Archival Orientation for Undergraduate Students: An Exploratory Study of Impact

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Abstract

This paper reports on an exploratory study that assessed the impact of four orientation sessions given by an archivist in the Yale University Library Manuscripts and Archives (MSSA).[1] The paper reviews the literature on the use of primary sources in the classroom, archival orientation sessions, and the impact of archival services. It outlines the methodology used in this study, discusses the findings, and concludes with suggestions for future research.

Introduction

Archivists gather data about the use of their holdings from interacting with users at the reference desk and in the reading room, answering reference letters, reading historical research, attending historical and/or genealogical conferences, and reviewing their archives registration data. The advent of digital archives and an increasing number of new users, however, erode the close relationship between researcher and archivist; consequently, archivists have begun to conduct more formal evaluation studies to ensure their services and systems meet users' needs.

Over the last decade, interest in evaluating archival services and systems has grown. Usability and evaluation studies of archival systems have become more

[1] The staff uses the abbreviation MSSA. The *MSS* stands for Manuscripts and the *A* stands for Archives.

common,[2] and archivists and academic researchers have begun to investigate how different user groups search for, and use, archival material.[3] These studies address important issues, however, finding evidence of the impact of archival services and the use of records is equally, if not more, critical.

Impact can be thought of simply as the difference something makes. Caroline Wavell, Graeme Baxter, Ian Johnson, and Dorothy Williams define impact as "the overall effect of *outcomes and conditioning* factors resulting in a *change* in state, attitude or behavior of an individual or group after engagement with the output."[4] They note that impact can be short-, medium-, or long-term; direct or indirect; intentional or unintentional; critical or trivial; simple or complex. They suggest that impact can be seen as a continuum "which progresses beyond the immediate interaction through an intermediate and longer term response (e.g., a person reads, becomes employed, contributes to social cohesion)."[5] Peter Brophy points out that impact may be "positive or negative; may be what was intended or something entirely different; and may result in changed attitudes, behaviors, outputs."[6] Impact is complex, but we consider the impact of archives to be any *effect* that an archival service, system, product, other "event," or archival material has on an individual or group.

This paper reports on a small exploratory study that investigated the impact of archival orientation sessions. This study is part of the Archival Metrics Project, which "seeks to promote a culture of assessment in the archival domain by creating standardized user-based evaluation tools and other performance measures."[7]

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[2] Christopher J. Prom, "User Interactions with Electronic Finding Aids in a Controlled Setting," *American Archivist* 67 (Fall/Winter 2004): 234–68; Burt Alman and John Nemmers, "The Usability of Online Archival Resources: The Polaris Project Finding Aid," *American Archivist* 64 (Spring/Summer 2001): 121–31; Wendy Duff and Penka Stoyanova, "Transforming the Crazy Quilt: Archival Displays from a User's Point of View," *Archivaria* 45 (1998): 44–79.

[3] Anne J. Gilliland-Swetland, "An Exploration of K–12 User Needs for Digital Primary Sources Material," *American Archivist* 61 (1998): 137–57; Wendy M. Duff and Catherine A. Johnson, "Accidentally Found on Purpose: Information-Seeking Behavior of Historians," *Library Quarterly* 72 (October 2002): 472–96; Wendy M. Duff and Catherine A. Johnson, "Where Is the List with All the Names? Information-Seeking Behavior of Genealogists," *American Archivist* 66 (Spring/Summer 2003): 79–95; Helen R. Tibbo, "Primarily History in America: How U.S. Historians Search for Primary Materials at the Dawn of the Digital Age," *American Archivist* 66 (Spring/Summer 2003): 9–50; Wendy Duff, Barbara Craig, and Joan Cherry, "Historians' Use of Archival Sources: Promises and Pitfalls of the Digital Age," *Public Historian* (Spring 2004): 7–22; Elizabeth Yakel, "Seeking Information, Seeking Connections, Seeking Meaning: Genealogists and Family Historians," *Information Research* 10 (October 2004), available at http://InformationR.net/ir/10-1/paper205.html, accessed 25 May 2008; Amanda Hill, "Serving the Invisible Researcher: Meeting the Needs of Online Users," *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 25, no. 2 (October 2004): 139–48, see also http://www.axsnet.org, accessed 25 June 2008.

[4] Caroline Wavell, Graeme Baxter, Ian Johnson, and Dorothy Williams, "Impact Evaluation of Museums, Archives and Libraries: Available Evidence Project" (Aberdeen, U.K.: The Robert Gordon University, 2002), available at http://www.rgu.ac.uk/files/imreport.pdf, 7, accessed 10 May 2008.

[5] Wavell et al., "Impact Evaluation of Museums," 7.

[6] Peter Brophy. "The Development of a Model for Assessing the Level of Impact of Information and Library Services," *Library & Information Research* 29 (Winter 2005): 44.

[7] Archival Metrics Project, available at http://archivalmetrics.org/, accessed 24 May 2008.

In October 2005, the Archival Metrics Project investigators and the Advisory Board, which consists of representatives from nine archival partner institutions, met in Ann Arbor to "determine the needs and desires for assessment tools for university archives and special collections."[8] Participants broke into smaller working groups, and each group identified tools that would help archivists assess aspects of their services and systems. One group, including Wendy Duff, Joan Cherry, Michael Moir, Karen Jania, and Diane Kaplan, focused on the impact that archival services have on users. This group decided to conduct two small exploratory studies, a study of members of a Canadian historical society[9] and a study of the impact of orientation sessions at Yale University. We chose these sites because Michael Moir and Diane Kaplan were affiliated with these organizations and offered to help with recruiting participants. We report only the results of the study of the impact at Yale University in this paper.

We were particularly interested in developing tools to investigate the impact of archival orientation sessions because helping university students develop archival literacy is an essential role for university archivists.[10] Because archivists provide access to primary sources, it can be argued that they are in a position to play an instrumental role in enhancing the education of young people.[11] University archives provide education through a variety of methods. We identified at least five general areas of archival instruction: short, one-on-one orientation interactions that take place during registration or at the reference desk; tours of archival facilities that may include an introduction to the archives' policies and procedures;

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[8] Archival Metrics Project, available at http://www.si.umich.edu/ArchivalMetrics/abouttheproject.html, accessed 24 May 2008.

[9] The study of members of the historical society was to understand how and why they developed their interest in history and cultural heritage. In particular, we wanted to see if primary sources had played a role in fostering this interest. We sent questionnaires to 539 members who lived in Canada and received 170 questionnaires back, a response rate of 31.5%. Fifty-six respondents indicated that their interest in history began in grade school, often nurtured by an enthusiastic teacher who was keen on history. Forty-nine respondents reported that their historical interest came from parents, grandparents, and/or family stories, or family trips to museums and historical sites. Other key factors that piqued an interest in history included reading history books and historical fiction (30 respondents) and university professors (29 respondents). Some respondents posited that they had always been interested in history, while others linked their interest to an event or activity. For example, 5 respondents indicated that their interest in canoeing influenced their curiosity about the history of the fur trade and early explorers. Only 5 respondents indicated that primary sources had sparked their historical interest. The findings of this study have not been published.

[10] Elizabeth Yakel and Deborah A. Torres, "AI: Archival Intelligence and User Expertise," *American Archivist* 66 (Spring/Summer 2003): 51–78.

