imperfections, really can make a positive difference, and are worth the effort.

Appendix A

TABULATED RESULTS—COLLECTING ACTIVITIES AT MANUSCRIPT REPOSITORIES

Survey Conducted March/April 2000

Total Number of Surveys Distributed: 100 Number Returned: 78

[Note: The number of responses for each question does not always match the overall or expected total (based on preceding questions) because of missing responses and respondents who did not know or answered "no" to a question but then provided answer(s) to the follow-up question(s).]

A. WRITTEN COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

A-1 Does your repository have a written policy identifying the kinds of historical records it accepts and that it seeks to acquire? (Circle one)
N = 78

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| 1. YES (<i>Please continue with Question A-2</i>) | 51 (65.4%) |
| 2. NO (<i>Please answer Questions A-1.1 and A-1.2</i>) | 27 (34.6%) |

A-1.1 Please indicate the reasons your repository does not have a written policy identifying the kinds of historical records it accepts and that it seeks to acquire. (Circle all that apply)
N = 28 (note: one respondent provided reasons for an outdated written policy)

- | | |
|---|------------------|
| 1. POLICY HAS BEEN DRAFTED BUT
NOT YET ADOPTED | 7 (25.0%) |
| 2. COLLECTING IS NOT A PRIORITY | 5 (17.9%) |
| 3. LACK OF TIME TO PREPARE POLICY | 9 (32.1%) |

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| 4. LACK OF FUNDS TO PREPARE POLICY | 1 (3.6%) |
| 5. LACK OF STAFF TO PREPARE POLICY | 7 (25.0%) |
| 6. LACK OF LEADERSHIP TO ADVOCATE
POLICY CREATION | 4 (14.3%) |
| 7. DO NOT WANT TO BE LIMITED BY
WRITTEN POLICY | 6 (21.4%) |
| 8. DO NOT FEEL WRITTEN POLICY IS
NECESSARY | 8 (28.6%) |
| 9. OTHER (specify) 6 (21.4%) including planning to write
one in the near future; policy preparation to be part of current
strategic planning; new department; just began collecting activ-
ities and final collecting focus not yet determined; organization
as whole has collecting policy but not manuscript division; and
collecting practices change rapidly with changes in “political cli-
mate” and in staff | |

A-1.2 If your organization does not have a written collection develop-
ment policy, does it have an unwritten policy identifying the
kinds of historical records it accepts and that it seeks to acquire?
(Circle one) **N = 27**

- | | |
|---|-------------------|
| 1. YES (<i>Please go on to Section B</i>) | 25 (92.6%) |
| 2. NO (<i>Please go on to Section C</i>) | 2 (7.4%) |

A-2 In what year was your repository's written collection development pol-
icy adopted? _____ **N = 51 (note: although specific years were pro-
vided by respondents the results have been grouped by decade)**

Prior to 1970	1 (2.0%)
1970s	3 (5.9%)
1980s	17 (33.3%)
1990s	20 (39.2%)
2000	1 (2.0%)
Unknown	9 (17.6%)

A-3 In what year was your repository's written collection development pol-
icy last revised? _____ **N = 51 (note: although specific years were
provided by respondents the results have been grouped in ranges)**

1980s	4 (7.8%)
1990–1994	3 (5.9%)
1995–1999	25 (49.0%)
2000/currently	7 (13.7%)
None/Left Blank	11 (21.6%)
Unknown	1 (2.0%)

A-4 Was your repository's written collection development policy created when your repository was established? (Circle one) **N = 51**

- | | |
|---|-------------------|
| 1. YES (<i>Please go on to Question A-5</i>) | 7 (13.7%) |
| 2. NO (<i>Please continue with Questions A-4.1 through A-4.4</i>) | 42 (82.4%) |
| "Don't Know" | 2 (3.9%) |

A-4.1 Approximately how many years after the establishment of your repository was the repository's first written collection development policy created? _____ YEARS **N = 42 (note: although specific numbers of years were provided by respondents the results have been grouped in ranges)**

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| More than 100 years | 4 (9.5%) |
| Between 50-99 years | 6 (14.3%) |
| Between 10 and 49 years | 14 (33.3%) |
| Between 1 and 9 years | 6 (14.3%) |
| Unknown | 12 (28.6%) |

A-4.2 Was there a particular incident that lead to the creation of a written collection development policy at your repository? (Circle one) **N = 42**

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------|
| 1. YES | 16 (38.1%) |
| 2. NO | 13 (31.0%) |
| 3. DON'T KNOW | 13 (31.0%) |

A-4.3 If your answer to Question A-4.2 was "yes", what was the incident that lead to the creation of a written collection development policy at your repository? (Circle one) **N = 18**

- | | |
|--|------------------|
| 1. BEGINNING ACTIVE COLLECTING PROGRAM AT REPOSITORY | 2 (11.1%) |
| 2. RESTARTING ACTIVE COLLECTING PROGRAM AT REPOSITORY | 0 |
| 3. ACQUISITION OF CONTROVERSIAL COLLECTION | 0 |
| 4. DESIRE TO REFUSE OFFERED COLLECTION | 2 (11.1%) |
| 5. DESIRE TO DEACCESSION COLLECTIONS | 1 (5.6%) |
| 6. OTHER (specify) 13 (72.2%) including staff change/hiring of professional archival staff (6 respondents); grant application; initial development of webpage; as part of wider organizational accountability/collecting defining activities (4 respondents); and "it was about time" | |

