Career Satisfaction of Young Archivists: A Survey of Professional Working Archivists, Age 35 and Under

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A b s t r a c t

The 2006 SAA A*CENSUS study identified a generational shift in the archival profession and recommended "making room in the archival profession for new workers" and working to "engage younger professionals in leadership roles within organizations." This study asked working archivists age 35 and under about their satisfaction with their work duties and work environment, as well as about their relationship with professional associations, to determine how to address the A*CENSUS action items. Results indicate that young archivists are generally satisfied with their day-to-day work. However, many young archivists have yet to serve in SAA positions and are unclear about the qualifications for service.

I n 2004, members of the A*CENSUS working group surveyed just under 12,000 members of the archival community and received 5,620 responses. The working group produced a snapshot of the archival profession in the twenty-first century.[1] Two of the many action items apply to young archivists. First, the working group predicts that until sometime between 2010 and 2020, "There will not be enough positions to accommodate all of the generation Y graduates who might be interested in archival work."[2] The group calls upon the profession to "Look for ways in which to make room in the archival profession now for new workers so that we do not lose a large cohort of potential archivists to other fields." Second, it finds that baby boomers, defined in the

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[1] Victoria Irons Walch, "Special Section on A*CENSUS," *American Archivist* 69 (Fall/Winter 2006): 291–527.

[2] Walch, "Special Section on A*CENSUS," 312.

A*CENSUS as individuals born between 1946 and 1964,[3] hold many of the current leadership roles in archival professional associations and recommends that "older members of professional associations should work to engage younger professionals in leadership roles within organizations and provide opportunities for growth and advancement." According to Victoria Irons Walch, the principle research consultant, "unless the Boomers make a deliberate effort to step aside from leadership positions, younger archivists may become frustrated by their inability to advance. We must provide leadership-development opportunities for younger members in order to ensure the long-term health of our institutions and associations."[4]

This article reports on a survey of archivists age 35 and under developed and administered in collaboration with Allison D. Fox, formerly of the University of Redlands, to probe these action items. The recommendation of "making room" in the archival profession for younger workers inspired us to seek information about the satisfaction of young archivists. We believe that not only should the availability of professional positions be considered, but also the satisfaction of young workers in archival positions. While "making room" speaks to the quantity of jobs available, job satisfaction provides a measure of the quality of those jobs. The ability of young workers to build lasting careers in the archival profession may determine the future health of the field, but career satisfaction is also an element worth addressing: young archivists may leave the profession for other fields if they are not satisfied.

The survey questions we developed to address younger workers' day-to-day job satisfaction were based on long-accepted theories of job satisfaction as well as theories about generation Y, defined in this study as those born in 1972–1973 or later. We designed these questions to address whether young archivists are satisfied with their day-to-day work experiences and to ascertain if the advice in generational literature about satisfying generation Y employees agrees with the career requirements of archivists in this generational cohort.

We also asked about satisfaction with professional associations and experience with leadership positions within them. If young members are dissatisfied with their professional associations, those trying to recruit them to leadership positions may face challenges.

The results of the Career Satisfaction of Young Archivists survey can serve as a resource for employers who aim to recruit and retain young archivists as well as for professional association leaders who aim to recruit young archivists into positions of leadership within their organizations.

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[3] Walch, "Special Section on A*CENSUS," 310.

[4] Walch, "Special Section on A*CENSUS," 317.

Literature Review

We consulted previous studies of the archival and library community, theories of career satisfaction, and generational literature to understand the career satisfaction of young archivists. The A*CENSUS study is the only current survey of the American archival community that considers generational groups. However, it did not seek data about career satisfaction. Satisfaction studies of librarians do not consider generational grouping.

Participants in the A*CENSUS survey were recruited using professional association membership lists. The survey asked many demographic questions including age, gender, location, institution type, job title, and professional association membership.

In her discussion of the A*CENSUS survey results, Walch addresses the "cycle of archival generations."[5] She suggests a 30- to 35-year life cycle and states that the United States is in the midst of the third wave of entrants to the archival profession. She observes that currently more generation Y graduates are interested in archival work than there are archival positions.[6] Between May 2005 and May 2009, the number of student members of SAA more than doubled from 614 to 1,285: student members now make up 26.04% of SAA membership.[7]

Most other surveys of segments of the archival community studied students or recent graduates. While most students and recent graduates tend to be young, many individuals join the archival field as a second profession, resulting in a wide age range of students and recent graduates. It is important, therefore, to distinguish between "new" archivists and "young" archivists. While the career satisfaction of "new" archivists is a worthy course of study, generational literature reports that members of the same generation have more in common with each other than with family with whom they are raised or with coworkers.[8]

In 1998, Anne Gilliland-Swetland surveyed recent graduates of archival education programs as a part of a research study that advocated using a systems perspective when conducting research in archival education.[9] Seventy recent graduates responded to the survey, which asked questions about job placement, salary, and the graduate's educational experiences. The survey did not collect data about the age of recent graduates. Significantly, Gilliland-Swetland also

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[5] Walch, "Special Section on A*CENSUS," 311.

[6] Walch, "Special Section on A*CENSUS," 312.

[7] Monthly membership reports from SAA headquarters, June 2009.

[8] William Strauss and Neil Howe, *Generations: The History of America's Future* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1991).

[9] Anne J. Gilliland-Swetland, "Graduate Archival Education and the Professional Market: Perspectives on Data and Data Gathering," *Archival Issues* 23, no. 2 (1998): 91–115.

stated that it was difficult to define a cohort of recent graduates since schools could not offer any data on them.[10]

Elizabeth Yakel built upon the work of Gilliland-Swetland to develop her survey of recent graduates in 2000.[11] Yakel's survey of 912 recent graduates included a 49% return rate. Only 49% of respondents were age 30 or younger at time of graduation, demonstrating that "young" archivists and "new" archivists are not always the same group. Yakel also finds that students surveyed had a 66% retention rate in the profession, and the mean number of years in the profession was 6.[12] The most frequently cited reason for leaving the archival profession was poor salary and lack of archival jobs in one's geographic area. Yakel questions whether we are "losing some of our best young archivists to related professions because of salary discrepancies."[13]

David Wallace reports the results of another survey of graduate students in the same issue of *American Archivist*.[14] Wallace asked about previous educational fields and experience in archives and records management, discovery of the archives and records management field, employment goals, and interest in archives and records management doctoral programs. His survey did not ask respondents to report their age.