[11] Julia Hendry, "Primary Sources in K–12 Education: Opportunities for Archives," *American Archivist* 70 (Spring/Summer 2007):114–29; Marcus C. Robyns, "The Archivist as Educator: Integrating Critical Thinking Skills into Historical Research Methods Instruction," *American Archivist* 67 (Fall/Winter 2004): 363–84. See also, Patricia L. Adams, "Primary Sources and Senior Citizens in the Classroom," *American Archivist* 50 (Spring 1987): 239–42; James W. Hopkins and Duanne Reed, "Teaching Historical Methods Through the Archives: United States Air Force Academy," *Colorado Libraries* 19 (Summer 1993): 35–37; Sharon Anne Cook, "Connecting Archives and the Classroom," *Archivaria* 44 (1997): 102–17; Ken Osborne, "Archives in the Classroom," *Archivaria* 23 (Winter 1986–1987): 16–40.

online or hands-on tutorials that cover archival sources, ninety-minute to three-hour sessions that describe the archives and discuss a variety of sources, or full-term courses that involve research training and promote critical thinking skills. Although university archivists usually devote considerable resources to providing archival education, little research investigates how students learn about archives or the role of the archivist in providing such education. This study developed questionnaires that archivists could use to investigate these issues.

Literature Review

The literature review discusses the use of primary sources in the classroom and research on archival orientation, including research on orientation interviews at the reference desk, online tutorials, and orientation sessions. It concludes by considering the literature on the impact of archival services.

Use of Primary Sources in the Classroom

Much has been written about the value of teaching both public school and university students how to use archival sources.[12] Anne Gillland-Swetland, Yasmin Kafai, and William Landis developed methodologies for integrating primary sources in K–12 classes,[13] and Julia Hendry suggests that primary sources can play an important role in fostering inquiry-based instruction for K–12 students. She states that if archivists[14] "share their resources with K–12 students and educators, archivists have a chance to make a real impact on classroom instruction." In a similar vein, Marcus Robyns argues that archivists should take an active role in teaching university students in formal classes that promote critical thinking.[15] Michael Drake argues that historical research can help liberate students at the university level and that working with sources of one's choosing does wonders for self-confidence, interest, and motivation.[16] To promote the use of archives to university students, many university archivists conduct archival orientation sessions.

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[12] Hendry, "Primary Sources in K-12 Education," 114–29; Robyns, "The Archivist as Educator," 363–84. See also, Adams, "Primary Sources and Senior Citizens in the Classroom," 239–42; Hopkins and Reed, "Teaching Historical Methods Through the Archives," 35–37a; Cook, "Connecting Archives and the Classroom," 102–17; Osborne, "Archives in the Classroom," 16–40.

[13] Anne Gilliland-Swetland, Yasmin B. Kafai, and William E. Landis, "Integrating Primary Sources in the Elementary School Classroom," *Archivaria* 48 (Fall 1999): 89–116.

[14] Hendry, "Primary Sources in K–12 Education," 127.

[15] Robyns, "The Archivist as Educator."

[16] Michael Drake, "The Democratisation of Historical Research: The Case of DA301," *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 17 (October 2006): 201–7.

Archival Orientation

In 2002, Elizabeth Yakel stated, "There has been no empirical work evaluating the outcomes of different types of archival user education."[17] In the summer and fall of 2001, she interviewed archival users and probed to understand the nature of an archives, identification and use of access tools, and user education. She asked the interviewees if they had had any formal orientation to archives, and, if so, to describe the experience. For many, the experience was not memorable. Yakel states,

> The concepts and skills demonstrated were not embraced and few interviewees were able to transfer them to later projects. The descriptions of the archival orientations focused on the skills and, at times, the rules of the archives. Little was said about higher-level frameworks or constructs such as provenance. . . .Interviewees were split on the importance of practical and conceptual information as well as the level of the practical information. This content issue is key and perhaps it is also time to rethink the one-size-fits-all approach to archival user education.[18]

Research conducted in the area of archival instruction includes a survey of 12 institutions by Robert W. Tissing.[19] He used the findings of the survey to develop guidelines for conducting orientation interviews. Jill Katte subsequently used Tissing's framework to assess the content of online tutorials.[20] Her assessment of Web-based user instruction at archives and manuscript departments in 2002 reveals that the majority of the sample websites contained research guides, but not online tutorials. Katte presents a model for Web-based archival user education with four types of information: an introduction to archival materials, information concerning intellectual access to the collections, information about physical access to the collections, and policies that pertain to the use of materials.

Two studies examined the content of archival orientation sessions. Susan Allen surveyed instructional programs in special collections at 75 liberal arts colleges and found that despite staff shortages, over 80% of the respondents provide instruction through tours, exhibits, and class visits.[21] Anna Allison undertook a mail survey of archives, manuscripts, and special collections departments

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[17] Elizabeth Yakel, "Listening to Users," *Archival Issues* 26 (2002): 111–27.

[18] Yakel, "Listening to Users," 122.

[19] Robert W. Tissing, Jr., "The Orientation Interview in Archival Research," *American Archivist* 47 (Spring 1984): 173–78.

[20] Jill Katte, "Reaching Out to Researchers: A Model for Web-based User Education Resources for Archives and Manuscript Collections," master's thesis, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2002.

[21] Susan M. Allen, "Rare Books and the College Library: Current Practices in Marrying Undergraduates to Special Collections," *Rare Books & Manuscripts Librarianship* 13 (1999): 110–19.

in United States universities with membership in the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) and examined the format and content of instruction these departments provide for undergraduate classes.[22] Her study shows that 96.47% of archives, manuscripts, and special collections departments at major research institutions provide classroom instruction for undergraduate students.[23] Many of the respondents indicated that their instructional sessions address primary sources and incorporate the interpretation of original materials through course assignments, in addition to providing an orientation to the facility.[24] Approximately half the respondents reported that the website is always or usually introduced during instruction sessions. Allison suggests that online tutorials had multiplied since Katte's study, but she warns that having quick and easy access to tutorials may mean that faculty will not bring students to an archives for an orientation session.[25] Finally, while it is widely argued that students are best engaged through active learning strategies, Allison notes that more research is needed to determine the specific instructional techniques that most effectively engage students while in an archives.[26]

Impact of Archival Services

The archival literature often suggests that archives make an impact on individuals, groups, and society at large. Most often, archives are extolled for their ability to increase historical knowledge and preserve collective memory. Other bodies of literature locate value in archives' ability to connect people to their family histories, hold governments accountable, or promote corporate responsibility. Archival scholars and practitioners, however, have only recently discussed the need to assess these impacts with methods that systematically gather statistics, facts, or stories that can articulate the impact of archives to the wider public. The call for such analysis comes in response to the general climate of our times, which insists on accountability, transparency, and quality assurance.[27] In addition, evidence of archival impact can help improve core services, evaluate particular programs, and serve advocacy efforts in times of financial restraint.[28]

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[22] Anna Elise Allison, "Connecting Undergraduates with Primary Sources: A Study of Undergraduate Instruction at Archives, Manuscripts and Special Collections," master's thesis, University of North Carolina, available at http://etd.ils.unc.edu/dspace/handle/1901/158, accessed 8 May 2007.

[23] Allison, "Connecting Undergraduates with Primary Sources," 45.

[24] Allison, "Connecting Undergraduates with Primary Sources," 45.

[25] Allison, "Connecting Undergraduates with Primary Sources," 48.