A-4.4 When your repository's collection development policy was first created was it written so that existing collections would fall under the collecting scope(s) defined by the written policy? (Circle one) **N = 43**

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. YES | 31 (72.1%) |
| 2. NO | 6 (14.0%) |
| 3. DON'T KNOW/Missing | 6 (14.0%) |

A-5 How long is your repository's written collection development policy? _____ PAGES **N = 51 (note: although specific numbers of pages were provided by respondents the results have been grouped in ranges; some respondents indicated that page numbers given were for an organization-wide collection development policy, rather than for just the responding repository)**

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 page | 17 (33.3%) |
| 2-4 pages | 14 (27.5%) |
| 5-10 pages | 12 (23.5%) |
| 10-20 pages | 3 (5.9%) |
| More than 20 pages | 2 (3.9%) |
| Missing/Varies | 3 (5.9%) |

A-6 Which of the following elements are included in your repository's written collection development policy?* (Circle all that apply) **N = 51 (note: two respondents had all 18 elements in their collection development policy. Average number of elements per respondent was 7.90)**

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| 1. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE OF REPOSITORY AND ITS HOLDINGS | 47 (92.2%) |
| 2. TYPES OF ACTIVITIES (SUCH AS RESEARCH, PUBLICATIONS, EXHIBITS, AND OUTREACH) TO BE SUPPORTED BY REPOSITORY'S HOLDINGS | 27 (52.9%) |
| 3. CLIENTELE TO BE SERVED BY REPOSITORY'S HOLDINGS | 30 (58.8%) |
| 4. IDENTIFICATION OF STRENGTHS OF EXISTING HOLDINGS | 26 (51.0%) |
| 5. IDENTIFICATION OF WEAKNESSES IN REPOSITORY'S EXISTING HOLDINGS | 9 (17.6%) |
| 6. IDENTIFICATION OF CURRENT COLLECTING LEVELS (SUCH AS EXHAUSTIVE, COMPREHENSIVE, OR MINIMAL) | 14 (27.5%) |
| 7. IDENTIFICATION OF DESIRED LEVELS OF COLLECTING IN SPECIFIC AREAS | 18 (35.3%) |
| 8. GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS THAT ARE COLLECTED | 43 (84.3%) |

9. CHRONOLOGICAL PERIODS THAT ARE COLLECTED	29 (56.9%)
10. SUBJECT AREAS THAT ARE COLLECTED	43 (84.3%)
11. LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH THAT ARE COLLECTED	10 (19.6%)
12. PHYSICAL FORMATS THAT ARE COLLECTED	38 (74.5%)
13. EXCLUSIONS (AREAS, PERIODS, TOPICS, LANGUAGES, AND FORMATS <u>NOT</u> COLLECTED)	15 (29.4%)
14. IDENTIFICATION OF COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS	11 (21.6%)
15. STATEMENT OF RESOURCE SHARING POLICY	4 (7.8%)
16. STATEMENT OF DEACCESSIONING POLICY	15 (29.4%)
17. PROCEDURES FOR CARRYING OUT COLLECTING POLICY	16 (31.4%)
18. PROCEDURES FOR MONITORING, REVIEWING, AND REVISING COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY AND COLLECTING PROGRAM	8 (15.7%)

(*The elements listed in Question A-6 are based on the model collecting policy described by Faye Phillips in "Developing Collecting Policies for Manuscript Collections," *American Archivist* 47 (Winter 1984): 30–42.)

A-7 If your repository's written collection development policy specifically identifies materials not to be collected (item 13 in Question A-6), in which of the following areas are exclusions identified? (Circle all that apply) **N = 17** (note: two respondents answered this question who did not have a specific exclusion statement in their written collection development policy)

1. GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS <u>NOT</u> COLLECTED	7 (41.2%)
2. CHRONOLOGICAL PERIODS <u>NOT</u> COLLECTED	5 (29.4%)
3. SUBJECT AREAS <u>NOT</u> COLLECTED	8 (47.1%)
4. LANGUAGES <u>NOT</u> COLLECTED	2 (11.8%)
5. PHYSICAL FORMATS <u>NOT</u> COLLECTED	7 (41.2%)
6. OTHER (specify) 2 (11.8%) including duplicates and institutions whose records will not be collected	

A-8 Which of the following statements best describes your repository's written collection development policy? (Circle one) **N = 50**

1. IT IS VERY VAGUELY WORDED; THERE IS A LOT OF ROOM FOR INTERPRETATION	7 (14.0%)
2. IT IS VAGUELY WORDED IN PARTS; BUT THERE ARE ALSO SOME CLEAR SPECIFICATIONS	14 (28.0%)
3. THE LANGUAGE IS RELATIVELY SPECIFIC; BUT THERE IS ALSO SOME ROOM FOR INTERPRETATION	28 (56.0%)

4. THE LANGUAGE IS VERY SPECIFIC; THERE IS NOT MUCH ROOM FOR INTERPRETATION 1 (2.0%)

B. USING COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICIES. *This section asks how repositories make their written and unwritten collection development policies known and how they are used by repositories.*

Note: The results in this section are presented as totals (N) and have also been broken down by repositories with written collection development policies (W) and those with unwritten collection development policies (U). Percentages were calculated within each category (i.e., overall total, repositories with written collection development policies, and repositories with unwritten collection development policies).