Gabrielle Wolski administered the only recent survey of young archivists to support her argument that current young archivists are plagued by status anxiety, as described by philosopher Alain De Botton.[15] Wolski reports on responses from 25 archivists under the age of 35 living in the state of Victoria, Australia. Although such a small sample is not generalizable, Wolski finds that young archivists consider the archival profession to have an average status within society but desire more recognition from other members of society. In addition, 80% of respondents thought archivists under age 35 were not well represented in the profession.[16]

In 2004, the American Association of Law Libraries conducted a survey about satisfaction that asked respondents to identify their generation in the

[10] Gilliland-Swetland, "Graduate Archival Education and the Professional Market," 101.

[11] Elizabeth Yakel, "The Future of the Past: A Survey of Graduates of Master's-Level Archival Education Programs in the United States," *American Archivist* 63 (Fall/Winter 2000): 301–21.

[12] Yakel, "The Future of the Past," 310.

[13] Yakel, "The Future of the Past," 310.

[14] David Wallace, "Survey of Archives and Records Management Graduate Students at Ten Universities in the United States and Canada," *American Archivist* 63 (Fall/Winter 2000): 284–300.

[15] Gabrielle Wolski, "The Introduction of Youth to the Archival Profession," *Archives and Manuscripts* 32, no. 2 (2004): 162–77.

[16] Wolski, "The Introduction of Youth to the Archival Profession," 175.

demographics section.[17] However, only 2.6% of respondents identified themselves as generation Y (defined as those born after 1977). Furthermore, although the surveyors asked respondents to identify a generation, response rates for the satisfaction question were only reported for the entire survey population, making it impossible to perceive the satisfaction rate between generations. All studies of the satisfaction of librarians were conducted before 2005, and none of these considered generational factors.[18] Many used psychological measures to determine the levels of satisfaction of librarians or library paraprofessionals. The authors often cite one another and argue that their method of determining satisfaction is superior to the last published. While no study in the group specifically compares the satisfaction levels of generational groups, Beverly P. Lynch and Jo Ann Verdin find that satisfaction is a function of age for nonprofessional librarians, with older individuals reporting higher levels of satisfaction; this does not, however, correlate with responses from professional librarians.[19] In addition, Suzanne P. Wahaba finds that women report more dissatisfaction than men, and Bonnie Horenstein finds that in an academic library, librarians with faculty status and those of higher rank are more satisfied than nonfaculty and lower ranked librarians.[20]

More recently, Ria Newhouse and April Spisak collected responses from 124 librarians on the job a year or less and find that most responded positively to questions about librarianship as a fulfilling career. However, the authors also find that new librarians are dissatisfied by resistance to change in the library profession. They asked respondents to report their ages, but do not include this information in the published article.

Of all the librarian satisfaction studies, only Kenneth Plate and Elizabeth Stone utilized Frederick Herzberg's theory of career satisfaction to design their questions. While Herzberg is well known for the two-factor theory (also known

[17] Beth DiFelice, Elizabeth Lambert, and Elizabeth LeDoux, "Generations in Law Librarianship: Results of AALL Survey" (2004), available online at http://www.aallnet.org/committee/gen_x_y.asp, accessed 12 May 2008.

[18] See Kenneth H. Plate and Elizabeth W. Stone, "Factors Affecting Librarians' Job Satisfaction: A Report of Two Studies," *Library Quarterly* 44 (April 1974): 97–110; William J. Vaughn and J. D. Dunn, "A Study of Job Satisfaction in Six University Libraries," *College and Research Libraries* 35 (May 1974): 163–77; Susanne P. Wahaba, "Job Satisfaction of Librarians: A Comparison Between Men and Women," *College and Research Libraries* 36 (January 1975): 45–51; George P. D'Elia, "The Determinants of Job Satisfaction Among Beginner Librarians," *Library Quarterly* 49 (July 1979): 283–302; Beverly P. Lynch and Jo Ann Verdin, "Job Satisfaction in Libraries: Relationships of the Work Itself, Age, Sex, Occupational Group, Tenure, Supervisory Level, Career Commitment and Library Department," *Library Quarterly* 53, no. 4 (1983): 434–47; Bonnie Horenstein, "Job Satisfaction of Academic Librarians: An Examination of the Relationship Between Satisfaction, Faculty Status, and Participation," *College and Research Libraries* 54, no. 3 (May 1993): 255–69; Ria Newhouse and April Spisak, "Fixing the First Job: New Librarians Speak Out," *Library Journal* 13 (2004), available online at http://www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA443916.html; Ria Newhouse and April Spisak, "First Year Librarian Survey," unpublished (2004).

[19] Lynch and Verdin, "Job Satisfaction in Libraries," 443.

[20] Wahaba, "Job Satisfaction of Librarians," 49; Horenstein, "Job Satisfaction of Academic Librarians," 265.

as the motivator-hygiene theory) related to career satisfaction, he was not the first to investigate the role of satisfaction in work.[21] Robert Hoppock published *Job Satisfaction* in 1935, after interviewing employed and unemployed adults of New Hope, Pennsylvania, about what they enjoyed best about their most recent work. From these interviews, Hoppock compiled characteristics shared by adults who claimed to be more satisfied with their work and characteristics shared by those adults who claimed to be more dissatisfied with their work. Hoppock ultimately defines job satisfaction as "any combination of psychological, physiological, and environmental circumstances that cause a person to truthfully say 'I am satisfied with my job' " and concludes that job satisfaction is the result of many variables.[22]

While Hoppock was interested in identifying the variables that contribute to job satisfaction, Herzberg et al. were primarily interested in motivation and productivity and set out to design a test that would predict productivity in individual workers.[23] Using the critical incident technique, Herzberg conducted semistructured interviews with 203 engineers and accountants in which the researchers asked the participants to recall a time when they were satisfied with their jobs and then a time when they were dissatisfied with their jobs. From participant responses, Herzberg concludes that job satisfaction is determined by a set of "motivator factors" that are considered to be intrinsic, whereas job dissatisfaction is determined by a set of "hygiene factors" that are considered to be extrinsic. The factors operate independently of one another, thus, motivator factors cannot predict dissatisfaction and hygiene factors cannot predict satisfaction. Based on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs to reach self-actualization, the motivator factors that can predict satisfaction include achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, and advancement.[24] In contrast, if considered inadequate, hygiene factors including supervision, interpersonal relations, physical working conditions, salary, company policies and administration, benefits, and job security can predict dissatisfaction. While the two-factor theory is still widely used today, Nathaniel King finds that satisfaction and dissatisfaction do not exist on separate scales: both sets of factors can predict satisfaction and dissatisfaction.[25]

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[21] Frederick Herzberg, Bernard Mausner, and Barbara Bloch Snyderman, *The Motivation to Work,* 7th ed. (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 1993).

[22] Robert Hoppock, *Job Satisfaction*, reprint ed. (New York: Arno Press, 1977).

