

The Master of Archival Studies and American Education Standards: An Argument for the Continued Development of Graduate Archival Education in the United States

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Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to report on the recent work of the Society of American Archivists (SAA) Committee on Education and Professional Development (CEPD) in preparing new education guidelines calling for a Master of Archival Studies degree; these new guidelines, if accepted by the SAA membership and approved by Council, will replace the long-accepted three-course sequence first stated in the 1977 graduate education guidelines and reaffirmed in 1988. The comments in this essay fall into three categories: first, what CEPD has done and why it has worked in the way it has; secondly, my own experience on CEPD in the mid-1980s and as chair of the CEPD subcommittee that drafted what eventually became the 1988 SAA graduate archival education guidelines; and, thirdly, increasing evidence for the necessity and viability of the MAS-type graduate programme.

Recent Work of the SAA CEPD

It is important to describe initially what the SAA CEPD has proposed. It is also important to state that the version of the guidelines I worked with was a preliminary draft, which will undergo extensive revision and reformulation. I intend to discuss only the generalities of the MAS *degree*, not the specifics of each element of the guidelines.¹

The MAS draft guidelines consist of four parts, a structure heavily influenced by the 1988 Association of Canadian Archivists education guidelines.² The first part is an introductory description of the work and mission of the archivist and the goals of these proposed guidelines. In this part it is noted that the Society is reaffirming its conviction that the most appropriate setting for professional formation is "an institution of higher learning that provides a unique forum for disciplined study, research, and experimentation" and that the MAS degree should "constitute the only recognized pre-appointment professional education for archivists."³

This is not a statement to be taken lightly, since it is counter to the prevailing view of a large portion of the United States archival profession that education can occur in short-term institutes or workshops or in the actions of many of our larger institutions, like the National Archives, which support in-service training programmes as substitutes for graduate archival edu-

cation (and, in fact, do not recognize graduate archival education at all). James M. O'Toole, in his insightful essay on graduate curriculum, calls this a "workshop mentality," which first "accustoms both educators and students to thinking about their discipline in summary, overview fashion"; secondly, "trains us to break archival subject matter into discreet blocks"; and, thirdly, "leaves us with an irresistible disposition toward practicality."⁴ Angelika Menne-Haritz's brilliant paper on archival education at the 1992 International Congress on Archives would suggest that archivists in the United States are still mired in an iron or bronze age of professional development, a criticism that we must be prepared to take if we are unable to advance our education programmes. Menne-Haritz suggested three stages for the development of archival science: "practical archival science," "descriptive archival science," and, finally, "multi-functional archival science." The first stage was archives serving strictly legal purposes, the second was archives serving historical research, and the third—now developing—is a focus on systematic appraisal and its development as an "autonomous scientific discipline."⁵ It is only in comprehensive graduate education programmes, such as represented by the MAS, that we can effectively manage such a discipline. The proposed guidelines in this section also suggest the importance of "education," as opposed to "training." Ann Pederson recently stated that "'education' is a process of systematic instruction designed to develop one's intellectual powers and to acquire a body of knowledge."⁶ I shall return to this definition below.

The second part of the proposed guidelines is the "conceptual foundations." These foundations are the role of archives in society, the work of an archivist, the education of an archivist, and sufficient flexibility in archival education to respond to changing needs and conditions. The role of archives in society is noted as providing administrative, legal, and cultural services to their parent organizations and a broader society. This section defines archives, archival document, archival science, archival studies, and archival education.

Beyond this aspect, the conceptual foundations include support for the notions that there is an "intellectual framework" for archival education, that this education is interdisciplinary, and that graduate archival education is the basis for "life-long" learning. Most telling in this part of the guidelines, perhaps, is the statement that "archival studies is in a dynamic and evolutionary state." This brings forth a call for educational "innovation and educational specialization,"⁷ which is related to a fact of which the American archival profession should not be proud of—the long-term state of flux of its education. It also defines, of course, the nature of American higher education, in which university administrators will be less prone to react positively to prescriptive standards imposed by professional associations. They will be more likely to respond to general guidelines, at least as far as curriculum content is concerned. By this, I am not inferring that proposals for knowledge, methodology, and practical content are not welcome—rather that we need to operate within a more flexible environment. Given the nature of archival theory and practice, programmes will develop along similar curricular lines in any case.