B-1 How is your repository's written or unwritten collection development policy made available to researchers, archivists at other repositories, and others interested in your repository? (Circle all that apply) N = 74 [W = 49, U = 25]

1. WRITTEN POLICY SENT UPON REQUEST 37 (50.0%) [W 37 (75.5%), U 0]
2. UNWRITTEN POLICY SUMMARIZED IN WRITING UPON REQUEST 21 (28.4%) [W 5 (10.2%), U 16 (64.0%)]
3. WRITTEN POLICY AVAILABLE AT REPOSITORY 26 (35.1%) [W 26 (53.1%), U 0]
4. WRITTEN POLICY POSTED ON REPOSITORY'S WEBSITE 18 (24.3%) [W 18 (36.7%) {note: an additional 5 repositories indicated that they intend to post their written collection development policy on their website in the near future}, U 0]
5. SUMMARY OF UNWRITTEN POLICY POSTED ON REPOSITORY WEBSITE 7 (9.5%) [W 1 (2.0%), U 6 (24.0%)]
6. EXPLAINED VERBALLY UPON REQUEST 49 (66.2%) [W 25 (51.0%), U 24 (96.0%)]
7. OTHER (specify) 9 (12.2%) [W 6 (12.2%), U 3 (12.0%)] including mailed to members; included in brochure; included in statewide cultural repository website; as part of public record; incorporated into mission statement; never been asked; summary of unwritten policy available at repository; and the repository documents a particular subject and collects anything broad or narrow that falls within that topic and "people seem to understand this"

B-2 How is your repository's written or unwritten collection development policy most often provided to donors whose collections are being solicited by your repository? (Circle one) N = 75 [W = 50, U = 25] (note: some respondents circled more than one choice)

1. WRITTEN POLICY (OR WRITTEN SUMMARY OF UNWRITTEN POLICY) PROVIDED AS PART OF SOLICITATION PROCESS **12 (16.0%) [W 9 (18.0%), U 3 (12.0%)]**
2. POLICY DISCUSSED VERBALLY AS PART OF SOLICITATION PROCESS **41 (54.7%) [W 26 (52.0%), U 15 (60.0%)]**
3. DISCUSSED OR PROVIDED ONLY IF DONOR ASKS ABOUT **1 (14.7%) [W 6 (12.0%), U 5 (20.0%)]**
4. NOT USUALLY DISCUSSED **14 (18.7%) [W 10 (20.0%), U 4 (16.0%)]**
5. OTHER (specify) **2 (2.7%) [W 2 (4.0%), U 0]** **including included in brochure; and policy discussed after solicitation of collection, ut before its transfer**

B-3 How is your repository's written or unwritten collection development policy most often provided to donors who offer unsolicited collections to your repository? (Circle one) **N = 75 [W = 50, U = 25]** (note: some respondents circled more than one choice)

1. WRITTEN POLICY (OR WRITTEN SUMMARY OF UNWRITTEN POLICY) PROVIDED WHEN COLLECTION OFFERED **11 (14.7%) [W 9 (18.0%), U 2 (8.0%)]**
2. POLICY DISCUSSED VERBALLY WHEN COLLECTION OFFERED **38 (50.7%) [W 26 (52.0%), U 12 (48.0%)]**
3. DISCUSSED OR PROVIDED ONLY IF DONOR ASKS ABOUT **5 (6.7%) [W 3 (6.0%), U 2 (8.0%)]**
4. DISCUSSED OR PROVIDED ONLY IF OFFERED COLLECTION FALLS OUTSIDE OF COLLECTING FOCUS IDENTIFIED BY POLICY **17 (22.7%) [W 8 (16.0%), U 9 (36.0%)]**
5. NOT USUALLY DISCUSSED **12 (16.0%) [W 9 (18.0%), U 3 (12.0%)]**
6. OTHER (specify) **0**

B-4 Has your repository's written or unwritten collection development policy ever been cited as a reason to decline a collection? (Circle one) **N = 76 [W = 51, U = 25]**

1. YES **59 (77.6%) [W 41 (80.4%), U 18 (72.0%)]**
2. NO **8 (10.5%) [W 6 (11.8%), U 2 (8.0%)]**
3. DON'T KNOW **9 (11.8%) [W 4 (7.8%), U 5 (20.0%)]**

B-5 Has your repository's written or unwritten collection development policy even been used to justify the acceptance of a controversial collection? (Circle one) **N = 75 [W = 51, U = 24]**

1. YES **28 (37.3%) [W 24 (47.1%), U 4 (16.7%)]**
2. NO **26 (34.7%) [W 16 (31.4%), U 10 (41.7%)]**
3. DON'T KNOW **21 (28.0%) [W 11 (21.6%), U 10 (41.7%)]**

B-6 Has your repository's written or unwritten collection development policy ever been changed to accommodate a particular collection? (Circle one) **N = 76 [W = 51, U = 25]**

1. YES **9 (11.8%) [W 6 (11.8%), U 3 (12.0%)]**
2. NO **54 (71.1%) [W 37 (72.5%), U 17 (68.0%)]**
3. DON'T KNOW **13 (17.1%) [W 8 (15.7%), U 5 (20.0%)]**

B-7 Has your repository's written or unwritten collection development policy ever been ignored to accommodate a particular collection? (Circle one) **N = 75 [W = 50, U = 25]**

1. YES **32 (42.7%) [W 20 (40.0%), U 12 (48.0%)]**
2. NO **34 (45.3%) [W 24 (48.0%), U 10 (40.0%)]**
3. DON'T KNOW **9 (12.0%) [W 6 (12.0%), U 3 (12.0%)]**