[23] Herzberg et al., *The Motivation to Work.*

[24] Abraham H. Maslow, "A Theory of Human Motivation," *Psychological Review* 50, no. 4 (1943): 370–96. Maslow theorized that humans have five basic needs, organized in a hierarchy. From bottom to top, these include physiological needs, safety, love, esteem, and self-actualization. We are motivated by the desire to achieve these basic needs.

[25] Nathaniel King, "Clarification and Evaluation of the Two-Factor Theory of Job Satisfaction," *Psychological Bulletin* 74, no. 1 (1970): 18–31.

In addition to the motivation-hygiene theory, we also used generational theory to design survey questions about the day-to-day work satisfaction of young archivists. First used by sociologist Karl Mannheim in 1928, it defines *generational cohorts* as members of a specific population that experience the same events at the same time intervals.[26] According to William Strauss and Neil Howe, individuals have more in common with those born in the same time period than with family with whom they are raised.[27] Advertising companies often use the concept of generations to market products to a specific demographic; people like to consider themselves a part of a generation.[28]

Many recent publications describe the characteristics of generation Y and its members as employees.[29] Often marketed to employers, this literature offers managers a succinct description of the characteristics of generation Y and, based on such descriptions, advises on how to recruit, manage, and retain a generation-Y employee. In addition, several consulting companies, such as nGenera and Claire Raines Associates, offer advice to businesses on generational relations in the workplace. The library field joined the trend in 2006 with the publication of *The Nextgen Librarian Survival Guide*.[30] However, not all generational advice is created equal: of the authors cited, only Jean Twenge and Don Tapscott provide detailed explanations of the research methods used to determine their theories about generation Y.

Although many generational theories appear anecdotal, publications by Strauss and Howe as well as the services provided by Raines are among the most frequently cited about generation Y. Anecdotal publications (Howe and Strauss; Zemke et al.) and publications based on research reach similar conclusions: at work, generation Y desires more praise, more feedback, more attention, and more flexible work schedules than its baby-boomer and generation-X coworkers. Managers are advised to consider these facts when recruiting and attempting to retain these employees: generation Y is less loyal to employers than other generations, and its members will not hesitate to leave for a better offer. Twenge links these characteristics to the sense of entitlement with which generation Y was raised, while Tapscott explains that these characteristics are superficial and cover up a more positive, but misunderstood, set of characteristics. Gordon, who offers the only advice directed to librarians,

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[26] Karl Mannheim, *Essays in the Sociology of Knowledge* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1928).

[27] Neil Howe and William Strauss, *Millennials Rising: The Next Great Generation* (New York: Vintage Books, 2000).

[28] Jean Twenge, *Generation Me* (New York: Free Press, 2006).

[29] Ron Zemke, Claire Raines, and Bob Filipczak, *Generations at Work: Managing the Clash of Veterans, Boomers, Xers, and Nexters in Your Workplace* (New York: AMACOM, 1999); Howe and Strauss, *Generations: The History of America's Future*; Twenge, *Generation Me*; Tamera Erikson, *Plugged In: The Generation Y Guide to Thriving at Work* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Business School Press, 2008); Don Tapscott, *Grown Up Digital* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2008).

[30] Rachel Singer Gordon, *Nextgen Librarian's Survival Guide* (Medford, N.J.: Information Today, 2006).

justifies these perceived characteristics as a reaction to library professionals' resistance to change.

Methodology

To learn more about the career satisfaction of young archivists, we chose a Web survey to gather responses unlimited by geographical location. As Gilliland-Swetland shows, it is often difficult to determine a specific population of archivists if information about the population is not available.[31] As a result, we used a "snowball sampling" method,[32] recruiting a set of 16 self-identified archivists age 35 and under. We used 5 listservs in the areas of archival administration, records management, and electronic records to invite participation, and we also solicited help from archival educators at 34 archival education programs listed in the SAA *Education Directory* and the *Listing of SAA Student Chapters*.[33] Because generational theorists disagree about both the birth year that marks the beginning of generation Y and the last year the generation spans, we chose individuals born in 1972–1973 or that were 35 years old or under in 2008 to include the "bridge" years, or the final years of generation X. We identified *archivists* as working individuals who held a paid position that involved archival duties. This definition was created to include individuals who consider themselves archivists but whose job titles do not contain the term "archivist."

The 30-question survey included open-ended questions, close-ended with unordered response questions, Likert scales, multiple-choice questions, and yes/no questions (see Appendix A). Specifically, we combined Herzberg's factors and the advice offered by generational theory to design questions about young archivists' satisfaction with their day-to-day work. For example, Herzberg found that benefits are a factor that could determine job satisfaction, and generational theory states that of benefits offered, a flexible work schedule is often the most attractive to generation-Y individuals. We combined these two facts to form the question-and-answer choice (see questions 4 and 5). To address the question of young archivists' satisfaction with professional associations, we asked participants about the most satisfying and dissatisfying aspects of professional association service, for which questions more resembled those utilized by Hoppock.

[31] Gilliland-Swetland, "Graduate Archival Education and the Professional Market," 101.

[32] *Encyclopedia of Statistical Sciences*, s.v. "snowball sampling."

[33] The snowball sampling method encourages current research participants to recruit their acquaintances to the study, invoking the image of a rolling snowball, continually growing in size. In using listservs to recruit participants, we replicated Gilliland-Swetland's and Yakel's techniques by contacting archival educators listed in the SAA *Education Directory*, resulting in a hybrid approach that combines previous methods with the snowball sampling technique. The listservs utilized included <Archives and Archivists>, <west_arch>, <neadiscuss>, <RECMGMT-L>, and <ERECS-L>.

Once developed, the Web survey was tested by several doctoral students at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and 8 young professional archivists. We sent a link for the revised Web survey to the identified young archivists, listservs, and archival educators for distribution to part-time students who already held professional archival positions in July 2008. The online survey remained open for a period of 3 weeks. Participation was anonymous and voluntary, and participants had the option of skipping any question excluding the first that asked them to designate their age as "35 and under" or "over 35." At the end of the survey, participants had the option of entering a drawing for a $50 Starbucks gift card. Survey results were not linked in any way with contact information entered in the gift card drawing.

After the survey closed, we entered quantitative data from the survey questions into SPSS 16.0 for analysis and qualitative data from the survey questions into Nvivo 8 for coding an analysis. For the quantitative data, we calculated the number of times each answer was selected, and for the questions using the Likert scale, we calculated the mode to discover the rating most often chosen. Qualitative data was coded by initial question; codes were then developed from the text of the open-ended responses. Many of these codes communicated the same idea but in different words: while one response might have been "not enough time to serve on a committee," another might read, "with all I have to do right now, I can't add something else." Both of these answers would have been coded as "time commitment."

