

Part 4. A*CENSUS: Report on Graduate Archival Education

Elizabeth Yakel and Jeannette Allis Bastian
Special Research Consultants

Introduction and Overview

Although the Society of American Archivists has been actively involved in archival education for more than three decades, few empirical studies of the components of that education have been conducted until recently.¹ These studies have shown increasing opportunities for graduate-level archival education in terms of programs, curricula, courses, and faculty. Other studies of students have been completed, but these have not provided us with detailed profiles of the range of individuals pursuing archival education.² The A*CENSUS survey takes us a step further in understanding the dynamics of two of the components of archival education: faculty and students.

This report examines archival education from the perspective of the A*CENSUS. To establish a context, it begins with an overview of the educational preparation of all respondents. The report then analyzes information on master's and doctoral students and faculty. It ends with a discussion of mentorship, internship, and recruitment, and then presents conclusions and challenges for the profession.

Several findings can be drawn from this report:

- Graduate archival education is currently the primary form of entry into the archival profession and was the primary form for a majority of the archivists under fifty years old.
- In terms of entry-level education for an archival job, the profession is currently in transition between offering on-the-job training and requiring a master's degree.

¹ See the following for a review of these studies: Richard J. Cox, Elizabeth Yakel, David Wallace, Jeannette Bastian, and Jennifer Marshall, "Archival Education at the Millennium: The Status of Archival Education in North American Library and Information Science Schools," *Library Quarterly* 71/2 (April 2001) and R. J. Cox, E. Yakel, D. Wallace, J. Bastian, and J. Marshall, (2001) "Educating Archivists in Library and Information Science Schools," *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 42/3 (Summer).

² David A. Wallace, "Survey of Archives and Records Management Graduate Students At Ten Universities in the United States and Canada," *American Archivist* 63/2 (Fall/Winter 2000): 284-300 and Elizabeth Yakel, "The Future of the Past: A Survey of Graduates of Masters-Level Graduate Archival Education Programs in the United States," *American Archivist* 63/2 (Fall/Winter 2000): 301-321.

- Both new archivists and career changers (from another career into archives) increasingly view the master's degree as a necessary requirement.
- The master's in library and information science (MLIS) is the degree of choice. If the A*CENSUS had asked whether educational programs were accredited by the American Library Association, rather than focusing on degrees, many of the MA and MS degrees would have shown the importance of this credential.
- Archivists value education; numerous archivists have or are pursuing advanced degrees.
- Educating the next generation of archivists is a profession-wide activity. Of all "archivist" respondents, 33% reported either being an intern or sponsoring an intern in his or her repository.
- The most critical issue in archival education is an aging faculty and few individuals in the ranks coming to replace them. At the same time, the recognition of graduate education as essential for entry into the profession is becoming ubiquitous. So, although in all other aspects, graduate archival education has grown exponentially, the faculty infrastructure is neither strong nor deep. A succession plan to bridge this widening gap is needed.

Education of Archivists and the A*CENSUS

The A*CENSUS findings demonstrate clear trends in the education of archivists. This is shown through the changing venues for archival education and the types of degrees held, especially when compared with earlier studies by David Bearman in 1982 and Ernst Posner in 1956. Graduate school has grown in importance as the primary source of archival education. In the A*CENSUS overall, 35% of the respondents identified graduate school as their primary source of archival education. However, this number is far higher for younger archivists; 64% of the respondents under twenty-nine years old listed graduate school as their principal archival education source. Among those respondents thirty to thirty-nine years old, 53% identified graduate school as their main archival education. This contrasts with older archivists, for whom self-education, continuing education, on-the-job training, and other forms of education were very important, with the importance of graduate school declining in each successively older age group (Fig. 4.1, Primary source of archival education, by age group).

Among all respondents, despite the gains in formal education, the survey showed that continuing education, self-education, and on-the-job training remain significant factors for entry into the archival profession. The majority of individuals whose answers fell into the "other" category identified "on-the-job" training as their primary source.

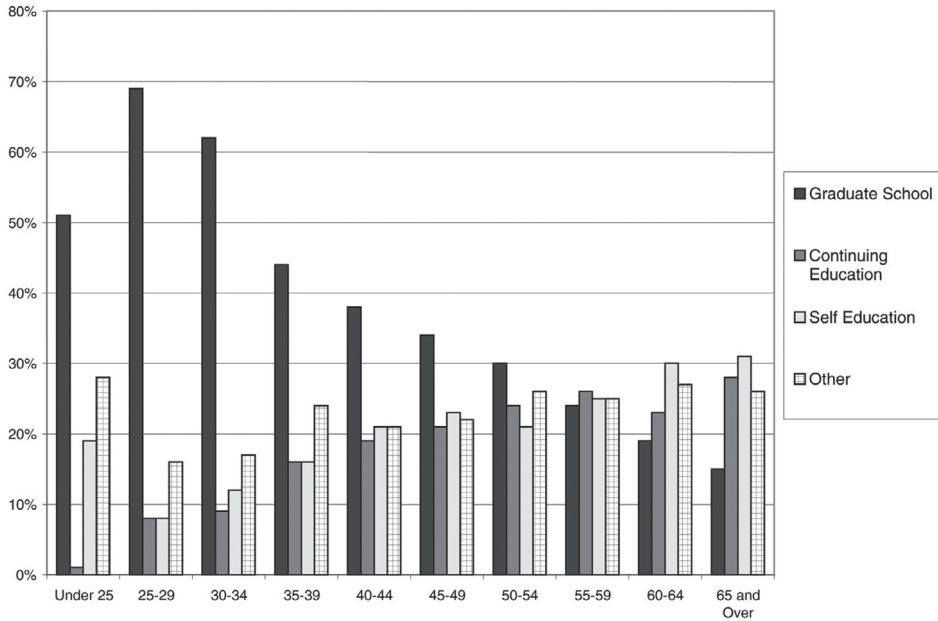


FIGURE 4.1 Primary source of archival education, by age group

Table 4.1. Degrees held, all respondents, compared with Bearman (1982) and Posner (1956)

Q6a: Degrees held	A*CENSUS 2004		Bearman - 1982		Posner - 1956	
	All degrees held		Highest degree		Highest degree	
	Count (n = 5620)	Percent	Count (n = 1717)	Percent	Count (n = 520)	Percent
High school	3471	61.8%				
Associate	454	8.1%				
BA/BS/BFA	4287	76.3%		18.0%		23.0%
MA/MS/MFA	2602	46.3%		29.0%		37.0%
MLS/MLIS	2214	39.4%		20.0%		
MBA	48	0.9%				
PhD	473	8.4%		16.0%		18.0%
JD	38	0.7%				
Other	975	17.3%				22.0%
None of the above	6	0.1%				
Rather not say	39	0.7%				

Additionally, the types of degrees have changed; more people have MLIS degrees (40.3%) and MA or MS degrees (47.4%). This represents an increase from earlier surveys. Fewer archivists, however, hold doctoral degrees. Currently 8.6% of the respondents had a PhD, down from 16% reported by Bearman

in 1982 and 18% according to Posner in 1956 (Table 4.1, Degrees held, all respondents, compared with Bearman [1982] and Posner [1956]).³

It should be noted that while master's programs in history offer an MA degree, master's programs in library and information schools offer a variety of master's degrees, including MA, MS, MLIS, and a Master of Science in Information Science (MSIS). The variance in the names of the master's degrees offered by library/information schools means that persons responding to either of two A*CENSUS categories (MA/MS or MLS/MSIS) could hold a degree from an American Library Association (ALA)-accredited master's program. And, because the MLS degree and ALA accreditation are not equivalent⁴ and there was no specific question about a degree with ALA accreditation, the number of individuals with a degree from an ALA-accredited program is most likely depressed in this survey. Because we also assume that in addition to the skills taught in MLS programs, individuals are also interested in getting the credential that is conferred with an ALA-accredited degree, we conclude that the actual number of respondents with a degree in an ALA-accredited program is much greater than 39%.⁵

Students in Graduate Programs

Identifying students pursuing graduate training for the purpose of entering the profession from among the respondents in the A*CENSUS proved to be difficult. We begin this analysis with several caveats:

- *Identification of Full-time and Part-time Students*

While the A*CENSUS requested a considerable amount of information about education, the questions were primarily directed toward people already involved in the archival field, rather than those just entering the profession. Because the survey was not specifically directed toward eliciting information from students as a separate group but rather identified them within the general

³ David Bearman, "1982 Survey of The Archival Profession," *American Archivist* 46/2 (Spring 1983): 233-239 and Ernst Posner, "What, Then, is the American Archivist, This New Man?" *American Archivist* 20/1 (January 1957): 3-11.