B-7.1 If your answer to Question B-7 was "yes", which of the following factors led to the accommodation of a collection outside of your repository's written or unwritten collection development policy? (Circle all that apply) **N = 33 [W = 21, U = 12]**

1. DIDN'T WANT TO PASS UP OPPORTUNITY **10 (30.3%) [W 7 (33.3%), U 3 (25.0%)]**
2. DIDN'T WANT COLLECTION TO END UP AT ANOTHER REPOSITORY **2 (6.1%) [W 2 (9.5%), U 0]**
3. DIDN'T WANT TO RISK COLLECTION BEING DESTROYED IF NOT PLACED IN A REPOSITORY **16 (48.5%) [W 12 (57.1%), U 4 (33.3%)]**
4. POTENTIAL IMPACT OF REFUSAL ON DONOR RELATIONSHIP **23 (69.7%) [W 13 (61.9%), U 10 (83.3%)]**
5. POTENTIAL PUBLICITY VALUE OF COLLECTION TO REPOSITORY **5 (15.2%) [W 3 (14.3%), U 2 (16.7%)]**
6. VALUE OF COLLECTION TO REPOSITORY AS LEVERAGE FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDING, STAFFING, AND/OR SPACE **4 (12.1%) [W 3 (14.3%), U 1 (8.3%)]**
7. OTHER (specify) **6 (18.2%) [W 4 (19.0%), U 2 (16.7%)]**
including order of superior/administrator (3 respondents);
accepted by an administrator without consulting policy;
research value of materials; and "serendipitous intercon-
nections" with other collections held at repository

B-8 Has your repository ever been pressured to accept a collection that was outside the scope of its written or unwritten collection development policy? (Circle one) **N = 76 [W = 51, U = 25]**

1. YES **36 (47.4%) [W 28 (54.9%), U 8 (32.0%)]**
2. NO **29 (38.2%) [W 17 (33.3%), U 12 (48.0%)]**
3. DON'T KNOW **11 (14.5%) [W 6 (11.8%), U 5 (20.0%)]**

B-8.1 If your answer to Question B-8 was “yes”, who did the pressuring? (Circle one) N = 36 [W = 28, U = 8] (note: some respondents circled more than one choice)

1. ADMINISTRATOR OF PARENT ORGANIZATION OF EPOSITORY 19 (52.8%) [W 15 (53.6%), U 4 (50.0%)]
2. ADMINISTRATOR OF REPOSITORY 3 (8.3%) [W 3 (10.7%), U 0]
3. REPOSITORY STAFF MEMBER 0
4. DONOR 18 (50.0%) [W 13 (46.4%), U 5 (62.5%)]
5. OTHER (specify) 5 (13.9%) [W 5 (17.9%), U 0] including board of trustees (3 respondents); University Advancement; and Friends of Department

B-8.2 Was the collection accepted? (Circle one) N = 36 [W = 28, U = 8] (note: some respondents circled more than one answer since outcome was different on different occasions)

1. YES 22 (61.1%) [W 15 (53.6%), U 7 (87.5%)]
2. NO 15 (41.7%) [W 13 (46.4%), U 2 (25.0%)]

C. COOPERATION IN COLLECTING. *This section addresses areas for possible cooperation in collecting activities by manuscript repositories.*

Note: The results in this section are presented as totals (N) and have also been broken down by repositories with written collection development policies (W); those with unwritten collection development policies (U); and those with neither written nor unwritten collection development policies (X). Percentages were calculated within each category (i.e., overall total, repositories with written collection development policies, repositories with unwritten collection development policies, and repositories with no collection development policies).

C-1 Does your repository have any formal, written understandings with other repositories about what each repository will and/or will not collect? (Circle one) N = 78 [W = 51, U = 25, X = 2]

1. YES 7 (9.0%) [W 7 (13.7%), U 0, X 0]
2. NO 71 (91.0%) [W 44 (86.3%), U 25 (100%), X 2 (100%)]

C-2 Does your repository have any informal understandings with other repositories about what each repository will and/or will not collect? (Circle one) N = 78 [W = 51, U = 25, X = 2]

1. YES 50 (64.1%) [W 36 (70.6%), U 12 (48.0%), X 2 (100.0%)]
2. NO 28 (35.9%) [W 15 (29.4%), U 13 (52.0%), X 0]

C-3 If your answer to either Question C-1 or C-2 was “yes”, please answer Questions C-3.1 and C-3.2, otherwise please go on to Question C-4

C-3.1 How many repositories (including your own) are involved in the formal and/or informal collecting understandings that your repository is involved in? **(note: although specific numbers of repositories were provided by respondents the results have been grouped in ranges; some respondents only listed one repository as being involved in the understanding, which would appear not to include their own. However, numbers of repositories were tabulated as provided by respondents. One respondent indicated no informal understandings, but then provided information on number of involved repositories)**

REPOSITORIES IN FORMAL UNDERSTANDING N = 7 [W = 7, U = 0, X = 0]

1 Repository	2 (28.6%) [W 2 (28.6%), U 0, X 0]
2 Repositories	1 (14.3%) [W 1 (14.3%), U 0, X 0]
3 Repositories	1 (14.3%) [W 1 (14.3%), U 0, X 0]
7 Repositories	1 (14.3%) [W 1 (14.3%), U 0, X 0]
14 Repositories	1 (14.3%) [W 1 (14.3%), U 0, X 0]
Not Provided	1 (14.3%) [W 1 (14.3%), U 0, X 0]