Findings

Respondents' Profile

Participants numbered 485, and 262 responses were included in data analysis.[34] Of the survey respondents, 79% (207) identified themselves as female, 13.4% (35) identified themselves as male, and 7.6% (20) did not select an answer to the question. Concerning education, 85% (223) of the survey

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[34] Although survey participants viewed the "age 35 and under" requirement in the survey directions and first question, 198 of the 485 responses had to be discarded because respondents reported they were "over age 35." In addition, although the directions specified that respondents be paid, working archivists, a few respondents reported that they were temporary interns. We did not consider an internship a professional position because the internship experience is wholly different from the professional one. Furthermore, questions that refer to benefits usually offered to staff members may not apply to interns. As a result, these 3 responses were discarded. Survey respondents who identified themselves as "over age 35" or "interns" were allowed to continue the survey to provide an equal opportunity for all participants to enter the gift card drawing. Furthermore, although we did not originally limit survey participation to archivists working in the United States, we did not predict the participation of young archivists from out of the country. Since many of the questions were phrased to reflect the work culture of the United States (such as a health care as part of a benefits package), as well as SAA being the national organization, 22 responses were discarded due to the international IP address of the respondent. 262 responses remained.

respondents reported a master's degree as their highest level of education obtained, and 69.5% (169) of respondents were employed in a permanent, full-time position. The most common employer was the academic sector (44% [116] of respondents).

Table 1. Employment Status *n*=262

Employed in a full-time position, permanently	69.5% (169)
Employed in a full-time position, temporarily	21.0% (51)
Employed in a part-time position, temporarily	5.8% (14)
Employed in a part-time position, permanently	3.7% (9)

Table 2. Current Employer *n*=262

Academic	44.3% (116)
Nonprofit	22.5% (59)
Government	16.4% (43)
Did not respond	7.3% (19)
Corporate/For-profit	6.5% (17)
Other	3.3% (8)

Of the 21% (51) of respondents employed full-time temporarily and the 5.8% (14) employed part-time temporarily, 33.9% (22) replied that they were satisfied with the temporary nature of their employment, and 66.1% (43) replied that they were dissatisfied with the temporary nature of their employment. Of those who reported being satisfied, 59.09% (13) provided an open-ended response. Of these, 7 reported that they were planning to make a life change in the future including moving, going back to school, or beginning a permanent position. Two respondents enjoyed the flexibility temporary work provided, 2 others hoped that their part-time work would lead to full-time work, and 2 respondents reported being satisfied because they knew the job to be temporary before accepting it. According to one respondent, "I am working on a 2-year grant-funded position. Although the temporary nature makes me a little uneasy (I'm not looking forward to the job search process all over again), I don't want to stay in this city anyway" (Respondent 628377104).

Of the 66.1% (43) who replied they were dissatisfied with their temporary position, 100% (43) provided an open-ended response to the question. Over half of the open-ended responses reported that the most dissatisfying aspect of a temporary position is the lack of job security. Many of these respondents explained how the temporary nature of their work bled over into other aspects of their lives. According to one respondent, "I would like to settle down here and become more involved in the community, but I always have in the back of my head that I'm not permanent. I was originally grant funded, but then extended on hard money for another 3 years" (Respondent 627787185). Many of the respondents expressed anger and frustration over the temporary nature of their employment, and 3 reported feeling insulted or disrespected:

> I hate having to bounce around from job to job. It's insulting that there aren't more permanent archives jobs. (Respondent 628114302)

> I'm the breadwinner for my family. I'm a grownup with a mortgage and I feel totally disrespected by being offered back-to-back projects. I'd much rather not have to panic (and apply for jobs) every 6–9 months! (Respondent 628234407)

Two of the respondents dissatisfied with their temporary positions mentioned having done temporary work for many years. In addition, 3 respondents reported having been promised full-time work at their current institution, with 1 respondent's growing skepticism that the full-time position would materialize: "I have been half-promised a permanent position by the administration but it always falls through. Another temp in the same position here has been a temp for over five years, which, in my opinion, is far too long" (Respondent 628956695). Two respondents suggested that turning their temporary position into a permanent position would be best for the archival collection.

Although the amount of data provided by young archivists working in temporary positions is small, the qualitative data suggest that most young archivists working in temporary positions are dissatisfied with the temporary nature of their employment. Comments lamenting the limited availability of permanent positions support Walch's finding, which suggests that young archivists may have increasing difficulty finding permanent positions in the archival field.

Day-to-Day Job Satisfaction

Survey questions designed to assess day-to-day job satisfaction included close-ended with unordered response questions, Likert scales, and open-ended questions. While many of the previous studies of librarians and satisfaction were designed to determine what job characteristic most predicts satisfaction, our goal was to gather information about satisfaction in different areas of the job to

guide retention and recruitment, so we used a variety of question types. Herzberg's "motivator" (intrinsic) factors were used as the basis for the statements for results in Figure 1 and Table 3. "I perform duties on a day-to-day basis which are interesting" ranks highest with 210 selections, followed by "my work involves a variety of tasks so that I don't do the same thing all day" (see Figure 1). While interest is relative, variety is controllable and could be factored into the duties of a new position that a supervisor may hope to fill with a young employee. Variety in work tasks could also be used as a technique to boost morale among young employees. In addition, "I have the latest in technological equipment at my workplace" ranked the lowest with only 25 selections. This low ranking is contrary to the advice provided by the generational literature. According to Tulgan and Martin in *Managing Generation Y,* "Yers have high expectations of technology and when they don't measure up, they get impatient."[35] This advice may not apply to generation-Y archivists.
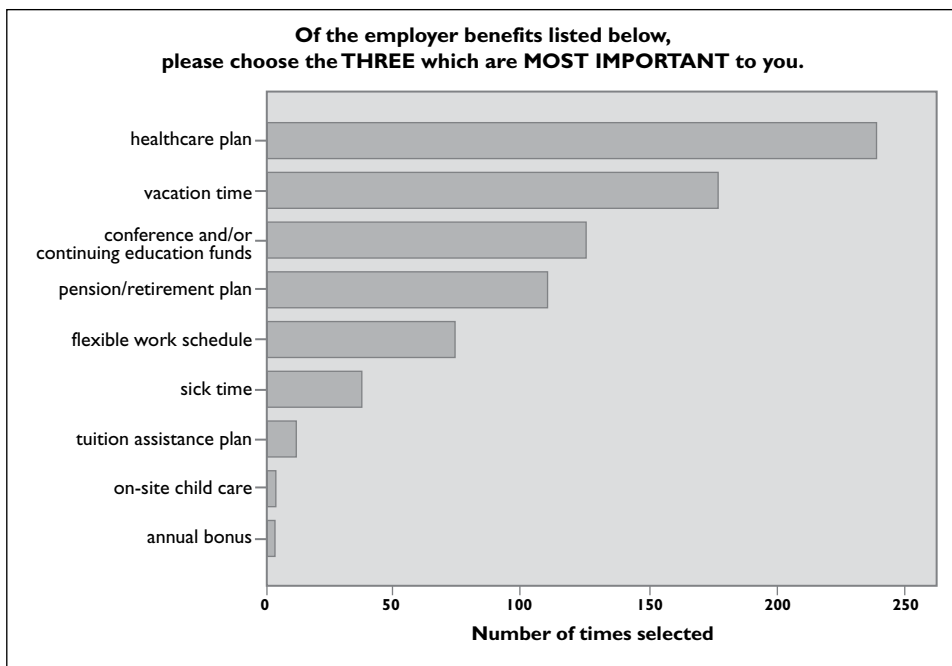