[26] Allison, "Connecting Undergraduates with Primary Sources," 47. See also in this issue, Xiaomu Zhou, "Student Archival Research Activity: An Exploratory Study," *American Archivist* 71 (Fall/Winter 2008): 476–98.

[27] Wavell et al., "Impact Evaluation of Museums," iii.

[28] Brophy, "The Development of a Model."

The recent interest in impact assessments comes primarily from the United Kingdom, where bodies such as the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council[29] have sponsored studies. Publications of the council assess the impact of museums, libraries, archives, and arts organizations, with the aim of developing better measures.

In 2002, Wavell, Baxter, Johnson, and Williams undertook an extensive review of the literature to identify studies on the impact of libraries, archives, and museums.[30] They conclude that "while most of the literature reviewed here conveys the opinion that the sector does have a positive social impact, extensive hard evidence of this impact, gathered systematically, is often lacking, particularly in the museums and archives domains."[31] They identify only a few research studies that shed light on the impact of archives, including evaluation studies of individual projects, annual statistical surveys of archives, and the longitudinal survey conducted in Great Britain by the Public Service Quality Group (PSQG).[32] They conclude by noting "a gap. . .in the research into impact evaluation and, therefore, evidence of impact in the archive domain. There is evidence that the domain itself is beginning to rectify this and is building on the research experience of the museum and library domains."[33]

Wavell, Baxter, Johnson, and Williams[34] created a web portal to survey archives, library, and museum practitioners' awareness and experience with impact evaluation.[35] They found that 52% of organizations were engaged in assessing social, learning, or economic impact but concluded that "evaluation itself is at an early state, and practitioner understanding of *impact* evaluation is one step behind that, both conceptually and in implementation."[36]

In 2006, Horton and Spence reviewed research on the social and economic impact of archives, identifying evidence from the PSQG studies as well as from evaluations of digitization projects and online services such as Archives Hub.[37]

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[29] See http://www.mla.gov.uk/home, accessed 25 June 2008.

[30] Wavell et al., "Impact Evaluation of Museums."

[31] Wavell et al., "Impact Evaluation of Museums," vi.

[32] Public Services Quality Group for Archives and Local Studies, *National Survey of Visitors to British Archives,* 2006, available at http://www.ncaonline.org.uk/research_and_development/survey/, accessed 2 June 2006.

[33] Wavell et al., "Impact Evaluation of Museums," xi.

[34] Wavell et al., "Impact Evaluation of Museums."

[35] Dorothy A. Williams, Caroline Wavell, Graeme Baxter, Alan MacLennan, and Debbie Jobson "Implementing Impact Evaluation in Professional Practice: A Study of Support Needs within the Museum, Archive, and Library Sector," *International Journal of Information Management* 25 (2005): 533–48.

[36] Williams et al., "Implementing Impact Evaluation in Professional Practice," 546.

[37] Sarah Horton and Jacqueline Spence, *Scoping the Economic and Social Impact of Archives,* undertaken for Museums, Libraries, Archives Yorkshire, March 2006, available at http://www.mla.gov.uk/resources/assets/S/Scoping_the_Economic_and_Social_Impact_of_Archives___Report_9739.pdf, accessed 25 May 2008.

Although they conducted their study four years after Wavell et al., Horton and Spence still note the lack of research on the social, learning, and economic impact of archives. At the same time, they developed archives-specific impact models that incorporate concepts often overlooked by studies examining libraries, archives, and museums simultaneously. For example, they underscore Wavell et al.'s emphasis on access as a precondition for impact, and they develop a taxonomy of usage that locates impact in both primary and secondary use.

Discussions of archival impact in the North American literature are scarce and often focus on short-term outcomes and performance evaluation. In Canada, Jacques Grimard and Lucie Pagé examined more than thirty years of literature on performance evaluation and conclude that few authors deal with the issue of evaluation, and then only superficially.[38] They note that current program evaluations concentrate on compiling statistics and tracking activities, which cannot measure the impact of a service or resource.

The literature typically divides impact into three interrelated categories: social, economic, and personal (typically learning).[39] Horton and Spence define *social impact* as encompassing "inclusion or overcoming exclusion of individuals or groups in terms of poverty, education, race or disability and may also include issues of health, community safety, employment and education."[40] Wavell et al. argue that the literature fails to deliver evidence of a causal relationship between archives and social impact. The PSQG study, however, shows a general public perception that archives impact social development by preserving culture, strengthening family and community identity, providing learning opportunities, and supporting administrative and business activity.[41] Wavell et al. also note the potential for archival impact on social inclusion in regard to "personal identity and development; community identity and development; representing communities; democracy and citizenship; tackling crime; promoting healthier communities; promoting lifelong learning, educational attainment, [and] employability."[42]

Studies of *economic impact* tend to focus on the ways in which archival users contribute to the local economy, for example by supporting public transportation, local shops, restaurants, and hotels. The PSQG study indicates some of this impact in its user surveys, as 87% of archival users "reported visiting the area

[38] Jacques Grimard and Lucie Pagé, "Towards Program Evaluation in Archives," *Archival Science* 4 (2004): 99–126.

[39] Others (including Horton and Spence) add categories such as cultural and health impact, but these can often be incorporated into the three broader headings.

[40] Horton and Spence, *Scoping the Economic and Social Impact of Archives,* 48.

[41] PSQG, *National Survey of Visitors to British Archives,* 2006, http://www.ncaonline.org.uk/research_ and_development/survey/ accessed 2 June 2006.

[42] Wavell et al., "Impact Evaluation of Museums," v.

with the specific purpose of going to the local archive."[43] Others consider the archives' effect on tourism, job creation, and innovation.[44]

According to Wavell et al., *learning impact* is interpreted in a broad sense to encompass an individual, organisation, or community's formal, informal and lifelong progression towards, and change in, knowledge base through a variety of real and virtual channels. Learning can be surface or deep, immediate or long term, the acquisition of skills or an interaction with established knowledge.[45]

Of the three types of impact, Horton and Spence argue that the archives sector knows most about learning impact. The 2001 PSQG study demonstrates evidence of impact on personal development, including archives' role as an important source of leisure, enjoyment, and personal satisfaction that provides a useful and enjoyable learning experience; stimulates or broadens understanding of history and culture; increases abilities, skills, and confidence; and, to a limited extent, helps job seeking or workplace skills.[46]

However, most studies of learning impact pertain to individuals. Moussouri's exploration of learning outcomes in libraries, archives, and museums notes that "learning impact studies of archives are even scarcer than those of libraries,"[47] as archives have historically been more concerned with preserving their holdings than making them accessible. Wavell et al. agree and suggest that research on the archival impact on learning is lacking. They also note that research that investigates the impact of libraries on learning identifies the difficulty of isolating library services from other important influences. This is due to the complexity of the learning process. Some evidence exists that archives could also contribute to students' learning, but studying learning would require that archives partner with intermediaries such as teachers.

The literature points to the paucity of research on the impact of archives, as well as the need to develop methods for gathering data that provide evidence of the difference archives make in people's lives. In particular, authors articulate a need for longitudinal, national studies, using robust tools and indicators

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[43] As cited in Theano Moussouri, "A Context for the Development of Learning Outcomes in Museums, Libraries and Archives," prepared for the Learning Impact Research Project Team, Research Centre for Museums and Galleries, University of Leicester, 2002, available at http://www.le.ac.uk/ms/research/pub1110.html, 37, accessed 15 April 2008.