⁴ The holding of an MLS from an ALA-accredited school is a required qualification on a significant number of current job advertisements for archivists, as can be seen on the SAA website, <http://www.archivists.org/employment/index.asp> (accessed November 2006). However, it is clear that the term MLS is a generic one and can refer to a master's degree from a library/information science program; other degrees are possible, and we suspect that many individuals indicated their specific degrees (e.g., MA, MS) and not the generic MLS.

⁵ It is somewhat difficult to compare current data about the degrees held by respondents with earlier surveys because the questions were asked in different ways. The A*CENSUS asked respondents to indicate ALL of the degrees they hold, while earlier surveys usually asked for HIGHEST degree. Some of the A*CENSUS respondents appear not to have caught the distinction; either that, or there are a large number of people with master's degrees who never graduated from high school, and many PhDs with no bachelor's degrees.

archival population, it was difficult to definitively determine the numbers of full-time and part-time students who completed this study. It was possible, however, to isolate *approximate* groups of persons who were either full-time students in an academic program or persons who were pursuing an academic degree part-time. In addition, it is clear from the discrepancies in responses to questions that include some type of “student” identification that the respondents self-identified in different ways, depending on how the question was asked and what other choices were presented. Written responses in the “other” categories also often indicated that a “student”-related question could be interpreted in numerous ways. Although the numbers of “students” in all categories varied according to the ways in which different questions were analyzed, there is no doubt that they all revolved around similar figures. We, therefore, selected one base number for each “population” with the recognition that these were approximations and that the different tables would yield slightly different numbers.

- *Low Reportage by Students*

It also seems likely from the low full-time student response rate that many full-time students did not respond to this survey because they have not yet joined the archival organizations whose mailing lists formed the basis for the A*CENSUS population. Part-time students may have responded only if they were exposed to the survey through another archival venue (i.e., if they also worked as archivists and knew about the survey through a professional organization or through their workplace). The listing of student chapters on the SAA website and the anecdotal evidence strongly suggest that both master’s and doctoral programs have significantly higher numbers of students than responded to this survey.⁶ The SAA website shows more than twenty student chapters in graduate education programs, most of which list their officers and some of their membership. These numbers alone add up to more than twice the number of full-time students responding to the survey. In addition, it is difficult to identify students who may be part-time and who are not employed by an archival institution. In these cases, it would have been next to impossible for the survey to reach them.

- *Representative sample*

In spite of the low level of responses by full-time students, a number of indications—such as geographic distribution, age, and type of employer—make it likely that in terms of part-time and even full-time graduate students, the respondents in this survey are a representative sample and therefore indicative of trends in the larger population.

⁶ See the listing of SAA student chapters, chapter officers, and some members at http://www.archivists.org/students/chap_dir.asp (accessed November 2006).

Graduate Students: General

A substantial number of respondents to this survey said they were involved in some type of formal graduate education. Approximately 575 persons, or 9% of all persons responding to the question “Please indicate which degrees you are currently pursuing,” indicated that they were currently pursuing a degree beyond the BA/BS or were pursuing coursework in a structured academic program. The reported degree programs vary widely, with the greatest concentration of students in MA/MS, MLS/MSIS, and PhD programs (Fig. 4.2, Number of respondents seeking graduate degrees, by degree type, at www.archivists.org).

If we examine this group further, the data seem to indicate there are two types of students: those pursuing degrees full-time and those working (largely in archives) who are pursuing degrees part-time (Fig. 4.3, Full-time and part-time students and the degrees they are seeking, at www.archivists.org).

Growing Centrality of the Master’s Degree

A master’s degree is the preferred means of entry into the archival profession. In addition to respondents’ reported degrees, a number of respondents in the large “other” category had either just completed a master’s degree or were in the process of completing one. Several of these individuals were also taking