F I G U R E   1 . The most important characteristics of a workplace environment to young archivists (based on Herzberg et al.'s intrinsic factors) *n*=262.

Herzberg's "motivator" (extrinsic) factors were the basis for the statements in Figure 2 and Table 3. In response to close-ended with unordered response

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[35] Bruce Tulgan and Carolyn A. Martin, *Managing Generation Y: Global Citizens Born in the Late Seventies and Early Eighties* (Amherst, Mass.: HRD Press, 2001), 22.

questions asking participants to choose 3 benefits that are most important, respondents listed in order: a health care plan, vacation time, and conference and/or continuing education funds as the most important workplace benefits (see Figure 2). The fact that 92% (241) of respondents chose health care as one of the top three benefits seems to explain that health care may be the most important benefit when recruiting young archivists. Interestingly, generational theory usually emphasizes a flexible work schedule more often than health care.[36] According to Tapscott, the "net" generation (as he labels it) enters the workforce with attitudes of "being free to work when and where they want."[37] However, Tapscott's study population spans several countries, including many with universal health care, making employer-provided health-care benefits less of a focus for young professionals. Twenge, whose population consists of only Americans, emphasizes health care in addition to a retirement plan and a flexible schedule.[38] Furthermore, there may be some support for the idea that young archivists have essentially accepted working on-site as a central aspect of their careers, but further research would be required to test such a hypothesis.
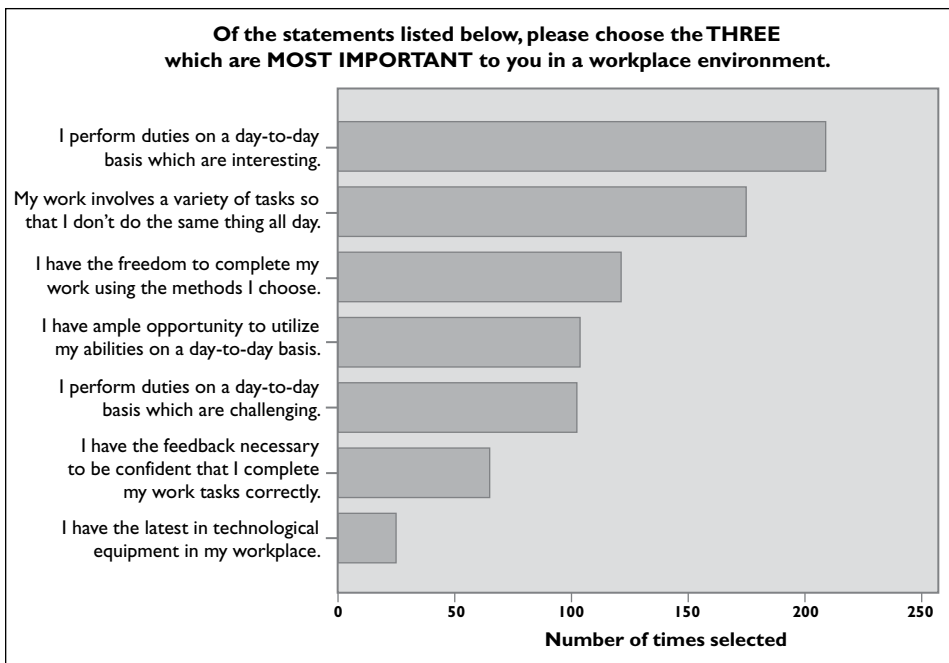

F I G U R E 2 . The most important workplace benefits to young archivists (based on Herzberg et al.'s extrinsic factors) *n*=262.

[36] Tulgan and Martin, *Managing Generation Y*, 22.

[37] Tapscott, *Grown Up Digital*, 150.

[38] Twenge, *Generation Me*, 220.

When respondents were asked to choose among the combined lists of intrinsic and extrinsic factors, health care topped the list, selected by 62% (162) of the respondents (see Table 3). "I perform duties on a day-to-day basis which are interesting" was the most selected intrinsic factor in the combined statements questions, chosen by 56% (148) of respondents. Overall, intrinsic and extrinsic factors were spread fairly evenly across the rankings from highest to lowest.

Table 3. The Most Important Elements of Workplace Environment (Intrinsic) and Benefits (Extrinsic) when Compared against Each Other

Q 5. Of all the choices available in questions 3 and 4, please choose the THREE which are MOST IMPORTANT to you:	
Intrinsic/extrinsic statements and choices	Number of times selected
Health-care plan	162
I perform duties on a day-to-day basis which are interesting.	148
My work involves a variety of tasks so that I don't do the same thing all day.	74
Vacation time	60
I have the freedom to complete my work using the methods I choose.	58
I have ample opportunity to utilize my abilities on a day-to-day basis.	52
I perform duties on a day-to-day basis which are challenging.	52
Conference and/or continuing education funds	51
Pension/retirement plan	39
Flexible work schedule	37
I have the feedback necessary to be confident that I complete my work tasks correctly.	26
I have the latest in technological equipment at my workplace.	11
Sick time	10
Tuition assistance plan	4
Annual bonus	2
On-site child care	1

n = 262

When given the opportunity to provide an open-ended answer about the most dissatisfying aspect of their current position, respondents generally remained in the realm of Herzberg et al.'s extrinsic and intrinsic factors. Respondents reported that the level of recognition that their institutions and archival duties received from patrons and administration was most dissatisfying, barely edging out salary. According to one respondent, "our administration hasn't got a clue what we do" (Respondent 627805860). Herzberg lists level of recognition as an intrinsic motivator, but when asked about recognition on the Likert scale, respondents did not consider level of recognition one of the most important elements of the workplace environment. The finding that salary is the second most common open-ended response when respondents were asked

about the most dissatisfying aspect of their current position is similar to Yakel's hypothesis that the archival field is "losing some of our best young archivists to related professions because of salary discrepancies."[39]

When asked to identify the most satisfying aspect of their positions using an open-ended response format, most respondents replied that the variety of their work and the ability to set their own priorities brought them the most satisfaction. One respondent wrote, "the variety of work I am able to do for a variety of people. Every day is a rewarding challenge" (Respondent 628023785). Another respondent stated it simply by writing, "I get to do what I want" (Respondent 627994051). The third most common theme of the open-ended responses stated opportunities for growth as a satisfying characteristic.