[44] Cultural Heritage Consortium, *Impact Evaluation of Museums, Archives and Libraries: Quantitative Time Series Data Identification Exercise,* a report for Resource: The Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries (London: Resource, 2002).

[45] Wavell et al., "Impact Evaluation of Museums," 6.

[46] Cited in Wavell et al., "Impact Evaluation of Museums," 21.

[47] Moussouri, "A Context for the Development of Learning Outcomes," 37.

that generate evidence of causal links and report on how archives change the way people behave.[48]

Developing Models

To move toward a better understanding of the various aspects of impact, Brophy developed the *Levels of Impact* (LoI) model that rates impact of information services on users in six levels: awareness raised, better informed, improved knowledge, changed perception and/or ability, changed world view, and changed action. Horton and Spence adapted Brophy's model to develop Table 1. Their model identifies the various aspects and possible impacts in an archival setting and maps the model to "Generic Learning Outcomes (GLOs)[49] and Generic Social Outcomes (GSOs).[50]

The literature suggests that few studies have investigated the impact of archives or students' impressions of archival orientation sessions. Our study of the impact of archival orientation sessions provides tools to aid archivists in investigating this issue.

Impact of an Orientation Session

We surveyed professors and students who attended four orientation sessions at the Yale University Library Manuscripts and Archives MSSA, which is a major center for historical inquiry and serves as the documentary memory of Yale University.[51] The orientation sessions held at the MSSA are similar in many ways to the orientation sessions discussed in Allison's study. The archivist who presents them works with professors and tailors each session to meet the specific needs of a course. These sessions cover the types of material contained in the MSSA collection, access and use, and the retrieval of records. The archivist displays original materials from archival holdings related to the course to engage students. The MSSA's orientation session also devotes time to searching the ORBIS database, the university's online public catalog.[52]

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[48] As asserted in Brophy, "The Development of a Model," Horton and Spence, *Scoping the Economic and Social Impact of Archives,* Wavell et al., "Impact Evaluation of Museums," and Williams et al., "Implementing Impact Evaluation in Professional Practice."

[49] For more information on the GLO outcomes, see "Inspiring Learning for All," available at http://www.inspiringlearningforall.gov.uk/introduction/default.aspx, accessed 2 June 2008.

[50] For more information on the GSOs, see "Introducing the Generic Social Outcome Framework," available at http://www.mla.gov.uk/policy/Communities/gso_intro, accessed 2 June 2008.

[51] Yale University Library Manuscripts and Archives, available at http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/, accessed 8 May 2007.

[52] According to Allison, archival orientation sessions do not typically include information about the library's catalog.

Table 1. Mapping of Impact Scale (Brophy, 2005) to Generic Learning Outcomes (GLOs) and Prototype Generic Social Outcomes (GSOs). (Horton and Spence 2006)

Scale (Brophy, 2005)	Definition (Brophy, 2005)	Impact over time/on whom	GLO equivalent (MLA, 2004b)	Prototype GSO equivalent (Burns Owen Partnership 2006)
−2	Hostility (extreme disappointment)	Short-term / Individual Medium-term / Community Longer-term /Society	*Attitudes and Values (about archives)*	
−1	Dismissive (service not worth money/time)	Short-term / Individual Medium-term / Community Longer-term /Society	*Attitudes and Values (about archives)*	
0	Neither positive nor negative—unaware	Short-term / Individual Medium-term / Community Longer-term /Society		
1	Awareness raised (mild positive impact)	Medium-term / Community Longer-term / Society	*Attitudes and Values (about archives)*	*Strengthening Public Life (inclusive public spaces and services)*
2	Better informed (with relevant information)	Short-term / Individual	*Knowledge and Understanding (learning facts or information)*	*Stronger and Safer Communities (tackling fear of crime)*
3	Improved knowledge	Medium-term / Individual Longer-term / Community	*Knowledge and Understanding (deepening understanding) Skills (knowing how to do something)*	*Stronger and Safer Communities (contributing to crime prevention) Health and Well-being (encouraging healthy lifestyles) Strengthening Public Life (enabling community empowerment)*
4	Changed perception and/or ability	Medium-term / Individual Longer-term / Community Longer-term / Society	*Skills (key; info management; social) Attitudes and Values (self-esteem; attitudes to others) Enjoyment, Inspiration, Creativity (creativity; being inspired)*	*Stronger and Safer Communities (supporting cultural diversity; family ties) Health and Well-being (supporting care and recovery) Strengthening Public Life (encouraging participation)*
5	Changed worldview (transferable skills acquired)	Longer-term / Individual Longer-term / Community Longer-term / Society	*Skills (social; emotional; communication) Attitudes and Values (empathy, capacity for tolerance)*	*Stronger and Safer Communities (improving intergroup understanding) Strengthening Public Life (building capacity)*

(continued)

Table 1. Continued

Scale (Brophy, 2005)	Definition (Brophy, 2005)	Impact over time/on whom	GLO equivalent (MLA, 2004b)	Prototype GSO equivalent (Burns Owen Partnership 2006)
6	Changed action	Longer-term / Individual	*Activity, Behavior, Progression* (doing more; changing ways of managing life; behavioral change)	*Stronger and Safer Communities* (improving intergroup dialogue)
		Longer-term / Community		*Health and Well-being* (supporting older people; helping children)
		Longer-term / Society		*Strengthening Public Life* (encouraging participation; improving service)

In the orientation session, the archivist also addresses aspects of archives and archival research that she thinks could be intimidating. The archivist encourages the students to ask questions and to approach staff at the reference desk for help. At the end of the session, she asks students questions about their feelings about archival research.

Purpose of the Study

In conducting the study of MSSA's orientation sessions, we wanted to explore methods for assessing the impact of archival instruction sessions. The study focused on two possible areas of impact: students' level of confidence in finding archival material and their subsequent use of archival material. Two research questions guided the study:

1. Is the level of confidence in finding archival material higher for students at the end of a term in which they have attended an archival orientation session?
2. Is student use of archival sources higher at the end of a term in which they have attended an archival orientation session?

The study also gathered feedback on the orientation sessions from students and professors.

Method

We used questionnaires to gather data from professors and students both before the orientation session and at the end of the term. We developed the questionnaires in consultation with Diane Kaplan, an MSSA archivist, and, with

her help, pilot tested them on a small group of nursing students in April 2006. We experienced no difficulties with their administration. In the fall of 2006, Kaplan contacted professors who had arranged for their classes to have orientation sessions at MSSA and asked them if they would be interested in participating in the study. Seven professors volunteered to take part. We sent email messages formally inviting them to participate. We sent packages with a faculty questionnaire and a student questionnaire to the professors and asked them to complete the faculty questionnaire and distribute the other to the students before the orientation session. The faculty questionnaire asked three questions about previous experience with archival orientation sessions and the extent to which the professors expected their students to use various sources in their assignments. (See Appendix A.) The student questionnaire gathered data about students' familiarity with archival research, their experience using various types of primary and secondary sources, their confidence level about finding sources in archives, and their expectations for the orientation session. (See Appendix B.) The students were to complete the questionnaire in class before the orientation session and return it to their professor in a sealed envelope if they wished to participate. We asked any student who did not wish to participate to return the blank questionnaire. We instructed them all to place their questionnaires in an envelope so their professors did not know who had chosen to participate in the survey and who had not. Students and professors from four courses took part in the study.[53]