REPOSITORIES IN INFORMAL UNDERSTANDING N = 51 [W = 37, U = 12, X = 2]

1 Repository	6 (11.8%) [W 4 (10.8%), U 2 (16.7%), X 0]
2 Repositories	15 (29.4%) [W 10 (27.0%), U 5 (41.7%), X 0]
3–5 Repositories	17 (33.3%) [W 13 (35.1%), U 3 (25.0%), X 1 (50.0%)]
6–10 Repositories	5 (9.8%) [W 5 (13.5%), U 0, X 0]
More than 11 Repositories	2 (3.9%) [W 1 (2.7%), U 1 (8.3%), X 0]
Not Provided	6 (11.8%) [W 4 (10.8%), U 1 (8.3%), X 1 (50.0%)]

C-3.2 For which of the following types of materials have formal and/or informal collecting understandings been reached between your repository and other repositories?

Type of Understanding

Formal N = 7 [W = 7, U = 0, X = 0]

1. Geographical Areas	4 (57.1%) [W 4 (57.1%), U 0, X 0]
2. Chronological Periods	0
3. Subject Areas	3 (42.9%) [W 3 (42.9%), U 0, X 0]
4. Languages	0
5. Physical Formats of Materials	2 (28.6%) [W 2 (28.6%), U 0, X 0]
6. Other (specify)	0

Informal N = 50 [W = 36, U = 12, X = 2]

1. Geographical Areas **31 (62.0%) [W 22 (61.1%), U 7 (58.3%), X 2 (100%)]**
2. Chronological Periods **14 (28.0%) [W 9 (25.0%), U 3 (25.0%), X 2 (100%)]**
3. Subject Areas **42 (84.0%) [W 32 (88.9%), U 8 (66.7%), X 2 (100%)]**
4. Languages **5 (10.0%) [W 3 (8.3%), U 2 (16.7%), X 0]**
5. Physical Formats of Materials **12 (24.0%) [W 9 (25.0%), U 3 (25.0%), X 0]**
6. Other (specify) **3 (6.0%) [W 1 (2.8%), U 2 (16.7%), X 0] including cost (2 respondents); and jurisdiction**

C-4 When your repository is offered a new collection, are any checks made to see what, if any, related or similar collections are held in other repositories? (Circle one) **N = 77 [W = 50, U = 25, X = 2]**

1. YES **51 (66.2%) [W 34 (68.0%), U 15 (60.0%), X 2 (100%)]**
2. NO **26 (33.8%) [W 16 (32.0%), U 10 (40.0%), X 0]**

C-5 How frequently has your repository referred potential collections to more appropriate repositories? (Circle one) **N = 78 [W = 51, U = 25, X = 2]**

1. VERY FREQUENTLY **10 (12.8%) [W 7 (13.7%), U 2 (8.0%), X 1 (50.0%)]**
2. OCCASIONALLY **49 (62.8%) [W 35 (68.6%), U 14 (56.0%), X 0]**
3. INFREQUENTLY **16 (20.5%) [W 7 (13.7%), U 8 (32.0%), X 1 (50.0%)]**
4. NEVER **3 (3.8%) [W 2 (3.9%), U 1 (4.0%), X 0]**

C-6 Which of the following factors have led to collections being referred by your repository to other repositories? (Circle all that apply) **N = 75 [W = 49, U = 24, X = 2]**

1. OFFERED COLLECTION OUT-OF-SCOPE TO EXISTING COLLECTIONS AND/OR COLLECTING POLICY **68 (90.7%) [W 45 (91.8%), U 21 (87.5%), X 2 (100%)]**
2. OFFERED COLLECTION FIT OWN COLLECTING FOCUS, BUT AS BETTER SUITED TO ANOTHER REPOSITORY'S COLLECTING FOCUS **31 (41.3%) [W 23 (46.9%), U 7 (29.2%), X 1 (50.0%)]**
3. LACK OF FUNDS TO PROCESS **11 (14.7%) [W 8 (16.3%), U 3 (12.5%), X 0]**