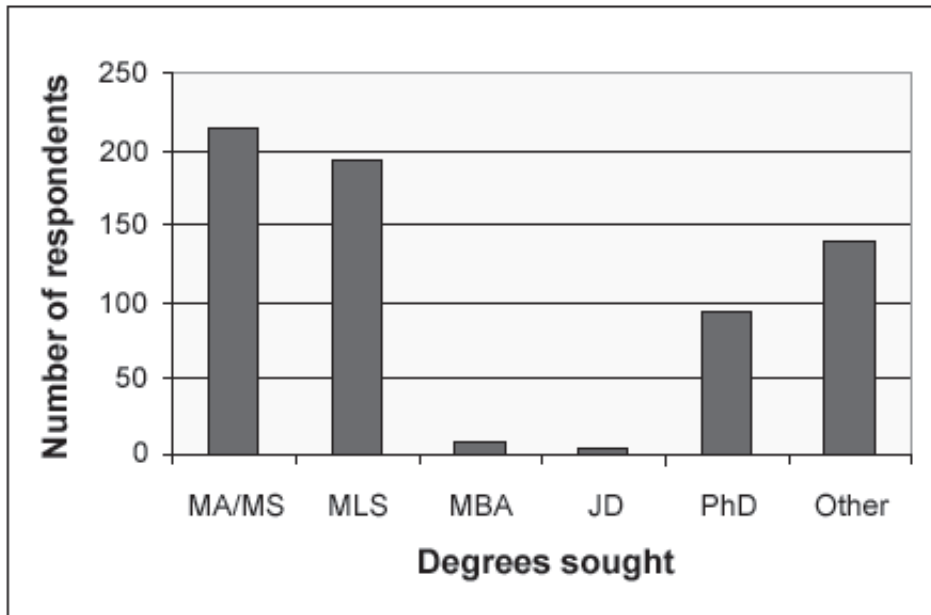


FIGURE 4.2

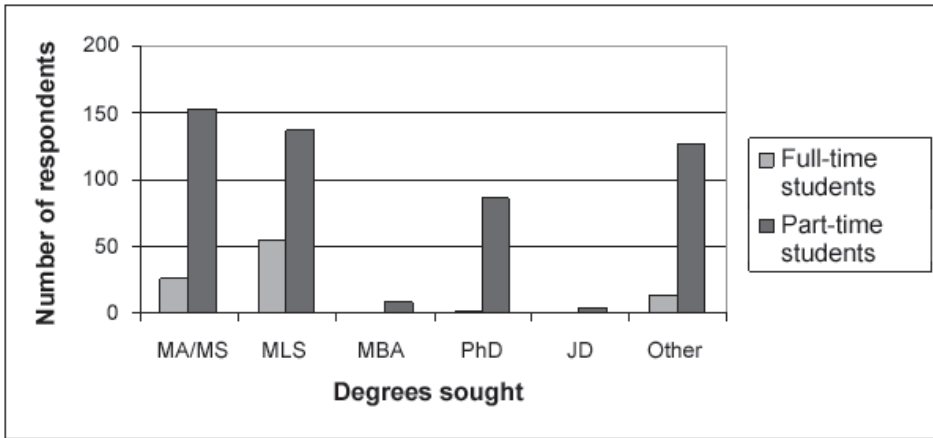


FIGURE 4.3

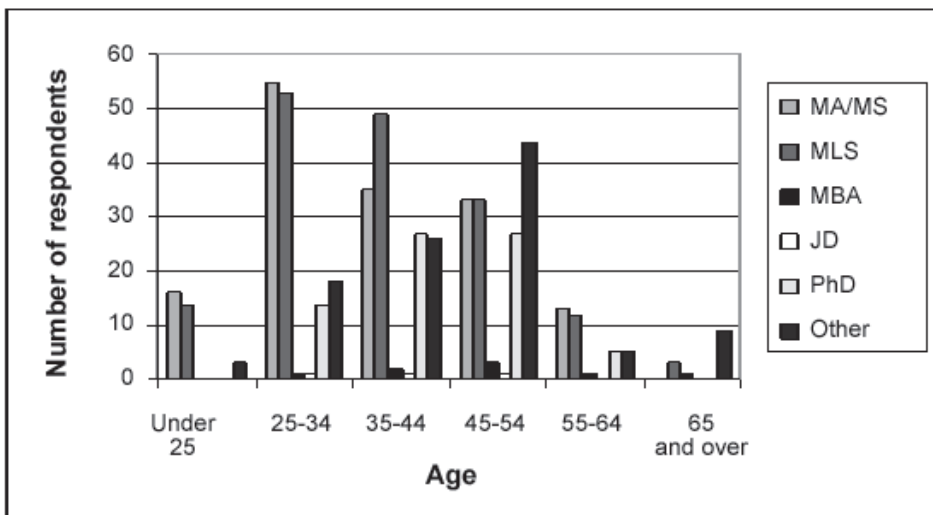


FIGURE 4.4

non-degree courses or were in an archives-related certificate program connected to an academic institution. A few were in degree programs that they felt did not fit into any of the categories presented. The fact that the majority of degrees were being sought at the master's level, plus the young age level of students seeking master's degrees (Fig. 4.4, Degrees sought, by age, at www.archivists.org), supports and validates the growing consensus within the profession that a master's is now the most prevalent entry-level requirement for employment as an archivist. This is further supported by the finding that 373 people are seeking an MA, an MS, an MLS, or an equivalent degree. Of that

group, 362 also answered the question, *Is archives your first career?* (Q29), with 41% indicating that archives was not their first career. Of those pursuing the MA/MS/MLIS degrees, only 38 indicated that they were planning to leave archival work (Q31. *Are you planning to leave archival work to pursue another field?*), so their pursuit of a degree is assumed to be for career advancement in archives or in another information area.

The data show that a majority of the respondents pursuing degrees were employed full-time in an archival setting (Fig. 4.5, Employment status and types of degrees sought; and Table 4.2, Degrees sought and employing institution, full-time and part-time employees, both at www.archivists.org). While most degrees being sought were at the master's level, other degrees were being pursued, including the MBA, JD, and the PhD. The PhD category will be

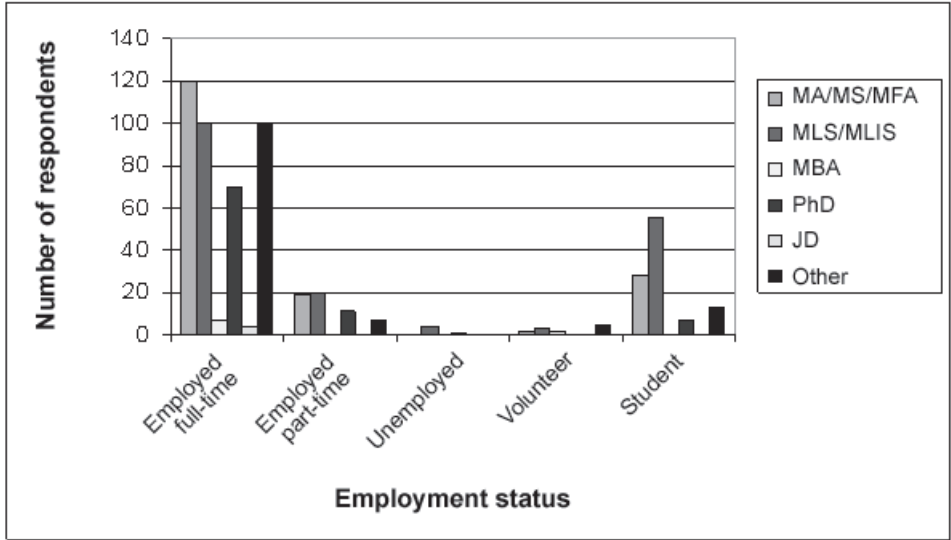


FIGURE 4.5

Table 4.2.

Degrees pursued	Acedemic institutions	Government agencies	Nonprofit organizations	For-profit organizations	Self-employed	Total
MA/MS	64	37	33	4	1	139
MLS	56	24	32	4	1	120
MBA	1	3	2	1		7
PhD	34	23	17	1		80
JD	1	2		1		4
Other	30	41	30	5	1	109
Total	186	138	114	16	3	459

discussed later in this report. A number of persons working in academic institutions, government agencies, and nonprofits were seeking PhDs. While the majority of respondents seeking degrees were employed, either part-time or full-time, more than 100 pursuing a degree at the master's level or beyond identified their primary occupation as student.

Of the persons employed part-time and full-time and also pursuing degrees at the master's level and above, the overwhelming majority were employed in academic institutions, with a substantial number employed in government agencies and nonprofits. Persons pursuing PhDs were also similarly divided (Table 4.2). The inference here, particularly at the master's level and combined with the finding that the majority of people seeking master's degrees planned to continue working as archivists, is that the employing institution was supportive of its personnel seeking degrees. This further underlines the importance put on the master's as the professional degree, both by students and by institutions.

Full-time Students

One hundred forty-seven people, 2.6% of the respondents to the A*CENSUS, answered Q1, *Please indicate if you currently are:* as “studying to be an archivist.” These 147 individuals were spread around the United States. There was at least one person in each state studying to be an archivist; two of the states with major archival programs (New York and California) had considerably more. This wide dispersal is somewhat puzzling because not all states have graduate education programs. Of the 147 individuals who primarily identified themselves as “studying to be an archivist,” 89, or 61%, also described their “Primary employment status” as a student (Q20. *Which of the following best describes your current employment status?*). We took this number of 89 as the base number for full-time students because it cross-checks very closely with the number of respondents identifying their primary employment as a student in the academic degree programs in Figure 4.5.

Of this cohort of 89, almost half were entering the archival profession as a first career (Fig. 4.6, Full-time students, archives as a first career, at www.archivists.org: Q29. *Is archives your first career?*). Furthermore, the overwhelming majority of the full-time students were under age 35 (Fig. 4.7, Age of full-time students, at www.archivists.org). The age of the students suggests that many archivists are now entering the profession as a first career; 66% of the students said they were 34 years old or younger; only 33% said they were over the age of 35 (Fig. 4.7; see also Fig. 4.8, Archives as a first career, by age of full-time students, at www.archivists.org).