We mailed another pair of questionnaires (one for professors and one for students) to professors near the end of the term. We asked the professors to complete the faculty questionnaire and distribute the student questionnaires during their last class. The faculty questionnaire asked the professors to comment on what they found most and least useful about the orientation; what, if anything, they would change about it; their general level of satisfaction with the session; and whether they would include the orientation session in future classes or recommend it to other professors. We also asked how satisfied they were with the range of sources their students had used in their assignments throughout the term and whether they thought the orientation had an impact on the students' assignments. The student questionnaire asked them to comment on what they liked best and least about the orientation session, their general level of satisfaction with the orientation session, their confidence level in finding sources in an archives, the extent to which they used various primary and secondary sources for their coursework and other research, and whether they had used the MSSA

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[53] Seven professors originally agreed to take part in the study, however, the packages mailed surface mail through Canada Post took an unexpectedly long time to arrive at Yale. This created problems with the distribution of the questionnaires and reduced participation.

and its online tutorial since the orientation. (See Appendix D.) Again we asked the students to place the completed questionnaire in an envelope if they wished to participate or to return the blank questionnaire if they did not. Each professor returned the questionnaires to us in a self-addressed envelope.

The courses

The four courses involved in the study included a course on the history of medicine, an introduction to historical sources, and two history courses dealing with America. Students in the introduction to historical sources course (a non-Yale course) attend a small university approximately thirty-five miles from New Haven, while students from the other three courses attend Yale University. All four courses include assignments that involve the use of primary sources. Students in the introduction to historical sources course write a short paper describing how one document discussed in the orientation session might be used in a research paper. The professor does not expect them to use the MSSA for their other assignments as they live outside of New Haven. The students in the Yale classes write either a short analysis of a primary source,[54] a brief paper using three primary sources, or a bibliographic essay and a research paper based on primary sources.

Profile of respondents

Sixty-nine students completed the questionnaire before the orientation session. Thirty-four listed their major as history and 17 noted history of science and history of medicine (HSHM). Other majors included American studies, ethics, economics, secondary and elementary education, international studies, African American studies, and English. Forty-six students completed the questionnaire at the end of the term. History majors accounted for the majority of these students.

Analysis of the data

We entered the data from the questionnaires filled out by students before the orientation session and at the end of term into Excel and later imported the quantitative data into SSPS for further analysis. Some questions asked students to comment on aspects of the orientation session or to provide more information about the answer to another question. We printed the qualitative data and examined the answers to each question. We broadly categorized the data from

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[54] The assignment does not stipulate that the primary source be an item shown in the orientation session.

each question to understand the students' thoughts and feelings about the orientation. For example, we categorized responses to a question that asked students to elaborate on their level of satisfaction with the orientation session as either positive or negative. We quote from student responses we think best represent responses in each category.

Findings

Prior to the Orientation

Sources used for coursework and other research

Before the orientation session, we asked students to indicate the extent to which they had used information from a list of 11 different sources for coursework or other research. We rated their responses on a Likert scale of 1 to 5, 1 for "Not at all" to 5 for "A great deal." Overall, students had not used many different types of primary sources. As shown in Table 2, most of the students indicated they used information published on the Web (94.2%), in journal articles (91.3%), and in books or pamphlets (91.3%) for their coursework or other research. In contrast, fewer students indicated they had used the various types of primary sources for their coursework or other research: personal papers and correspondence (59.4%), photographs (52.2%), records (42.0%), and maps (42.0%).

The questionnaire asked students to indicate their level of familiarity with archival research. They were given three options: "Very familiar," "Familiar," and "Not at all familiar." Forty-five students (65.2%) indicated that they were "Not at All Familiar" with conducting research in an archives,[55] and 24 students (34.8%) indicated they were "Familiar" with conducting research in an archives.

Table 2. Sources Used for Coursework and Other Research before the Orientation

	Number of respondents who had used	Percentage of respondents who had used
The Web	65	94.2%
Journal articles	63	91.3%
Published books or pamphlets	63	91.3
Government documents	39	56.5%
Personal papers and correspondence	41	59.4%
Records	29	42.0%
Photographs	36	52.2%
Maps	29	42.0%

[55] Surprisingly, though 65.2% indicated they were not at all familiar with doing research in an archives, 59.4% of the students indicated they had previously used personal papers and manuscripts for their coursework. We do not know if students misinterpreted the meaning of the terms used in the survey. For example, did they understand what we meant by "records"?

No student reported that he or she was "Very familiar" with conducting research in an archives.

C o n f i d e n c e   l e v e l

The questionnaire also asked students to indicate their level of confidence in finding sources in an archives on a scale of 1 to 10. As shown in Table 3, 49 students (71.0%) rated their level of confidence at the lower end of the scale (5 or below), while only 20 students (29.0%) rated their level of confidence in finding sources in an archives at the higher end of the scale (6 or above). The mean confidence level was 4.1. We also separately calculated the confidence level of Yale students (3.71) and of students who did not attend Yale (4.61). We were surprised that the mean level of confidence for students who did not attend Yale University was higher than for students who attended Yale. The discrepancy may be due to different backgrounds, or perhaps the students who were taking the Introduction to Historical Sources were more familiar with historical sources.

Even though the students' confidence level in finding information before the orientation session was low, their comments generally indicate optimism. It appears that though students were not confident about finding sources, they had confidence in their research ability. Furthermore, many felt they would be able to figure out the archival system, as reflected in the following quotes:

> I have never used an archives before but I am confident of my abilities to figure out the system, though it might take some time.

> I'm smart enough to figure it out.

> I have never done research in an archive and feel that I will catch on.

> I know the sources exist so I've just got to find 'em.

> I haven't used the archives before, but I am confident that when I do I will find thing[s].

Table 3. Students' Level of Confidence before the Orientation Session

Likert Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Not at all confident									Extremely Confident
Number of responses	16	3	13	6	11	6	8	5	1	0
Percentage of respondents	23.2%	4.3%	18.8%	8.7%	15.9%	8.7%	11.6%	7.2%	1.5%	0%

Expectations

We asked students about their expectations for the orientation session. They indicated they hoped to gain "increased comfort," "familiarity," "to search efficiently," "further knowledge," and a "basic understanding" of an archives. Sixteen students indicated that they wanted to learn to search more effectively, and they wanted help with finding material or "Short cuts to finding sources." Eleven students hoped to learn how to use the archives or the archival sources, while 7 students wanted to increase their confidence in using archives. The remaining 34 students wanted general information about archives, research, the archival system, or the types of material the archives holds. For example, one student wanted "an introduction to archival organization and research methods" and another student wanted "knowledge of the full collection and its catalogue system."

Three of the four professors[56] completed the faculty questionnaire before the instructional session. Their expectations focused mainly on exposing students to a variety of documents. One professor also wanted to introduce the students to the "good mechanics of archival research," while another hoped the students would "develop a greater enthusiasm for archival research." We asked the professors to indicate the extent to which they expected students to use various primary and secondary sources. Not surprisingly, professors indicated that they expected their students to use secondary sources—books, newspapers, and information published on the Web—but they also expected the students to use records, personal papers, and correspondence, and, to a lesser extent, photographs.

At the End of Semester

Forty-six students from the four classes completed the questionnaire at the end of the semester, along with all four professors.