According to Herzberg, the "company policy and administration" hygiene factor can be divided into two characteristics: "adequacy or inadequacy of company organization and management" and "harmfulness or beneficial effects of the company's policies."[40] Table 4 represents the most frequently occurring ratings of each statement about a respondent's employer/administration on a 5-point Likert scale. From the responses provided in Table 4, it appears that most respondents are satisfied with the administration at their current place of work. The only statement with which respondents did not most often agree was "my employer provides me with adequate opportunities for promotion," which received a score of 3 or "neutral."

These scores demonstrate that of the employer/administration issues listed above, cultivating a belief in opportunities for promotion among young archivists may be one of the first issues to address. While some could argue that the current economic climate does not allow for promotion and additionally may cause an employee's satisfaction with his or her employer to change, belief in opportunities for future promotion is still significant as economic climates continue to change and young employees have many years left in the workplace before retirement. Furthermore, promotion may be a characteristic to explore more with young archivists.

Among open-ended responses to the question, "If you could change one thing about your current position, what would it be?," respondents mention "opportunities for promotion," but often in conjunction with statements about the desire to have more input at the administrative level and be appreciated for their work. While there seems to be a consensus that there is little room for promotion in most archival institutions, providing young archivists some of the incentives that are often coupled with promotion may increase satisfaction. The opportunity to provide input about administrative practices and

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[39] Yakel, "The Future of the Past," 310.

[40] Herzberg et al., *The Motivation to Work*, 48.

recognition for a job well done could be provided outside of the traditional context of promotion.

Table 4. Likert Scale Responses to Statements about Employer

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not respond
My employer provides me with adequate opportunities for promotion.	11.1% (29)	18.4% (48)	39.8% (104)	26.1% (68)	4.6% (12)	0.4% (1)
My administration/highest level management manages my institution effectively.	7.6% (20)	24.0% (63)	21.0% (55)	40.5% (106)	6.5% (17)	0.4% (1)
My employer wants me to have "a life."	1.1% (3)	27% (7)	19.8% (52)	45.0% (118)	30.9% (81)	0.4% (1)
My employer values me as an employee.	1.5% (4)	7.6% (20)	14.5% (38)	43.5% (114)	32.1% (84)	0.8% (2)
My employer provides me with adequate recognition for the work I complete.	2.7% (7)	12.2% (32)	19.5% (51)	47.3% (124)	17.2% (45)	1.1 (3)
My employer provides me with a sense of job security at my institution.	6.9% (18)	11.1% (29)	18.3% (48)	43.1% (113)	20.2% (53)	0.4% (1)

n = 262

Another of Herzberg's hygiene factors is supervision. According to Table 5, respondents most frequently agreed with positive statements about their current supervisor and disagreed with negative statements about their current supervisor. It appears that respondents are generally as satisfied with their supervisors as with their administration.

Table 5. Likert Scale Responses to Statements about Current Supervisor

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not respond
My supervisor effectively informs me of whether or not I am meeting the requirements of my position.	2.3% (6)	13.7% (36)	17.2% (45)	45.4% (119)	18.7% (49)	2.7% (7)
My supervisor micro-manages me.	29.0% (76)	42.4% (111)	12.2% (32)	9.9% (26)	3.4% (9)	3.1% (8)
My supervisor is too "hands off."	10.7% (28)	46.2% (121)	22.1% (58)	14.5% (38)	3.4% (9)	3.1% (8)
My supervisor values me as an employee.	0.8% (2)	2.7% (7)	11.5% (30)	41.2% (108)	40.8% (107)	3.1% (8)
My supervisor takes me seriously.	0.8% (2)	3.8% (10)	11.1% (29)	42.4% (111)	38.9% (102)	3.1% (8)
My supervisor listens to me when I have a suggestion to improve my institution.	1.5% (4)	7.3% (19)	15.6% (41)	44.7% (117)	27.5% (72)	3.4 (9)
My supervisor provides me with a satisfactory level of responsibility.	1.5% (4)	6.9% (18)	11.8% (31)	43.1% (113)	34.0% (89)	2.7% (7)

n = 262

Of the total number of responses, 81% (211) of respondents had departmental coworkers, 17% (44) worked alone, and 3% (7) declined to answer. Of the 81% (211) of respondents with departmental coworkers, most agreed with the positive statements about their relationship with their coworkers. It would be interesting to conduct more research to see if young archivists are more or less satisfied with coworkers who are part of their generational cohort.

Table 6. Likert Scale Responses to Statements about Coworkers

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
My coworkers value me as an employee.	0% (0)	2.8% (6)	7.6% (16)	56.9% (120)	32.7% (69)
My coworkers take me seriously.	0% (0)	2.8% (6)	85% (18)	53.6% (113)	35.1% (74)

n = 262

S a t i s f a c t i o n   w i t h   P r o f e s s i o n a l   A s s o c i a t i o n s

Overall, 75.2% (198) of respondents reported membership in a regional and/or state archival association (see Table 7). Of these respondents, 41.4% (81, 31% of total response rate) replied that they had been appointed or elected to a leadership position in a state and/or local archival association. Of those who had not been appointed or elected to a leadership position, 63.2% (74, 28% of total response rate) reported that they would like to be appointed or elected to a leadership position. Respondents provided a variety of reasons for wanting to lead, citing most frequently networking, a belief in professional values, and the opportunity to be introduced to other archivists. In contrast, they cited the time commitment most frequently for the lack of desire to be elected or appointed to a position of leadership.