Fifty-four of these 89 full-time students (60.7%) were pursuing MLS/MSIS degrees; 26, or 29.2%, were pursuing MA/MS/MFAs; and 2, or 2.2%, were studying for PhDs. Of the 13, or 14.6 %, in the “other” category, several were

just graduating from a master's program and the remainder were pursuing certificates in archives or museum studies.

In terms of demographics, the students in the survey were overwhelmingly white and female. This demonstrates that the feminization of the profession is continuing. Only 16% of the students were male. Unfortunately, the ethnic composition of the profession is not diversified, either. Less than 10% of the full-time students responding to the A*CENSUS were nonwhite (Fig. 4.9, Race and ethnicity of full-time students, at www.archivists.org).

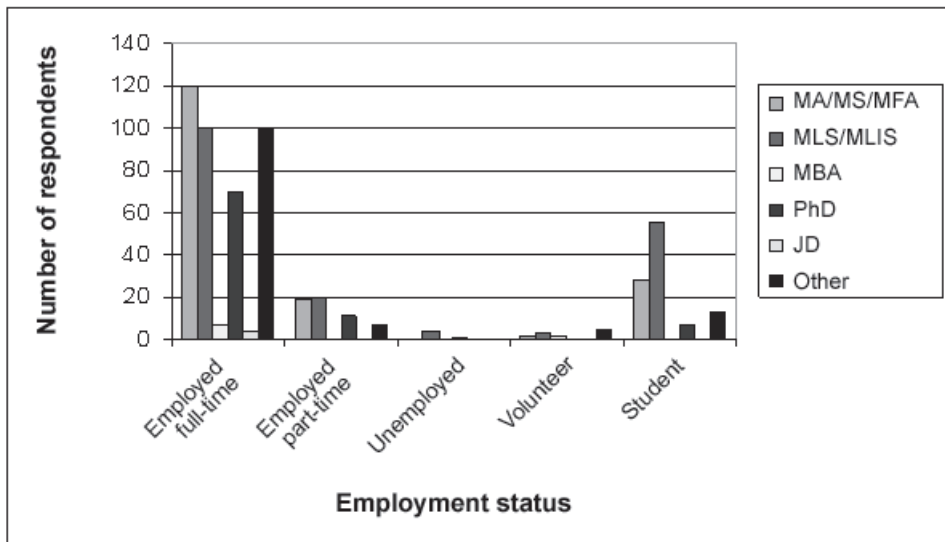


FIGURE 4.6

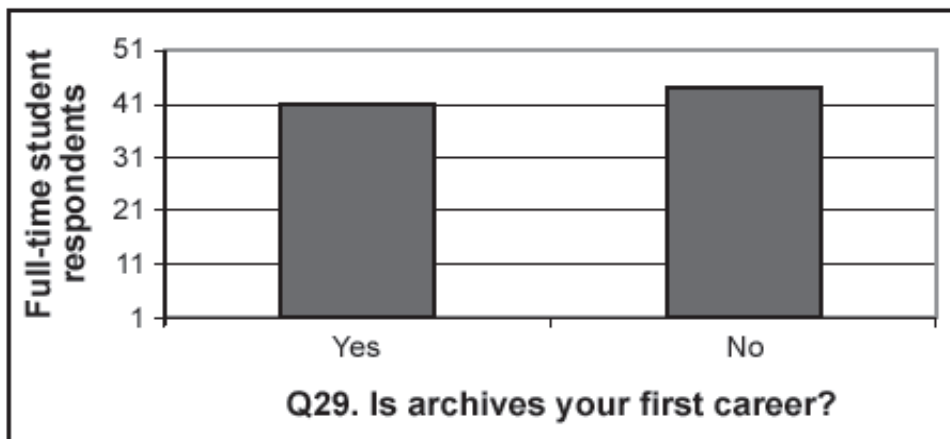


FIGURE 4.7

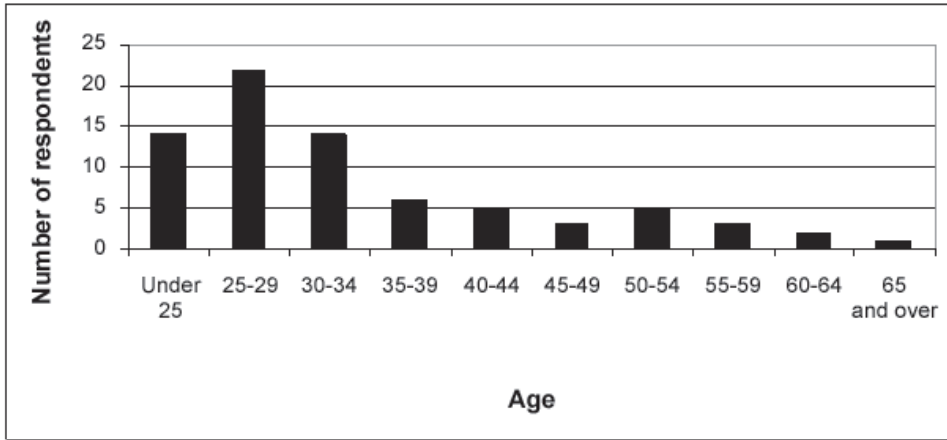


FIGURE 4.8

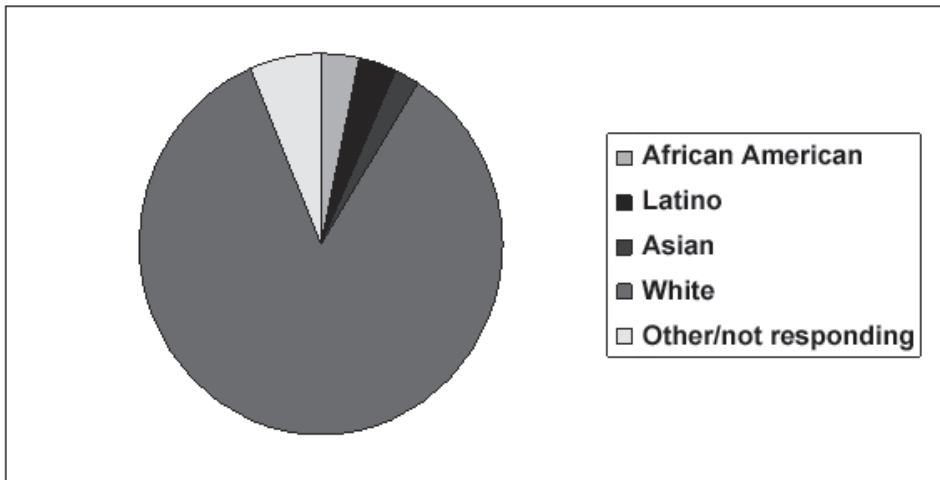


FIGURE 4.9

The responses from full-time students suggest that they identify strongly with the archival profession and are active in national professional associations. However, these respondents self-selected in that they had already taken the exceptional step of joining a professional organization while in school. Figure 4.10, Professional affiliations of full-time students, in Appendix I, shows the national archival organizations to which the full-time students said they belonged (Q36a. *To which of the following NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL ARCHIVAL ASSOCIATIONS do you belong?*). Interestingly, SAA was the organization of choice by far.