4. LACK OF STAFF TO PROCESS 12 (16.0%) [W 9 (18.4%), U 3 (12.5%), X 0]
 5. DID NOT MEET APPRAISAL CRITERIA 15 (20.0%) [W 12 (24.5%), U 3 (12.5%), X 0]
 6. OTHER (specify) 12 (16.0%) [W 10 (20.4%), U 2 (8.3%), X 0]
including related collections elsewhere (3 respondents); to avoid
splitting collection; not worth resources to process and maintain;
lack of funds/space to store (2 respondents); lack of funds to purchase
(4 respondents); and unusual format
- C-7 If your repository is part of any formal or informal collecting understanding, are the collection referrals it makes primarily made to other repositories involved in the understanding? (Circle one) N = 51 [W = 38, U = 11, X = 2]
1. YES 35 (68.6%) [W 23 (60.5%), U 10 (90.9%), X 2 (100%)]
 2. NO 16 (31.4%) [W 15 (39.5%), U 1 (9.1%), X 0]
- C-8 How frequently is your repository contacted by donors who have been referred to it by other repositories? (Circle one) N = 78 [W = 51, U = 25, X = 2]
1. VERY FREQUENTLY 3 (3.8%) [W 2 (3.9%), U 1 (4.0%), X 0]
 2. OCCASIONALLY 35 (44.9%) [W 25 (49.0%), U 8 (32.0%), X 2 (100%)]
 3. INFREQUENTLY 32 (41.0%) [W 20 (39.2%), U 12 (48.0%), X 0]
 4. NEVER 5 (6.4%) [W 3 (5.9%), U 2 (8.0%), X 0]
 5. DON'T KNOW 3 (3.8%) [W 1 (2.0%), U 2 (8.0%), X 0]
- C-9 If your repository is part of any formal or informal collecting understanding, are the collection referrals it receives primarily from the other repositories involved in the understanding? (Circle one) N = 51 [W = 38, U = 11, X = 2]
1. YES 25 (49.0%) [W 19 (50.0%), U 5 (45.5%), X 1 (50.0%)]
 2. NO 26 (51.0%) [W 19 (50.0%), U 6 (54.5%), X 1 (50.0%)]
- C-10 Does your repository have any parts of collections that are held primarily at other repositories? (Circle one) N = 78 [W = 51, U = 25, X = 2]
1. YES 49 (62.8%) [W 35 (68.6%), U 12 (48.0%), X 2 (100%)]
 2. NO 24 (30.8%) [W 13 (25.5%), U 11 (44.0%), X 0]
 3. DON'T KNOW 5 (6.4%) [W 3 (5.9%), U 2 (8.0%), X 0]
- C-10.1 If your answer to Question C-10 was "yes", what factors led to those partial collections being acquired by your repository? (Circle all that apply) N = 48 [W = 34, U = 12, X = 2]

1. UNAWARE THAT PART OF COLLECTION WAS ELSEWHERE 17 (35.4%) [W 13 (38.2%), U 2 (16.7%), X 2 (100%)]
2. POTENTIAL IMPACT OF REFUSAL ON DONOR RELATIONSHIP 15 (31.3%) [W 12 (35.3%), U 2 (16.7%), X 1 (50.0%)]
3. IMPORTANCE OF COLLECTION TO REPOSITORY 25 (52.1%) [W 16 (47.1%), U 7 (58.3%), X 2 (100%)]
4. OTHER REPOSITORY HAD REJECTED 6 (12.5%) [W 3 (8.8%), U 2 (16.7%), X 1 (50.0%)]
5. OTHER (specify) 26 (54.2%) [W 19 (55.9%), U 7 (58.3%), X 0] including to prevent loss of records; donor negative attitude toward other repository; result of donor decision/actions (6 respondents); reasons unknown/happened very long ago and/or before collection development policy in place (5 respondents); happened before responding repository created (2 respondents); responding repository had materials first (3 respondents); other repository not willing to restrict access; part of collection given to other repository that could provide better access; pressure from local administrator; overlapping collecting areas (3 respondents); geographical decisions; other repository part of parent organization; and anticipate receiving remainder of collection at a later date

C-11 Has part of a collection that is primarily held by your repository ever been acquired by another repository? (Circle one) N = 77 [W = 50, U = 25, X = 2]

1. YES 39 (50.6%) [W 29 (58.0%), U 8 (32.0%), X 2 (100%)]
2. NO 16 (20.8%) [W 11 (22.0%), U 5 (20.0%), X 0]
3. DON'T KNOW 22 (28.6%) [W 10 (20.0%), U 12 (48.0%), X 0]

C-11.1 If your answer to Question C-11 was "yes", was the portion of the collection obtained by another repository first offered to and refused by your repository? (Circle one) N = 39 [W = 29, U = 8, X = 2] (note: some respondents circled more than one answer since answer was different for different occasions)

1. YES 7 (17.9%) [W 6 (20.7%), U 1 (12.5%), X 0]
2. NO 24 (61.5%) [W 16 (55.2%), U 6 (75.0%), X 2 (100%)]

3. DON'T KNOW 11 (28.2%) [W 10 (34.5%), U 1 (12.5%),
X 0]

C-12 Does your repository have any collections that would be more appropriately held at the currently existing institutional archives of a particular agency, organization, or company? (Circle one) N = 78 [W = 51, U = 25, X = 2]

1. YES 26 (33.3%) [W 21 (41.2%), U 4 (16.0%), X 1 (50.0%)]
2. NO 45 (57.7%) [W 26 (51.0%), U 18 (72.0%), X 1 (50.0%)]
3. DON'T KNOW 7 (9.0%) [W 4 (7.8%), U 3 (12.0%), X 0]

C-12.1 If your answer to Question C-12 was "yes", what factors led to those collections being acquired by your repository? (Circle all that apply) N = 28 [W = 22, U = 5, X = 1] (note: a few respondents who answered Question C-12 "no" or "don't know" answered this question as well)

1. INSTITUTIONAL ARCHIVES DID NOT EXIST AT TIME COLLECTION WAS ACQUIRED 13 (46.4%) [W 9 (40.9%), U 3 (60.0%), X 1 (100%)]
2. UNAWARE OF INSTITUTIONAL ARCHIVES AT TIME COLLECTION WAS ACQUIRED 5 (17.9%) [W 3 (13.6%), U 1 (20.0%), X 1 (100%)]
3. POTENTIAL IMPACT OF REFUSAL ON DONOR RELATIONSHIP 9 (32.1%) [W 7 (31.8%), U 2 (40.0%), X 0]
4. INSTITUTIONAL ARCHIVES HAD TURNED DOWN 3 (10.7%) [W 3 (13.6%), U 0, X 0]
5. VALUE OF COLLECTION TO REPOSITORY'S OWN COLLECTIONS 6 (21.4%) [W 4 (18.2%), U 2 (40.0%), X 0]
6. OTHER (specify) 10 (35.7%) [W 10 (45.5%), U 0, X 0] including to seek a future trade for another collection; lack of proper storage facilities at institutional archives (2 respondents); donor preference (2 respondents); unknown or acquired prior to collection development policy being in place (3 respondents); decision of repository administrator; and no historical society in geographical area