Table 7. Participation in Regional and/or State Archival Associations/Societies

	Yes	No	Did not respond
Are you a member of a regional and/or state archival association/society?	75.2% (198)	17.6% (46)	7.3% (18)
Have you ever served on a committee, been appointed to a position of leadership, or held an elected position for a regional and/or state archival association/society?	41.4% (81)	58.6% (117)	n/a
Would you like to serve on a committee, be appointed to a position of leadership, or hold an elected position for a regional and/or state archival association/society?	63.2% (74)	36.8% (43)	n/a

n = 262

Respondents who reported that they had served in a position or held office for a state and/or regional archival association were asked about the most satisfying and most dissatisfying part of the experience. Most satisfying is the sense of accomplishment and getting to work with archivists in the area. One respondent wrote, "I love working with others to get something done (for example, a scholarship awarded)—or something set up (for example, a conference) that will help to benefit the profession" (Respondent 627778150). Most dissatisfying is the lack of motivation among others to participate; according to one respondent, those "who only want something for [their] resume" (Respondent 627791306). Another dissatisfying aspect of service to associations is the time commitment. Many explained that they had no time in their work day to work on committee projects, while others explained they were dissatisfied that they had to spend time outside of work doing committee work: "Finding time during the busy work day to take part in this work. I often have to participate on my own time" (Respondent 627768866). A few respondents wrote that it is difficult to be the only one representing their age group: one respondent found the most dissatisfying aspect of service was, "working with old schoolers" (Respondent 627869420).

Table 8. Participation in SAA

	Yes	No	Did not respond
Are you a member of the Society of American Archivists (SAA)?	71.4% (187)	21% (187)	7.3% (19)
Have you ever served on a committee, been appointed to a position of leadership, or held an elected position for SAA?	16.6% (31)	83.4% (156)	n/a
Would you like to serve on a committee, be appointed to a position of leadership, or hold an elected position for SAA?	54.5% (85)	45.5% (71)	n/a

n = 262

Of the 71.4% (187) of respondents who were members of SAA, only 16.6% (31, 13% of total response rate) had been appointed to a position of leadership or had held an elected position (see Table 8). The most common satisfying aspects of committee activity or leadership in SAA are similar to those of a regional association: the ability to work with other archivists and the feeling of contributing to the profession: "I am a lone arranger, so I literally cannot put into words just how valuable the colleagues I have gained through that experience are to my work life" (Respondent 627759846). Respondents noted the most dissatisfying aspects of the SAA experience as lack of engagement from other committee members, uneven workload, SAA's lack of recognition of completed work, and the slow pace of progress within SAA. One respondent

answered, "sometimes the people that are on the committee don't participate or know they won't be able to participate but still sign on" (Respondent 628103780).

Of the 83.4% (156) of respondents who were SAA members and had never been appointed or elected to a position of leadership, 54.5% (85) replied that they would like to be appointed or elected to an SAA leadership position (see Table 8). They cited most frequently reasons similar to those for regional and/or state archival associations: networking opportunities, the potential to learn from other archivists, and dedication to professional values. One respondent wrote, "I would like to make a difference in the archival profession. Plus, it would help with networking" (Respondent 628149711). Seventy-one (45.5%) replied that they would not like to be appointed to a position of leadership or hold an elected position within SAA and most frequently cited time commitment as the reason, just as for regional and/or state archival associations.

Other open-ended responses allowed respondents to explain why they are unable to serve as an appointed or elected leader for regional or national organizations. These responses described the inability to travel as parents of young children, or the inability to attend annual meetings because of a lack of funds for continuing education, whether institutional or personal: "I do not have the travel funds or seniority to take off time" (Respondent 627817922). A few responded that service "didn't matter" in their current position.

Many respondents believed that they are not qualified or lack the necessary experience to be appointed or elected to leadership positions. Most often they said, "I don't think I'm ready." Interestingly, when SAA releases a call for participation, it lists no required level of expertise or experience. A number of the respondents who claimed that they lacked experience or qualifications at the same time reported a number of years of experience in the profession. Why do these young archivists believe they are unqualified, when no qualifications are required to serve in many positions? Further research is needed to answer this question. If the profession is going to answer the A*CENSUS call to "provide leadership-development opportunities for younger members in order to ensure the long-term health of our institutions and association," this question needs to be addressed sooner rather than later.

These responses may be useful for current leaders of professional associations trying to recruit younger members for leadership. Providing financial assistance for travel or conference registration to first-time committee appointees may enable those under financial constraints to participate. Positive experiences could prompt continuing participation. At the very least, rewriting calls for participation may encourage some young archivists to apply for positions. Advertising calls for participation as networking opportunities may also positively enhance recruitment campaigns.

Conclusion

Overall, young archivists are satisfied with their positions and with their professional associations. They almost always agreed with positive statements and disagreed with negative statements about their positions when using the 5-point Likert scale. The only statement for which "neutral" was most frequently cited was "my employer provides me with adequate opportunity for promotion."

For young archivists, variety of work and the ability to set one's own priorities are important aspects of satisfying work. "Opportunities for growth" ranked third. While promotion and the opportunity for growth are often considered similar, it is not clear if survey respondents consider the terms interchangeable.

Walch estimates that baby-boomer generation archivists might begin to retire between 2010 and 2020.[41] Conducted in 2004, A*CENSUS analysis could not anticipate the recession that began in late 2008. Many baby boomers may postpone retirement well past 2010, hoping their retirement accounts recover from the recession.[42] Furthermore, opportunities for advancement usually shrink during an economic downturn. Young archivists responding to this survey in summer 2008 feel, at best, "neutral" about their opportunities for promotion, although they agreed with all other positive statements about their current positions. These young archivists want to advance but lack opportunity to do so, which could diminish their workplace satisfaction. However, young archivists may feel differently in the midst of an economic downturn: many may feel grateful to have a job.

To address the A*CENSUS call for "making room" for younger professionals, employers may consider blending a variety of archival duties into each job position (such as a combination of reference duties and processing duties), if possible. This would expand the availability of archival tasks in a position, while providing young archivists with the variety they desire. And, in any case, a good health-care plan may be the best bargaining chip to retain young archivists, followed by vacation time and funding for continuing education.

The membership rate of young archivists in this survey in professional associations is high, but participation in a position of service is lower. For those who do serve, the experience is usually positive. Respondents' open-ended answers provide clues to the low participation numbers. While the reasons are often financial or determined by parenting duties, many young archivists might be interested in participating if they thought they had "good enough" experience.

[41] Walch, "Special Section on A*CENSUS," 313.

[42] Kelly Green, "Baby Boomers Delay Retirement," *Wall Street Journal*, 22 September 2008, available at http://online.wsj.com/article/SB122204345024061453.html, accessed 17 January 2009.

Working to change misconceptions about required amounts of experience may be the single best method to encourage more participation from young archivists. In addition, creating a young archivists' forum at annual conferences may give interested parties the opportunity to offer ideas and suggestions in a room with other archivists their age, where they are likely to feel more comfortable.