Although only one student had a paper published (Q45. *Have you authored, co-authored, or edited an archival publication?*), many had given presentations at national, regional, state, and local conferences as well as to their own institutions

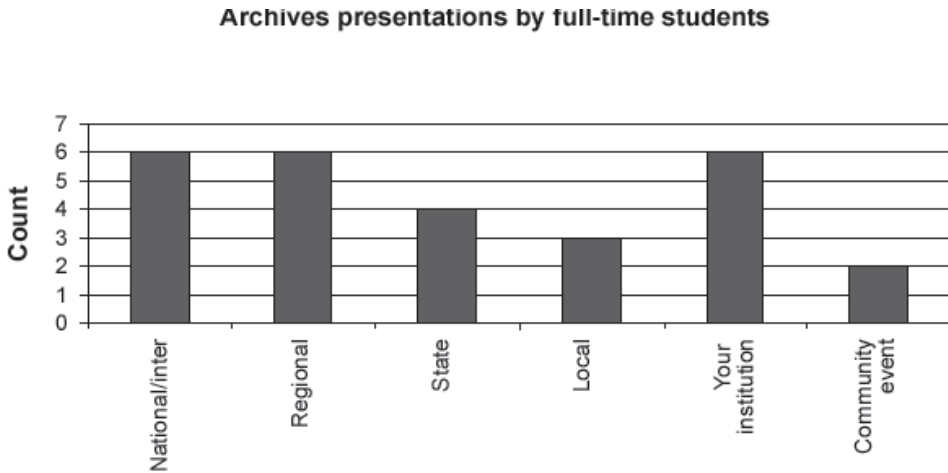


FIGURE 4.11

(Q44. Please indicate the number of times you have made an archives-related presentation at a conference or similar event in the last 5 years for each type of sponsoring organization) (Fig. 4.11, Number of archives presentations by full-time students over the previous five years, at www.archivists.org).

Finally, full-time students became interested in pursuing an archival degree for many reasons, but the primary one was because they had taken an archives-related class in college or graduate school (Q28x2. *What led you to begin working in your first archives-related job?*). Exposure to archives through education is in many ways, and on many levels, a key to the strength of the archival profession.

Part-time Students

Most of the students pursuing graduate degrees said they were enrolled part time. The A*CENSUS identified approximately 289 part-time students, 152 in MA/MS/MFA programs and 137 in MLS/MSIS programs.⁷ Much the same as with the full-time students, part-time students pursuing master's degrees were found in states across the country, with the exceptions being in the states of Indiana, Montana, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, and West Virginia.

The majority of part-time students were employed. There also were differences between the full- and part-time students, not only in the motivation to pursue an archival career, but also in age. Part-time students were substantially more likely to have had a career prior to entering the archival profession (Fig. 4.12, Archives as first career, part-time students, at www.archivists.org).

⁷ This number (289) is an approximation and was arrived at by applying the filter Q20 "Which of the following best describes your current employment status?" and then removing the "student" option (not like 7) to Q6b "Please indicate which degrees you are currently pursuing."

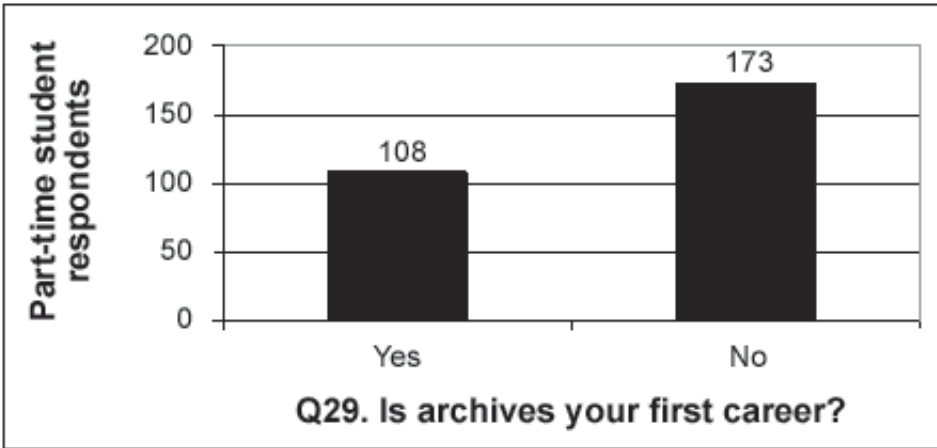


FIGURE 4.12

Part-time master's students, by race and ethnicity



FIGURE 4.13

The trends in gender and diversity that are evident in the archival profession are also apparent in the sample of part-time students. Gender was overwhelmingly female, with more than twice as many women (194) as men (84) pursuing master's programs part-time. However, racial and ethnic demographics of part-time students were slightly better than for full-time students. Although more racial and ethnic groups were represented than with the full-time students, the percentage compared with white/Caucasian was very small. Overall, the diversity of the part-time students was only slightly better than that of the full-time students (Fig. 4.13, Part-time master's students, by race and ethnicity; and [as mentioned above] Fig. 4.9, Race and ethnicity of full-time students, both at www.archivists.org).

Professional involvement in terms of presentations and publications was greater for the part-time students than it was for the full-time students; 265 part-time students answered Q44a. *Please indicate the number of times you have made an*

archives-related presentation at a conference or similar event in the last 5 years for each type of sponsoring organization. The majority, 221, made no presentations at national meetings, but 40 (20%) had made at least one presentation at a national meeting and 25 had made two. Part-time students also published articles. Of the 146 part-time students answering the question, Q45. *Have you authored, co-authored, or edited an archival publication?*, 20, or 14%, had authored at least one publication. (See for comparison Fig. 4.11, Number of archives presentations by full-time students over the previous five years, at www.archivists.org, for full-time students' responses, as discussed above).

A final difference between full-time and part-time students was the response to Q28x2: *What led you to begin working in your first archives-related job?* While full-time students had been centered on course work as the primary impetus for them to enter the archival profession, part-time students were more motivated by workplace experiences. Although course work still played a part, many part-time students had become involved in an archives job before they decided to formally study archives. In particular, the part-time students often were either assigned archival responsibilities or found an archival job during a general job search (Fig. 4.14, Reasons for first archives-related job, at www.archivists.org).

Faculty

The previous sections of this paper have documented the rising importance of, and reliance upon, graduate archival education by the profession. This section on faculty will examine the educational infrastructure, specifically faculty. First, we will examine full-time graduate archival educators, then discuss adjuncts, and, finally, address the preparation of future faculty. Each of these is a key element in

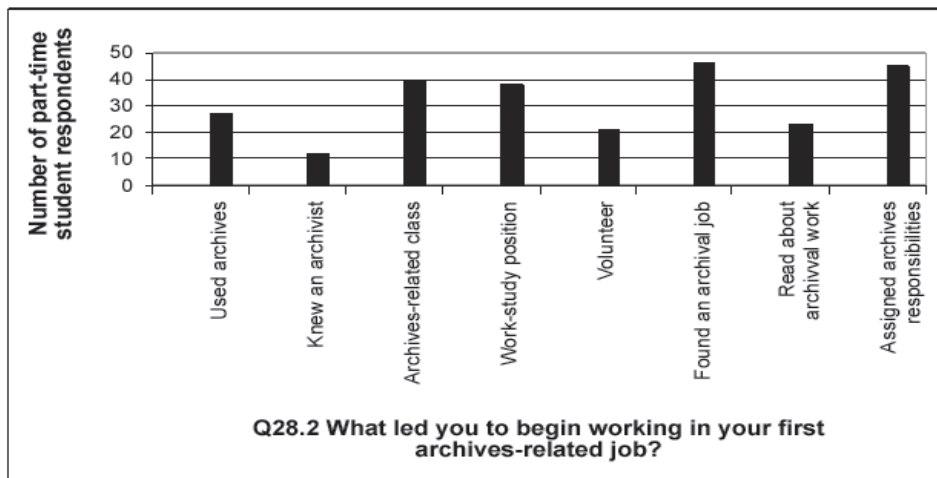


FIGURE 4.14

the educational infrastructure. And, as will be pointed out, the profession should have serious concerns about sustaining graduate archival education.