C-13 Based on your professional experience, how frequently does competition for collections occur between manuscript repositories? (Circle one) N = 77 [W = 51, U = 24, X = 2]

1. VERY FREQUENTLY 9 (11.7%) [W 8 (15.7%), U 1 (4.2%), X 0]

2. OCCASIONALLY 43 (55.8%) [W 25 (49.0%), U 16 (66.7%), X 2 (100%)]
3. INFREQUENTLY 22 (28.6%) [W 15 (29.4%), U 7 (29.2%), X 0]
4. NEVER 3 (3.9%) [W 3 (5.9%), U 0, X 0]

C-14 Based on your professional experience, is competition among manuscript repositories for collections a problem for the archival profession? (Circle one) N = 76 [W = 50, U = 24, X = 2] (note: one respondent circled two answers, indicating that competition is a significant problem when collections are purchased, but a minor problem when acquisitions are gifts)

1. A SIGNIFICANT PROBLEM 10 (13.2%) [W 6 (12.0%), U 4 (16.7%), X 0]
2. A MINOR PROBLEM 50 (65.8%) [W 35 (70.0%), U 13 (54.2%), X 2 (100%)]
3. NOT A PROBLEM 17 (22.4%) [W 10 (20.0%), U 7 (29.2%), X 0]

C-15 Based on your professional experience, are archivists and manuscript repositories doing enough in terms of cooperating when it comes to collecting activities? (Circle one) N = 75 [W = 49, U = 24, X = 2]

1. YES (*Please go on to Section D*) 27 (36.0%) [W 15 (30.6%), U 12 (50.0%), X 0]
2. NO (*Please answer Question C-15.1*) 48 (64.0%) [W 34 (69.4%), U 12 (50.0%), X 2 (100%)]

C-15.1 Which of the following factors do you feel are responsible for limiting cooperation among archivists and manuscript repositories in collecting activities? (Circle all that apply) N = 53 [W = 35, U = 16, X = 2] (note: 5 respondents who answered "yes" to the preceding question answered this question as well; their responses have been included in the totals for this question)

1. NOT ENOUGH STAFF 28 (52.8%) [W 18 (51.4%), U 8 (50.0%), X 2 (100%)]
2. NOT ENOUGH FUNDS 19 (35.8%) [W 14 (40.0%), U 3 (18.8%), X 2 (100%)]
3. NOT ENOUGH TIME 35 (66.0%) [W 22 (62.9%), U 11 (68.8%), X 2 (100%)]
4. NOT ENOUGH INTEREST 32 (60.4%) [W 22 (62.9%), U 8 (50.0%), X 2 (100%)]
5. UNIQUE NATURE OF ARCHIVAL MATERIALS 15 (28.3%) [W 9 (25.7%), U 4 (25.0%), X 2 (100%)]

6. **USABLE METHODS/MODELS FOR COOPERATION DO NOT EXIST** 17 (32.1%) [W 7 (20.0%), U 8 (50.0%), X 2 (100%)]
7. **OTHER (specify)** 13 (24.5%) [W 10 (28.6%), U 3 (18.8%), X 0] including competition, proprietorship, and professional differences (5 respondents); influence of administrators and/or non-archival components of organization on acquisition decisions (2 respondents); lack of knowledge of holdings of other repositories (4 respondents); lack of leadership to produce cooperative agreements; and lack of desire

D. GENERAL INFORMATION. *Finally, please provide some information about your repository itself to be used in interpreting the results of this survey.*

Note: The results in this section are presented as totals (N) and have also been broken down by repositories with written collection development policies (W); those with unwritten collection development policies (U); and those with neither written nor unwritten collection development policies (X). Percentages were calculated within each category (i.e., overall total, repositories with written collection development policies, repositories with unwritten collection development policies, and repositories with no collection development policies).

- D-1 Which of the following statements best describes your repository's current collecting efforts? (Circle one) N = 78 [W = 51, U = 25, X = 2]
1. **COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT AND ACQUIRING NEW COLLECTIONS ARE PRIORITIES** 28 (35.9%) [W 22 (43.1%), U 4 (16.0%), X 2 (100%)]
 2. **NEW COLLECTIONS ARE BEING SOUGHT, BUT ARE NOT A PRIORITY** 32 (41.0%) [W 22 (43.1%), U 10 (40.0%), X 0]
 3. **NOT ACTIVELY COLLECTING BUT WILL CONSIDER A COLLECTION IF OFFERED OR BROUGHT TO REPOSITORY'S ATTENTION** 18 (23.1%) [W 7 (13.7%), U 11 (44.0%), X 0]
 4. **NOT CURRENTLY ACCEPTING NEW COLLECTIONS** 0
- D-2 Which of the following best describes your repository? (Circle one) N = 78 [W = 51, U = 25, X = 2] (note: one respondent circled two responses indicating that repository was both special collections department and museum)
1. **PUBLIC LIBRARY** 6 (7.7%) [W 3 (5.9%), U 3 (12.0%), X 0]
 2. **STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY** 5 (6.4%) [W 5 (9.8%), U 0, X 0]
 3. **LOCAL/REGIONAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY** 9 (11.5%) [W 7 (13.7%), U 2 (8.0%), X 0]
 4. **MANUSCRIPT AND/OR SPECIAL COLLECTIONS REPOSITORY**