Evaluation of the orientation sessions

On a scale of 1 to 10, students were asked to rate how satisfied they were with the orientation session. (See Figure 1.) Forty students (88.9%) rated their level of satisfaction at 7 or above, 4 students rated it at 6, and 1 student rated it at 5. One student did not answer this question. The mean satisfaction rating was 8.0.

When asked to elaborate on their rating, the majority of students responded with positive reviews of the orientation session. Many students described it as "informative" and indicated their interest in the primary documents they saw.

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[56] Two of the professors who completed the faculty questionnaire before the orientation were from Yale University and one taught at the small university thirty-five miles from New Haven.
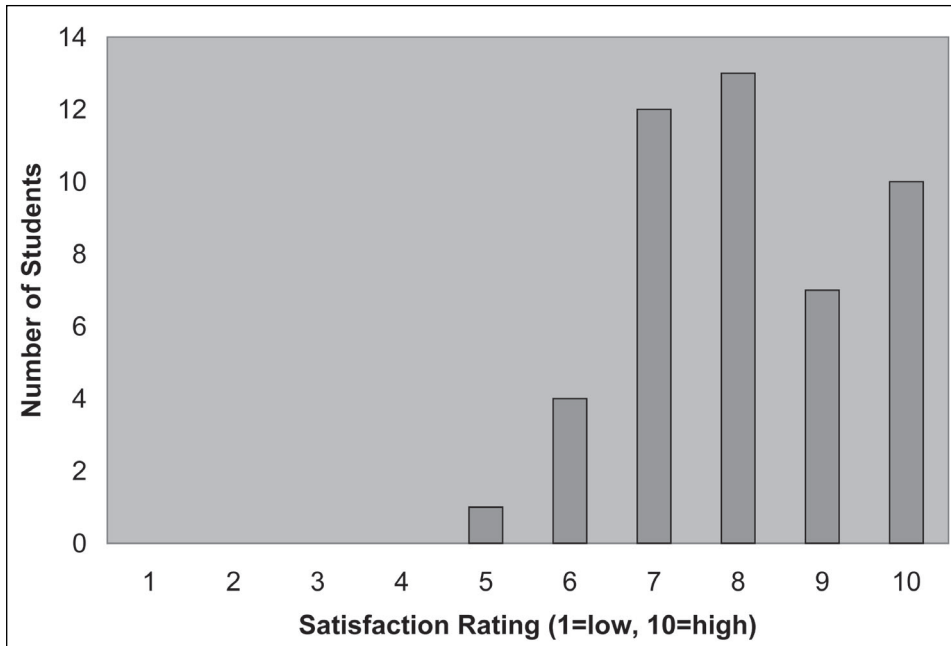
F I G U R E I .   **Student satisfaction with the orientation session.**

One student commented that the "archivist was very knowledgeable, enthusiastic and made the visit very worthwhile."

However, 7 students suggested ways to improve the orientation session. Four students commented that they would like more information on how to access the material or more explanation of how the information is cataloged and organized. Two students felt the orientation needed to be longer and more in depth. For example:

> I would have liked to have come away with a better understanding of how to find things, i.e., where they are catalogued, where to begin.

> I got a good feel for the range of the materials at the archives, but was somewhat unclear on how they were organized.

Two students noted the difficulty of retaining the information provided by the archivist:

> You did a fine job, but it did not stick in my mind.

> It was informative and not too boring but I don't know if I retained all the direction on how to work the system. Good thing they seem really nice there.

What they liked the most and the least

Thirty students indicated that they most enjoyed the display of primary source documents, and 2 students mentioned that they appreciated seeing

sources relevant to the class. Other students commented that they liked the overview of the database and the ambience and organization of the session. One student commented that the orientation had "demystified the process of using the archives."

Thirty-four students answered the question about what they liked "the least about the orientation?" Five students indicated that it was not long enough, while 6 felt it was too long. Four students commented that they would have liked more time to view the primary documents and artifacts displayed, and another 4 students felt that more time should have been spent on how to access the archival records.

The professors were asked what they found most and least useful about the orientation session, and what, if anything, about the orientation they would change. All 4 professors found the wide range of material shown to the students most useful. They differed about the least useful content. For example, one professor found the history of the archives least useful, while the professor who did not teach at Yale University found information about the registration process least useful. Finally, 2 of the 4 professors stated that they would add "some practical experience in finding material" and have the students "briefly walked through the steps of actually ordering materials."

Describing the orientation session to a fellow student

The questionnaire asked the students to choose one of five phrases to describe the orientation session to a fellow student; 19 students (42.2%) chose "Essential knowledge for conducting research." Sixteen students (35.6%) chose "Generally good knowledge to have," and 10 students (22.2%) selected "Useful knowledge only if you need primary sources." No student selected "Interesting, but not relevant," or "Neither interesting nor useful." One student did not respond.

Level of confidence

The questionnaire at the end of term also asked students to rate their level of confidence in finding sources in an archives. The data are shown in Table 4.

On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being "Not at all confident" and 10 being "Extremely confident," 27 students (61.4%) rated themselves 6 and above, and 17 students (38.6%) rated themselves as 5 or below with respect to their level of confidence. Two students did not respond. The mean confidence rating was 6.0. The mean confidence level of Yale students was 5.77, while the mean confidence level of the students who did not attend Yale was 6.43.

The professors' questionnaire asked if the orientation had an impact on the students' assignments, and all 4 professors indicated that it did. However, they

Table 4. Students' Level of Confidence at the End of the Term

Likert Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Not at all confident								Extremely confident	
Number of respondents	2	0	3	3	9	8	11	4	2	2
Percentage of respondents	4.5%	0%	6.8%	6.8%	20.5%	18.2%	25.0%	9.1%	4.5%	4.5%

differed in the degree to which they were satisfied (on a scale of 1 to 10) with the range of sources the students used in their assignments, with 3 professors rating their level of satisfaction as 7, 8, and 10. The fourth rated his or her level of satisfaction as a 3 [57] and noted the orientation took place too late in the term.[58] The professor who rated his or her level of satisfaction with the range of sources as a 10 noted that the archivist chose an excellent range of sources in the orientation which interested and excited the students.

Impact Indicators

Comparison of Confidence Levels

We compared the confidence level of students before the orientation and at the end of term to address research question 1: Is the level of confidence in finding archival material higher for students at the end of a term in which they have attended an archival orientation session?

As Figure 2 shows and as previously noted, a large number of students (71.0%) rated their confidence at the lower end of the scale (5 or below) before the orientation. On the other hand, at the end of the term, only 38.6% of the students rated themselves at the lower end of the scale (5 or below). Furthermore, the mean rating for confidence level before the orientation was a 4.1, while the mean rating for confidence at the end of the term was 6.0. The confidence level of Yale students increased from 3.71 to 5.77; the confidence level of the students who did not attend Yale increased from 4.61 to 6.43.

Although the students' ratings of their level of confidence increased, when asked to elaborate on their responses, three students commented that they

[57] We note that the students in the different classes had different assignments, and these differences may have affected the professors' opinions.