Full-time Faculty

Identifying faculty in graduate education programs through the A*CENSUS was not easy. In answering the first question—“*Please indicate if you currently are: ...*”—thirty-eight individuals responded that they were “*Teaching in a graduate archival education program.*” Of those, thirty-two said they worked in academic institutions, two in government, one in a nonprofit, and the rest did not answer. Respondents seemed to interpret this question more broadly than intended. We therefore tried to isolate the full-time faculty in academic institutions. We followed the A*CENSUS answers to Q21 (type of institution), then went to those who identified themselves as “Other” in Q27, *Select which of the following best describes your current position*, and then to those who selected “*Educator, College and University.*” When cross-checked with the individuals who indicated in Q1 that they were teaching in a graduate archival education program, the resulting number was twenty-four. The most recent comparative information on the total population of archival faculty is from 2000. Cox et al. identified thirty-five full-time faculty members who were teaching archives and records management courses. Using this figure from 2000, we can approximate that 69% of the archival educators responded to the survey.⁸ Thus, although the overall population is small, the responding sample represents a majority of the archival educators.

The demographics on educators as a group reveal an interesting and alarming picture of this group. In age, 71% of the educators are over fifty years old; 20% are sixty and older. While the archival population overall is aging, its educators are even older. Responding to a question that asked, in effect, when they expected to retire from the archival field (Q33), eighteen said in nineteen years or less and seven said in less than nine years.

Sixteen (66%) of the educators in the survey are female, eight (33%) are male. Twenty-three have a PhD, but twelve also have an MLS and eighteen have another master's degree. Among those with other degrees, men were more likely to have an MA or MS degree (88% men to 69% women) and women were more likely to have an MLS (63% of the women to 25% of the men). Unfortunately, the A*CENSUS did not ask respondents to indicate the field of their degrees. But this pattern of master's degrees fits the stereotypical pattern of a feminizing profession. By far the majority of archival educators are white. The lack of racial and ethnic

⁸ Richard J. Cox, Elizabeth Yakel, David Wallace, Jeannette Bastian, and Jennifer Marshall, “Archival Education at the Millennium: The Status of Archival Education in North American Library and Information Science Schools,” *Library Quarterly* 71/2 (April 2001) and R. J. Cox, E. Yakel, D. Wallace, J. Bastian, and J. Marshall, (2001) “Educating Archivists in Library and Information Science Schools,” *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 42/3 (Summer).

diversity among the ranks of faculty may partially answer the question of why there are so few minorities entering the profession. If education is an introduction to the profession, it is a very white introduction.

Graduate educators are some of the most professionally active individuals. Seventy-five percent attended five or more national or international meetings over the past five years (Q42). Twenty-five percent made five or more presentations at national or international conferences. Their participation at regional, state, and local conferences, while comparatively less, is still significant. Furthermore, 88% of the graduate educators have held leadership positions in archival organizations (Q48). As expected, graduate educators publish; 88% have authored, co-authored, or edited an archival publication (Q45). Given the high level of professional activity, it is not surprising to note that when asked how strong their ties were to the archival profession (Q51), 62% said that their ties to the archival profession were very strong (the mean was 6.21, standard deviation 1.2). The average for respondents as a whole was 5.0. The question was asked on a seven-point (Likert) scale where 1 was "not strong at all" and 7 was "very strong."

Part-time Faculty

Part-time faculty were virtually impossible to identify in the A*CENSUS. There was no specific question concerning whether individuals taught as adjuncts in graduate archival education programs. Q24 asked, *Within the last 12 months, what percentage of your time did you spend on the following functions?* In response to this, 613 people indicated that they spent some time "Teaching archives-related courses."

On the positive side, the responses suggest that education is a function in the jobs of many archivists. However, it seems obvious that this question could be answered affirmatively whether they were doing archival researcher education (for example, a single class session on using the archives for an assignment) or archival education. Eighty-four percent of the archivists who said that they spent some portion of their time on education indicated that the portion was less than 10%. This may be too small a percentage of time to be a full-scale graduate archival education course. Also, adjuncts may teach outside their normal employment responsibilities, which may not have been possible to indicate in response to this question. What is clear is that there are numerous adjuncts who are keeping archival education afloat; unfortunately, the A*CENSUS survey has not made them any more visible.

Doctoral Education

The replacement of graduate archival educators depends on PhD-trained archivists. As previously noted, 8.4% of archivists have a doctoral degree. In

addition, eighty-one people are pursuing doctoral degrees. The A*CENSUS did not ask in what area these doctoral degrees were; however, those responders pursuing a PhD were from all types of institutions. From previous research, we know that most of these students are not likely to be pursuing degrees in the emerging doctoral programs in archives and records management. It is definitely not out of the question for an individual to get a PhD in another area and teach graduate-level archives courses. However, there is no overt interest being shown by most of those individuals pursuing PhDs that would indicate that they would like to teach archives.

Mentorship, Internships, Recruitment, and Replacement

Maintaining graduate-level archival education is a profession-wide endeavor. This is clearly demonstrated by the A*CENSUS. Archival educators rely on professional colleagues to mentor, provide internships for, and support the recruitment of graduates from archival education programs.

Mentorship

Although the apprenticeship model of archival training is waning, mentorship still plays a vital role in introducing new people to the archival profession and in fostering professional growth. Mentorship can be in overt mentorship programs or it can be more subtle, such as the encouragement of a promising student worker to become an archivist.

That less overt type of mentoring is hard to pull from these data. However, one question asked: *What led you to begin working in your first archives-related job?* (Q28x2). Relationships to archivists are implicit in the answers; 188 people (3%) knew an archivist; 489, or 9%, held a work-study position in a college archives; 665, or 12%, took an archives-related course; and 772, or 14%, indicated "other," with many of those responding specifying different types of working arrangements in college archives besides work-study. Three individuals specifically cited mentors as leading them to their first archives position.

Respondents were also asked whether they had ever participated in any formal mentoring activities (Q10c_1). The question was worded so that this would apply to both mentors and those who were mentored. Twenty-one percent of the respondents, or 1,193 individuals, answered this question affirmatively.

Internships

Applying theory to practice in the form of internships is a hallmark of most archival education programs. In fact, archival education would not be successful without the willingness of institutions to open their doors to interns.

Respondents were asked whether they had ever participated in any internship activities, Q10c_2. *Have you ever participated in any of the following ARCHIVES RELATED continuing education and/or training options?* “Internship” was one of seven nonexclusive options. Almost 2,000 individuals (1,845, or 33%) said that they had been involved, either as an intern or a supervisor. As previously noted, internships were a frequent answer in another question, *What led you to begin working in your first archives-related job?* (Q28x2). Of the 772 respondents (14%) who specified “other,” 64 people mentioned internships. These respondents were spread across a number of different types of archives, although they were predominantly in academic (about 40%), government (about 30%), and nonprofit institutions (about 20%) (Fig. 4.15, *What led to first archival job, type of employer of respondents who mentioned internships*, at www.archivists.org).