- LOCATED AT COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY 36 (46.2%) [W 26 (51.0%), U 9 (36.0%), X 1 (50.0%)]
5. GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY 1 (1.3%) [W 0, U 1 (4.0%), X 0]
6. RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATION 6 (7.7%) [W 4 (7.8%), U 2 (8.0%), 0]
7. MUSEUM 5 (6.4%) [W 1 (2.0%), U 3 (12.0%), X 1 (50.0%)]
8. OTHER (specify) 11 (14.1%) [W 5 (9.8%), U 6 (24.0%), X 0]
including independent research library (3 respondents); archives of nonprofit organization (2 respondents); combination historical society and/or library and museum (3 respondents); archives devoted to single individual; archives of historical site; and state agency historical collection

D-3 Approximately how many patrons did your repository serve in 1999?
_____ (note: although specific numbers of patrons were provided by respondents the results have been grouped in ranges; some respondents indicated that patron counts provided for their repository were not separated out from the overall library/museum or other organization of which their repository is a part) N = 78 [W = 51, U = 25, X = 2]

Less than 100	5 (6.4%) [W 1 (2.0%), U 4 (16.0%), X 0]
100–499	17 (21.8%) [W 8 (15.7%), U 9 (36.0%), X 0]
500–999	12 (15.4%) [W 9 (17.6%), U 3 (12.0%), X 0]
1,000–4,999	17 (21.8%) [W 11 (21.6%), U 4 (16.0%), X 2 (100%)]
5,000–9,999	8 (10.3%) [W 6 (11.8%), U 2 (8.0%), X 0]
10,000 or more	19 (24.4%) [W 16 (31.4%), 3 (12.0%), X 0]

D-4 Please indicate how many paid staff members and volunteers work at your repository by estimating the number of full-time equivalents (FTEs) for each of the following categories: N = 77 [W = 50, U = 25, X = 2] (note: although specific numbers of staff members were provided by respondents, results have been presented in ranges and broken down by professional staff, non-professional staff, and total staff. A few respondents indicated that the staff counts provided for their repository were not separated out from the overall library/museum or other organization of which their repository is a part)

1. PAID PROFESSIONALS _____ FTEs

1 or less	25 (32.5%) [W 16 (32.0%), U 9 (36.0%), X 0]
2–4	30 (39.0%) [W 16 (32.0%), U 12 (48.0%), X 2 (100%)]
5–9	9 (11.7%) [W 7 (14.0%), U 2 (8.0%), X 0]
10 or more	13 (16.9%) [W 11 (22.0%), U 2 (8.0%), X 0]

Non-Professional Staff

2. PAID PARA-PROFESSIONALS _____ FTEs

3. PAID STUDENTS/INTERNS _____ FTEs
4. PAID CLERICAL STAFF _____ FTEs
5. VOLUNTEERS _____ FTEs

1 or less 33 (42.9%) [W 18 (36.0%), U 15 (60.0%), X 0]
2-4 18 (23.4%) [W 11 (22.0%), U 6 (24.0%), X 1 (50.0%)]
5-9 16 (20.8%) [W 13 (26.0%), U 2 (8.0%), X 1 (50.0%)]
10 or more 10 (13.0%) [W 8 (16.0%), U 2 (8.0%), X 0]

Total Staff

1 or less 7 (9.1%) [W 5 (10.0%), U 2 (8.0%), X 0]
2-4 23 (29.9%) [W 12 (24.0%), U 11 (44.0%), X 0]
5-9 20 (26.0%) [W 11 (22.0%), U 8 (32.0%), X 1 (50.0%)]
10 or more 27 (35.1%) [W 22 (44.0%), U 4 (16.0%), X 1 (50.0%)]

D-5 What is your repository's total annual operating budget excluding endowments and staff salaries? (Circle one) N = 78 [W = 51, U = 25, X = 2] (note: several respondents indicated that the budget for their repository was not separated out from an overall organizational budget and they either omitted this question or provided information on the organization-wide budget)

1. LESS THAN \$10,000 17 (21.8%) [W 12 (23.5%), U 5 (20.0%), X 0]
2. \$10,000-\$25,000 12 (15.4%) [W 7 (13.7%), U 5 (20.0%), X 0]
3. \$25,000-\$50,000 5 (6.4%) [W 1 (2.0%), U 4 (16.0%), X 0]
4. \$50,000-\$100,000 8 (10.3%) [W 7 (13.7%), U 1 (4.0%), X 0]
5. \$100,000-\$250,000 5 (6.8%) [W 4 (7.8%), U 1 (4.0%), X 0]
6. \$250,000-\$500,000 1 (1.3%) [W 0, U 1 (4.0%), X 0]
7. \$500,000-\$1,000,000 6 (7.7%) [W 4 (7.8%), U 2 (8.0%), X 0]
8. MORE THAN \$1,000,000 14 (17.9%) [W 11 (21.6%), U 2 (8.0%), X 1 (50.0%)]
Unknown/Not Provided 10 (12.8%) [W 5 (9.8%), U 4 (16.0%), X 1 (50.0%)]