[58] Interestingly, 5 of the 10 respondents from this class (which is taught at Yale) indicated they visited the MSSA after the orientation.
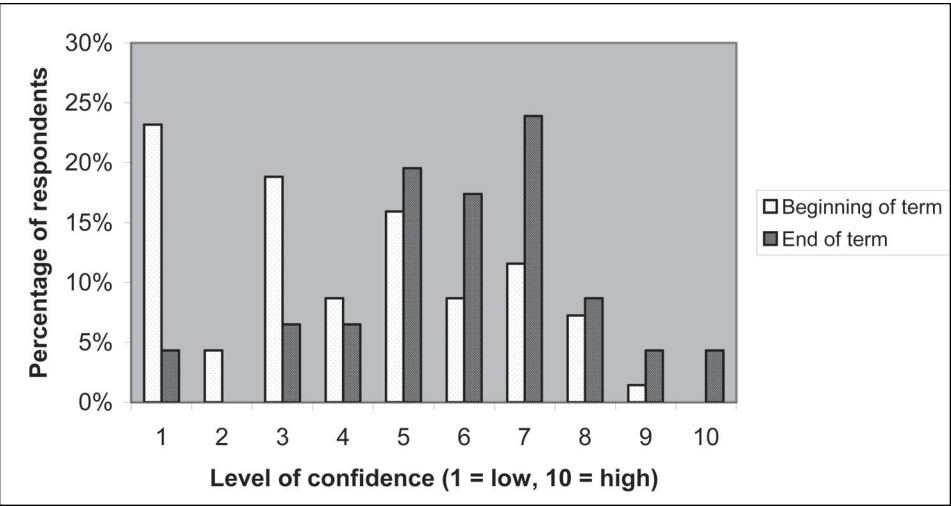
F I G U R E 2 .   **Confidence level of students before the orientation and at the end of the term.**

would still require help to find material. Another 6 students indicated that they were too inexperienced to be confident in using an archives.

Comparison of Use of Archival Sources

We compared students' use of archival sources before the orientation and at the end of the term to address research question 2: Is student use of archival sources higher at the end of a term in which they have attended an archival orientation session?

Before the orientation session, 59.4% of the students had used personal papers and correspondence for coursework and other research. At the end of the term, 70.5% of the students reported that they had used personal papers and correspondence for the coursework and other research. As shown in Figure 3, not only had the percentage of students who had used personal papers and correspondence increased but they also reported heavier use.

Students' use of other archival sources also increased, albeit only slightly. For example, before the orientation session, 52.2% of respondents indicated they had used photographs for coursework and other research, and by the end of the term, 58.1% indicated they had used photographs for coursework and other research.

Use of MSSA

The data also indicate an increase in use of the MSSA. Only 3 of the 69 students indicated they had used the MSSA before the orientation session. When
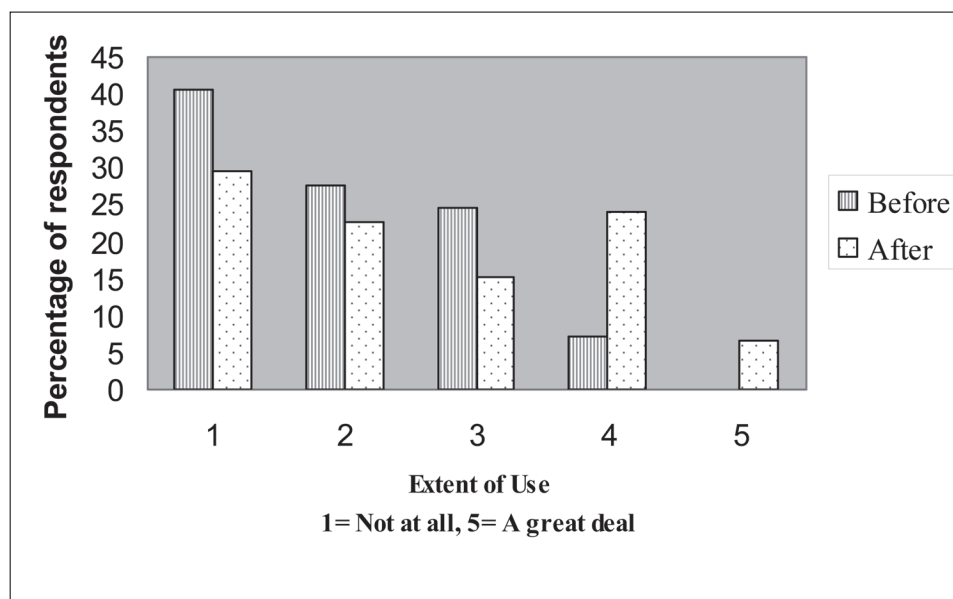
F I G U R E   3 .   **Students' use of personal papers and manuscripts.**

asked if they had used the archives since their orientation, 12 of the 45 students (26.7%) who answered this question said they had used the archives. All 12 students who had visited the archives after their orientation session attended Yale University.[59]

D i s c u s s i o n

The archival orientation sessions in this study included components that have been shown to increase the impact of *library* instruction.[60] The professors and the archivist have a close working relationship, and the orientation is organized in conjunction with the professors and tailored for each specific course. All of the courses include assignments that require students to use primary sources, and in some cases, the students have more than one assignment requiring use of this material. All professors were positive about the orientation session and the archives, and all agreed that the sessions had an impact. Thus it seems that these orientation sessions have the potential to have an impact on the students' use of archival sources and their confidence level in finding archival material.

[59] The assignments the non-Yale students completed did not require them to visit the MSSA after the orientation.

[60] Heidi Julien and Stuart Boon, "Accessing Instructional Outcomes in Canadian Academic Libraries," *Library and Information Science Research* 26 (2004): 121–39.

From the students' point of view, the orientation session seems to have been a success. The questionnaire completed at the end of the term included questions to assess the students' level of satisfaction with the orientation, as well as their level of confidence in finding sources and the extent of their use of primary sources. Almost all students (88.9%) rated their level of satisfaction with the session as a 7 or above, and three-quarters of the students (77.8%) indicated that they thought the session provided either essential knowledge for conducting research, or generally good knowledge to have.

However, the study also pointed to ways the orientation session could be improved. Two of the four professors and seven students suggested that they would have liked a hands-on component, and many students indicated that they felt they still did not know how to search for and find information in the archives. If the orientation session had required students to search in the catalog and fill out request forms for one or two of the documents they saw in the orientation session, they might have felt more confident in their ability to find material. Furthermore, since 16 of the students indicated they had expected to learn how to search more effectively for material, and 11 students expected to learn how to use the archives, adding a hands-on component might help ensure the orientation session meets the expectations of these students.

Nine of the students had used the MSSA tutorial by the end of term, while only 3 used it before the orientation session. More students who were not enrolled at Yale had used it than students who attended Yale University. These findings seem to indicate that the relationship between orientation sessions and online tutorials are more complex than Allison suggests. She suggests that professors might stop arranging for their students to attend archival orientation sessions if the students have access to online tutorials. This does not seem to be the case in this study as some students used the online tutorial after they visited the archives. This may suggest that for remote students without easy access to the archives, the online tutorial may supplement and reinforce the learning that takes place in the orientation session.

Impact

When comparing the use of primary sources before the orientation session and at the end of the term, we found a small increase in the percentage of students who had used personal papers and correspondence (from 59.4% to 70.5%) as well as photographs (from 52.2% to 58.1%), but use of other archival sources remained nearly the same. The mean rating of students' level of confidence in finding material increased from 4.1 before the orientation session to 6.0 at the end of the term.