Recruitment

The A*CENSUS survey asked two questions of archival managers concerning their emphasis on hiring graduates of archival education programs. The first question (M10) asked, *In your experience, how effective is each of the following in finding new archival employees?* On a seven-point scale where 1 was “not strong at all” and 7 was “very strong,” referral from a trusted colleague (5.38) was identified as the most effective means of recruitment. Recruiting candidates from graduate archival education programs, at 4.82, was the fourth most effective method, close behind “Advertisement on professional association Web site” (4.91) and “Recruiting archival professionals with whom you are acquainted”

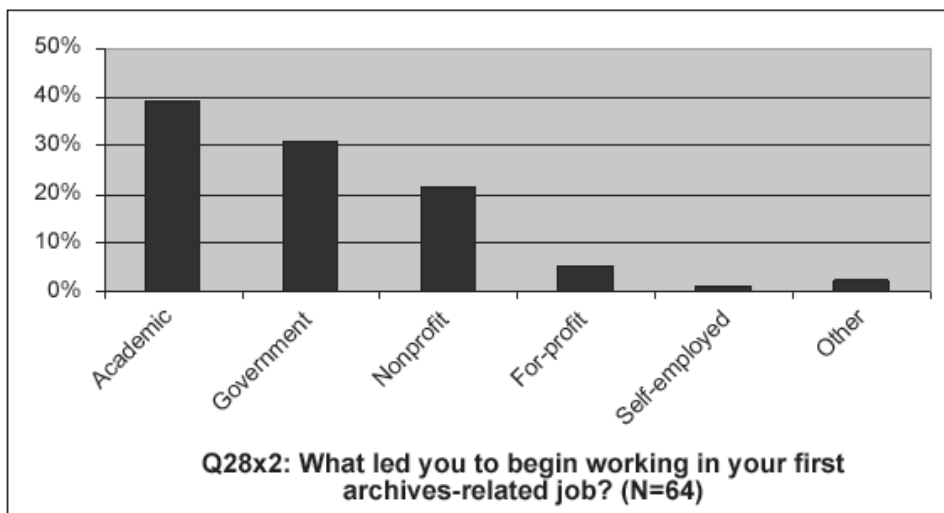


FIGURE 4.15

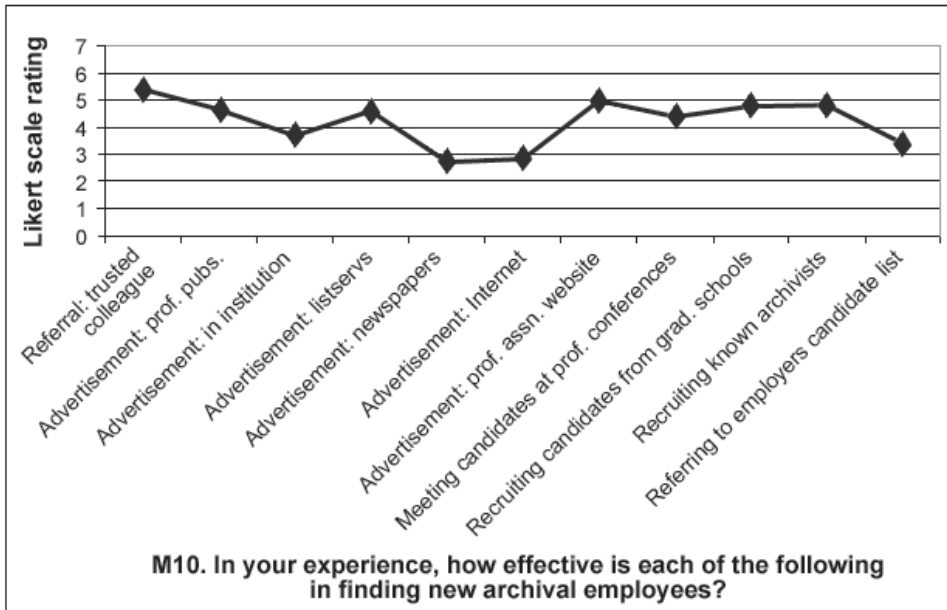


FIGURE 4.16

(4.84) (Fig. 4.16, Managers' responses, methods of recruitment for all employees [M10], at www.archivists.org).

Managers were also asked specifically about the qualifications they saw as crucial for entry-level archivists. This question (M17) was worded, *How important are the following qualifications when hiring full-time ENTRY-LEVEL archivists?* This question was also posed on the seven-point scale where 1 was "not strong at all" and 7 was "very strong." Interestingly, graduate archival education was listed fifth behind the following: "Other skills such as interpersonal and communications" (6.14); "References" (5.92); "Technical skills" (5.63); and "Degrees held" (5.16) (Fig. 4.17, Managers' rating of qualifications for full-time, entry-level archivists [M17], at www.archivists.org). These findings may be somewhat misleading, since specific studies of job ads and employers have found education to be valued. For example, Richard Cox found a decided bent toward a master's degree in his analysis of job advertisements.⁹ Likewise, in Alan Gabehart's article on employers' qualifications for entry-level archivists, he concludes that "the choices of bachelor's degree and master's degree in library science dominated the selections for all types of institutions." Gabehart also found that "a bachelor's degree appears to satisfy the minimum educational qualifications for employment in institutions outside the college/university community."¹⁰ Our findings suggest that there has

⁹ Richard J. Cox, "Employing records professionals in the information age," *Information Management Journal* 34/1 (January 2000): 18-29.

¹⁰ Alan D. Gabehart, "Qualifications Desired by Employers for Entry-Level Archivists in the United States," *American Archivist* 55 (Summer 1992): 428, 437.

been a shift since Gabehart's work more than a decade ago, and the master's degree may just be a given in the archival marketplace.

Interestingly, however, certification was ranked as the lowest of the qualifications for all types of institutions, a finding that supports Gabehart's earlier survey. Overall, there were no marked differences between institutions. However, in terms of graduate archival education, self-employed archivists (consultants?) valued education more highly than respondents from formal repositories (Fig. 4.18, Managers' qualification preferences when hiring full-time, entry-level archivists, by type of archival institution, at www.archivists.org).