Two of the A*CENSUS action items—"making room" in the archival profession for younger professionals and recruiting younger members of archival associations to positions of leadership—inspired this survey. The findings provide some insight into how young archivists feel about their current positions and their professional associations. Considering the results of this study, future studies of young individuals who have decided to leave the archival profession for another career, have been unable to find permanent positions, or have worked in a series of temporary positions may provide more insight into factors that could hinder the growth of the profession.

C A R E E R   S A T I S F A C T I O N   o f   Y O U N G   A R C H I V I S T S :
A   S U R V E Y   o f   P R O F E S S I O N A L   W O R K I N G   A R C H I V I S T S ,
A G E   3 5   A N D   U N D E R

Appendix A: Career Satisfaction of Young Archivists Survey Instrument

1. Are you:
    ___Age 35 and under   ___Over age 35

2. What was your PRIMARY motivation for entering the archives field?

3. Of the statements below, please choose the THREE that are MOST IMPORTANT to you in a workplace environment.
    ___I have the latest in technological equipment at my workplace.
    ___I perform duties on a day-to-day basis that are interesting.
    ___I perform duties on a day-to-day basis that are challenging.
    ___My work involves a variety of tasks so that I don't do the same thing all day.
    ___I have ample opportunity to utilize my abilities on a day-to-day basis.
    ___I have the feedback necessary to be confident that I complete my work tasks correctly.
    ___I have the freedom to complete my work using the methods I choose.

4. Of the employer benefits listed below, please choose the THREE that are MOST IMPORTANT to you:
    ___Heathcare plan   ___Conference and/or continuing
    ___Pension/retirement plan   education funds
    ___Vacation time   ___Flexible work schedule
    ___Sick time   ___On-site child care
    ___Annual bonus   ___Tuition assistance plan

5. Of all the choices available in questions 3 and 4, please choose the THREE that are MOST IMPORTANT to you:
    ___I have the latest in technological equipment at my workplace.
    ___I perform duties on a day-to-day basis that are interesting.
    ___I perform duties on a day-to-day basis that are challenging.
    ___My work involves a variety of tasks so that I don't do the same thing all day.
    ___I have ample opportunity to utilize my abilities on a day-to-day basis.
    ___I have the feedback necessary to be confident that I complete my work tasks correctly.
    ___I have the freedom to complete my work using the methods I choose.
    ___Heathcare plan
    ___Pension/retirement plan
    ___Vacation time
    ___Sick time
    ___Annual bonus
    ___Conference and/or continuing education funds

___Flexible work schedule
___On-site child care
___Tuition assistance plan

For questions 6–11, please choose ONE of the following ratings that BEST describes your general beliefs about your CURRENT position.
6.   My employer provides me with adequate opportunities for promotion.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

7.   My administration/highest level management manages my institution effectively.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

8.   My employer wants me to have "a life."

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

9.   My employer values me as an employee.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

10. My employer provides me with adequate recognition for the work I complete.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

11. My employer provides me with a sense of job security at my institution.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

For questions 12–18, Please choose ONE of the following ratings that BEST describes your general beliefs about your CURRENT supervisor.
12. My supervisor effectively informs me of whether or not I am meeting the requirements of my position.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

13. My supervisor micromanages me.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

14. My supervisor is too "hands off."

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

15. My supervisor values me as an employee.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

16. My supervisor takes me seriously.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

17. My supervisor listens to me when I have a suggestion to improve my institution.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

18. My supervisor provides me with a satisfactory level of responsibility.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

19. Do you have departmental coworkers?
    ___Yes
    ___No, I work alone

Please choose ONE of the following ratings which BEST describes your general beliefs about your CURRENT departmental coworkers.

[1] 20. My coworkers value me as an employee.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

*21. My coworkers take me seriously.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

22. What is the MOST SATISFYING aspect of your current position?

23. What is the MOST DISSATISFYING aspect of your current position?

24. If you could change one thing about your CURRENT position, what would it be?

[1] Denotes the use of "skip logic" in a question in Survey Monkey. Skip logic allows the researcher to change the course respondents take through a survey. For example, in question 19, if a respondent answered that he or she worked alone and had no coworkers, that respondent would not be prompted to answer questions 20 and 21, which ask about relationship with coworkers. Not all respondents answered all questions.

25. Are you a member of a regional and/or state archival association/society?
    ___Yes
    ___No

*26. Have you ever served on a committee, been appointed to a position of leadership, or held an elected position for a regional and/or state archival association/society?
    ___Yes
    ___No

*27. What was the most SATISFYING part of the experience of serving on a committee?

*28. What was the most DISSATISFYING part?

*29. If you HAVE NOT served, would you like to serve on a committee, be appointed to a position of leadership, or hold an elected position for a regional and/or state archival association/society?
    ___Yes
    ___No

*30. WHY OR WHY NOT would you like to serve on a committee, be appointed to a position of leadership, or hold an elected position for a regional and/or state archival association/society?

31. Are you a member of the Society of American Archivists (SAA)?
    ___Yes
    ___No

*32. Have you ever served on a committee, been appointed to a position of leadership, or held an elected position for SAA?
    ___Yes
    ___No

*33. What was the most SATISFYING part of the experience of serving on a committee?

*34. What was the most DISSATISFYING part?

*35. If you HAVE NOT served, would you like to serve on a committee, be appointed to a position of leadership, or hold an elected position for SAA?
    ___Yes
    ___No

*36. WHY OR WHY NOT would you like to serve on a committee, be appointed to a position of leadership, or hold an elected position for a SAA?

37. Are you currently a student enrolled in a degree-granting program?
    ___Yes
    ___No

38. Of the choices below, what category best describes your highest level of education?

___Doctoral degree in _____

___Master's degree in _____

___Bachelor's degree in _____

___High School

39. What category BEST describes your current employer?

___Self-employed

___Nonprofit

___Academic

___Government

___Corporate/for profit

___Other

40. Of the following choices below, how would you BEST describe your current position?

___Archivist or manuscripts curator

___Managing a program that employs archivists

___Teaching in a graduate education program

___Working in another profession or occupation, but with archives-related responsibilities

___Working as a technical or support staff members, but with archives-related responsibilities

___Other

41. Considering your answer to the previous question, are you:

___Employed in the position full-time, permanently

___Employed in the position part-time, permanently

___Employed in the position full-time, temporarily

___Employed in the position part-time, temporarily

___Employed in the position part-time, as an intern

___Employed in the position full-time, as an intern

*42. Are you satisfied with the temporary nature of your employment?

___Yes

___No

*43. Considering your answer to the previous question, WHY or WHY NOT?

44. What is your gender?

___Male

___Female

45. If you have any comments about this survey, please share them below.