The study is only exploratory, but using the Spence and Horton framework for impact in Table 1, we posit that the impact of the orientation sessions in this

study could be mapped on the 9-point impact scale as a positive level 4, meaning it changed students' perception of their confidence and perhaps their self-esteem, and as a positive level 6, in that it enabled a change of action, manifested in a greater use of archives. Furthermore, some students changed their behavior as indicated by the increase in their use of archival sources, their visits to the MSSA, and their use of the Yale tutorial. The challenge, however, remains to discover how to extend these impacts on behavior and perceptions for all students.

Limitations of the Study

The study has a number of limitations. Fewer students completed the questionnaire (46) at the end of the term than the number who responded to the questionnaire before the orientation session (69). Students who did not use archival sources or who had less confidence in finding archival sources might have had less interest in our study and may not have completed the questionnaire at the end of the term. If they had, the data might have indicated no increase in level of confidence and use of personal papers and correspondence.

Furthermore, 9 of the students in these courses used the MSSA tutorial and 12 students used the archives after the orientation. Thus, the increased level of confidence may have resulted from activities that took place after the orientation session. For example, the orientation may have sparked students' interest in returning to the archives or consulting the tutorial, and these activities may have increased their confidence level. Nevertheless, if the level of confidence increased because students used the MSSA or the tutorial because of an interest sparked by the orientation session, this increase would still be an indirect impact of the orientation session. Another possibility is that the increase in use and confidence level results from doing their assignments and their professors' encouragement rather than from the orientation session. With the current research design, we cannot isolate the impact of the orientation session from the impact of the course and other factors.[61] The study is, of course, also limited because of its administration and the problems experienced in distributing the questionnaires.

Future Research

Measuring impact is very difficult. Further research is needed to gain additional insights. Replicating the study at other university archives may provide data on the impact of different types of orientation sessions. Further, studying

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[61] As previously indicated, Wavell et al. point out that researchers who investigate the impact of libraries on learning note the difficulty of isolating library services from other important influences.

students' use of the archives and confidence level in finding archival sources in history classes where professors expect students to use archives but do not provide orientation sessions might provide interesting comparisons. Working more closely with professors and analyzing citations from students' papers would provide a mechanism to identify the archival material the students used in their assignments. Furthermore, in-depth interviews with students as well as with professors would provide more insight into why the students did or did not use the archives after the orientation session and what components of the orientation session helped increase their confidence.

Appendix A: Faculty Questionnaire

Assessing the Impact of the Yale University Archives Orientation

1. Have you ever included an archival orientation in a previous course?

   ☐ Yes ☐ No

   If yes, was it at the Yale University Archives? ☐ Yes ☐ No

   What was the greatest benefit of the orientation session(s) to your class?

2. Please describe your expectations of the Yale University archives orientation session for this course.

3. Please indicate the extent to which you expect your students to use the following sources in their assignments. Please circle the appropriate number:

	Not at all			A Great Deal	
Records	1	2	3	4	5
Photographs	1	2	3	4	5
Personal papers and correspondence	1	2	3	4	5
Maps	1	2	3	4	5
Sound recordings	1	2	3	4	5
Film or video	1	2	3	4	5
Published books or pamphlets	1	2	3	4	5
Newspapers or periodicals	1	2	3	4	5
Architectural plans	1	2	3	4	5
Government documents	1	2	3	4	5
Journal articles	1	2	3	4	5
Information published on the web	1	2	3	4	5

Questionnaire complete—thank you

Appendix B: Student Questionnaire

Assessing the Impact of the Yale University Archives Orientation

1. How familiar are you with doing research in an archives?

   ☐ Very   ☐ Somewhat   ☐ Not at all

2. Please rate the extent to which you have used the following sources for coursework or other research. <u>Please circle the appropriate number</u>:

	Not at all				A Great Deal
Records	1	2	3	4	5
Photographs	1	2	3	4	5
Personal papers and correspondence	1	2	3	4	5
Maps	1	2	3	4	5
Sound recordings	1	2	3	4	5
Film or video	1	2	3	4	5
Published books or pamphlets	1	2	3	4	5
Newspapers or periodicals	1	2	3	4	5
Architectural plans	1	2	3	4	5
Government documents	1	2	3	4	5
Journal articles	1	2	3	4	5
Information published on the web	1	2	3	4	5

3. How confident are you about finding sources in an archives? <u>Please circle the appropriate number</u>:

Not at all confident									Extremely confident
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Please elaborate on your degree of confidence:

4. What do you expect to gain from the orientation session?

5. Have you ever used the Yale University Archives online tutorial?

   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

6. Please note your field of study and year.

Questionnaire complete—thank you

A p p e n d i x   C :   F a c u l t y   E v a l u a t i o n

Assessing the Impact of the Yale University Archives Orientation

Assessment of Orientation:
1. Overall, how satisfied were you with the orientation?
    <u>Please circle the appropriate number</u>:

Not satisfied									Extremely satisfied
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Please explain your response:

2. What was most useful in the orientation?

3. What was least useful in the orientation?

4. If you could change anything in the orientation, what would that be?

5. Would you include an orientation to the archives again in the future? Please explain.

6. Would you recommend an orientation to the archives to other faculty members? Please explain.

Assessment of Student Performance:
7. Do you believe that the orientation had an impact on the assignments students submitted in the course?

    ☐ Yes

    ☐ No

8. Overall, how satisfied were you with the range of sources the students used in their assignments? <u>Please circle the appropriate number</u>:

Not satisfied									Extremely Satisfied
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Please explain your response:

Evaluation complete—thank you

Appendix D: Yale University Archives Orientation Student Evaluation

1. Before attending the orientation session for this course, had you ever used the Yale University Archives?

☐ Yes

☐ No

2. Overall, how satisfied were you with the orientation?
<u>Please circle the appropriate number</u>:

Not Satisfied   Extremely
satisfied

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Please elaborate on your response:

3. What did you like the most about the orientation?

4. What did you like the least about the orientation?

5. How would you describe the orientation to a fellow student? Please choose one of the following:

☐ Essential knowledge for conducting research

☐ Generally good knowledge to have

☐ Useful knowledge only if you need primary sources

☐ Interesting, but not relevant

☐ Neither interesting nor useful

6. How confident are you now about finding sources in an archives? Please circle the appropriate number:

Not Confident									Extremely Confident
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Please elaborate on your response:

7. Please rate the extent to which you have used the following sources for coursework or other research. Please circle the appropriate number:

Extent Used

	Not At All				A Great Deal
Records	1	2	3	4	5
Photographs	1	2	3	4	5
Personal papers and correspondence	1	2	3	4	5
Maps	1	2	3	4	5
Sound recordings	1	2	3	4	5
Film or video	1	2	3	4	5
Published books or pamphlets	1	2	3	4	5
Newspapers or periodicals	1	2	3	4	5
Architectural plans	1	2	3	4	5
Government documents	1	2	3	4	5
Journal articles	1	2	3	4	5
Information published on the web	1	2	3	4	5

8. Have you ever used the Yale University tutorial, *Using Manuscripts and Archives*?

☐ Yes

☐ No

9. Have you used the Yale University Archives since the orientation?
☐ Yes
☐ No

10. Please note your field of study: _____

11. Please note your year:
☐ Freshman
☐ Sophomore
☐ Junior
☐ Senior

Thank you for completing the questionnaire. We welcome any additional comments you may have, including suggestions for the orientation session.