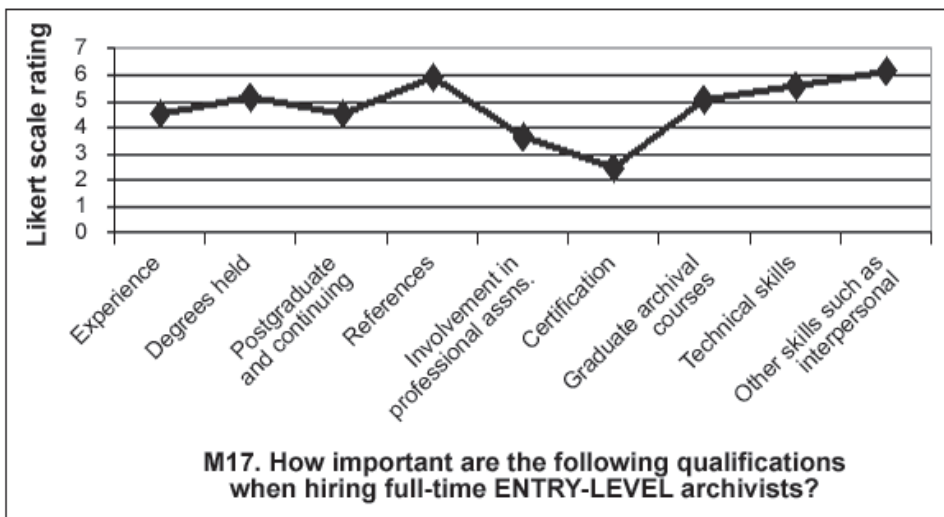


FIGURE 4.17

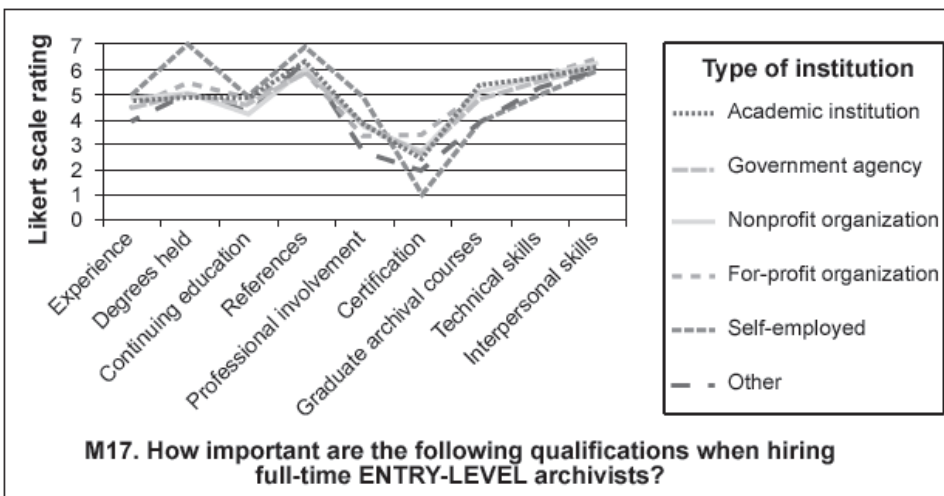


FIGURE 4.18

Replacement

The final section of this report examines the plans for retirement and replacement of archivists. Are enough students coming to replace them? What are the implications for keeping up this recent educational standard for entry into the profession? Q33 asked, *If you expect to end your career while still working in the archival field, when do you plan to do so?* The responses indicated that 28% of all archivists and 33% of all archival managers expected to retire within nine years or sooner. Furthermore, 51% of all archivists and 63% of all managers planned to retire within twenty years (Table 4.3, Retirement plans for archivists [all respondents] and archival managers).

Conclusions

Graduate Education and the Archival Profession

The A*CENSUS results overwhelmingly demonstrate a strengthening relationship between graduate education and the archival profession, primarily expressed through the increasing recognition of the master's degree as a necessary requirement for entry into the archival profession. This was observed in two major groups: young persons ranging in age from under twenty-five to thirty-five years of age who are entering the profession, and career-changers (persons for whom archives was not a first career) between thirty-five and forty-five years of age. Additionally, receiving an archives education through a library/information science (MA, MLIS, or MSIS) program is increasingly preferred over an MA in history.

The master's degree requirement is recognized both within and outside the profession, that is, by persons wishing to become archivists and by persons who are already employed by an archival institution. The high number of part-time students in master's programs who are already working in archives strongly suggests a connection between employment status and degrees. This is true particularly in academic institutions. The number of part-time master's

Table 4.3. Retirement plans for archivists (all respondents) and archival managers

	All respondents		Managers	
	(n = 5256)		(n = 1741)	
Within 3 years	420	8.0%	157	9.0%
3-9 years	1,037	19.7%	417	24.0%
10-19 years	1,205	22.9%	522	30.0%
20-29 years	796	15.1%	257	14.8%
30+ years	585	11.1%	139	8.0%

degree students working in archives also underscores the connection between on-the-job experience and the desire to pursue an archival career.

There is a definite trend away from on-the-job training and toward professional education. At the same time, experience continues to be highly valued, and there still is the sense that archivists can begin learning the profession on the job. Again, from the high number of employed persons who are also part-time students, it appears that many persons initially enter the profession through on-the-job-training and then get a master's degree. This may support and add another dimension to the managers' preferences that emerged through the recruitment questions—that "interpersonal skills" and "personal references" rated highest in the hiring process. In other words, given the large number of employed archivists who are working toward academic degrees, there may be a sense on the part of managers that individual potential is the most important factor in recruiting new employees, and that education can be completed after the person is hired.

Impending Crisis in Graduate Education

In the area of graduate education, the most dramatic finding in the A*CENSUS survey is the scarcity of full-time archival educators at a time when the demand for graduate education is rapidly escalating and the primacy of a master's degree is becoming widely recognized. This scarcity is compounded by the fact that the majority of current educators are over fifty years old, with very few new PhDs on the horizon. We suggest several explanations:

- Because the master's degree is established as essentially the terminal degree in the archives profession, there is very little incentive for a person to pursue archival education beyond the master's degree. Many of the PhDs currently working as archivists generally represent an older generation of archivists who came into the profession through the field of history.
- Being an archival educator is not sufficiently identified or promoted as a sub-career within the archives profession. In the majority of instances, the current group of archival educators began their careers as archivists and, for a variety of reasons, became educators, rather than setting out to be educators from the beginning.
- There are few academic programs that specifically support the development of archival educators.
- The archives profession is in a transitional stage as it moves from training on the job to training through graduate education. The supply of educators has not yet caught up with the demand for education.
- The archives profession and its professional associations, particularly the Society of American Archivists, have not yet sufficiently recognized the

need to promote and nurture the development of an archives faculty in the academic world.

As a result, there are a number of academic openings for full-time archival educators in well-established archives education programs, vacancies that continue to be unfilled because there is no one to fill them. Recent job advertisements by library/information schools show an increasing interest in recruiting faculty to teach archives. Many are from schools that do not currently have archives programs, but that apparently now see a need for one (or at least for archives courses).¹² Again, there is no one to fill these positions or start new programs.

Major Challenges

The rapid development of the master's as the professional degree and the continuing scarcity of academic archival educators pose a number of challenges to the archival professional:

- *Quality and Consistency of Graduate Education*

Recent studies¹³ have demonstrated wide disparities in both the depth and the quality of the archival education currently offered by master's programs, whether they are history programs or in library/information schools. Although the Society of American Archivists has suggested guidelines for graduate education, these are in no way "official" nor are they enforceable. As graduate education becomes a hallmark of the professionalization of the archival endeavor, the profession will have to determine its own role in setting educational standards and decide whether or not it needs to strive for consistency among programs.

- *The Graying of the Archives Faculty*

This trend poses a threat to the burgeoning development of the master's degree as a professional requirement. While archives educators themselves generally recognize this threat and actively encourage students to pursue PhDs and the teaching of archives, the task of promoting the development of archives faculty is also the responsibility of the profession as a whole, particularly through its national organization, SAA. By bringing to light this threat, the A*CENSUS survey may represent the first step in confronting the problem. But it must be followed by the development of strategies at a national level that will help define

¹² See the website of ALISE (Association for Library and Information Science Education), which maintains a current list of faculty openings in library and information science schools, <http://www.alise.org/jobplacement/>.

¹³ Richard J. Cox, et al. "Archival Education at the Millennium and R. J. Cox, E. Yakel, D. Wallace, J. Bastian, and J. Marshall, (2001) "Educating Archivists in Library and Information Science Schools," *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 42/3 (Summer).

academic archival education as a desirable and profitable career path, and at the same time encourage both adjunct educators and new PhD students to become full-time archival educators.

- *The Transition from On-the-Job-Training to Professional Academic Education*

Although the consensus for graduate archival education is growing steadily, the majority of persons currently working as archivists received their archival training in other ways, including on-the-job training. Although the profession must acknowledge both groups and accommodate all of its members' needs, it should also recognize that the profession is in a transition period, and look unapologetically to the future while providing services that reflect multiple educational levels. The profession, through the various professional associations at the national, regional, and local levels, needs to help all its members make the transition toward professional education. At the same time, it must begin to focus, in new and more strategic ways, on the continuing professional development needs of archivists who already have that education and have made that transition.