Part three of the guidelines is devoted to "knowledge areas," which are identified as consisting of two parts: core and shared knowledge. The core knowledge area, meaning that which all archival students should be taught, includes the context of information, archival history and the character of the archival profession, archival theory, archival methods, the application of archival theory and methods, and records management. I know that there has been disagreement within CEPD itself about whether anything that is not archival theory and knowledge should be listed as a core area. For the United States archival community, however, the bigger debate may be about whether there *is* archival theory and an autonomous body of knowledge. My own position on this question is, of course, widely known: that there is such a body of knowledge—a position which I am always surprised to find provokes heated debate in the United States. It is also the axis upon which the MAS degree rotates. The fundamental reason for the MAS degree programme is that this level of knowledge and theory requires a fully-fledged graduate education in order to instil it within the student. After graduation from such a programme, the working archivist spends his or her career applying this theory and knowledge,

as well as identifying areas where additional education is needed. This is a matter for education, rather than training, to which I referred earlier in the paper. In other words, as Canadian archival educator Tom Nesmith has stated, the “primary aim of graduate archival studies is to educate students to learn about archives rather than to teach them as much of existing knowledge and practice as can be covered.”⁸

The shared knowledge areas are rather predictable: the management sciences, information and library science, preservation, and historical and other research methods. The important thing here is that “*archival*” knowledge and theory take the forefront in the curricular construction of this programme. Perhaps, we are seeing the end of the fifty-year-old American debate over the placement of archival education, by holding out for a separate MAS degree (or, perhaps, we shall witness the debate all over again). Librarians do not equal archivists; nor do historians. Enough said about this. Archivists are archivists. The new guidelines, moreover, strongly support this view through statements such as: archivists’ “professional competence must be guaranteed by a strong archival education,” and archivists “need to be firmly grounded in the principles and methods of archival science, and to have a broad knowledge of the field of archival studies.”⁹

Part four of the proposed guidelines deals with “infrastructures.” It is here that the most mundane, but most vociferous, debates within the American archival profession about the MAS degree proposal may occur. There are three crucial statements made here which must be mentioned. First, “a graduate archival studies programme should be formally recognized” by its host institution, by having “department status,” or an “autonomous status within the department(s) or school to which it is attached.”¹⁰ Secondly, “at least one full-time, tenure track position is required to establish and maintain an archival studies programme.”¹¹ Thirdly, “two-thirds of the students’ work should be dedicated to the archival knowledge area, while one-third should be relate to the contextual and the complementary knowledge areas.”¹² Furthermore, “students should routinely undertake major research activities producing scholarly papers ... and should conclude their studies with a thesis or a comparable original project.”¹³

Here are the primary characteristics—beyond the focus on archival theory and knowledge—of the MAS degree. All three are, at this moment, beyond what any single school in the United States is able to support. All three, taken together, represent an indictment of American graduate archival education. For this reason, there will be opposition by some, either because they believe that everything is fine or because they believe that the changes will be impossible or too difficult to make. One member of the CEPD indicated to me that the opposition to the MAS degree has come primarily from current archival educators, a detail about which I will let my readers derive their own conclusions.

Why has the SAA CEPD taken this step to propose an MAS degree as a minimal basis for graduate archival education? Some would argue that the reasons may be because of American archivists’ inferiority complex regarding what foreign colleagues have accomplished in archival education, misguided notions of the extent of archival knowledge and theory, and misinformed steps to over-specialize. However, I must state that I have a far different view. There is some merit in the argument that the Canadian experience with the MAS degree has been a generally successful one, and that there is no reason why it should not be successful in the United States as well. The larger reason, however, is due to the nature of how graduate archival education and its counterparts—continuing education and the internship-practicum—have evolved. Because of the statement of the SAA CEPD itself to SAA Council, explaining its actions, it is important to start with the second aspect first.

In the transmittal document covering the proposed MAS degree guidelines, CEPD reiterated its commitment to the responsibility for preparing and promoting “standards for archival education programmes, those based in graduate schools as well as continuing education workshops, seminars, and institutes.”¹⁴ The present CEPD has stressed that graduate and continuing

education “need to be addressed in a coordinated manner” and, furthermore, that “attention to educational programmes must be balanced with a view toward the profession and the forces and circumstances that could or should shape and support educational offerings.”¹⁵ In reacting to this, the present CEPD has determined that its work on graduate education, practicum, and continuing education guidelines has been too piecemeal or “disconnected.” By early 1991 CEPD had informed SAA Council that the “past strategy of trying to move ahead on a number of fronts simultaneously had caused CEPD to fail to make significant headway on any of its priorities and had prevented the committee from bringing even one of them to a successful conclusion.”¹⁶ This caused CEPD to shift its energies to graduate archival guidelines as the keystone or foundation for all its other work, and to temporarily shelve work on the continuing education and practicum guidelines. The Canadian experiences and guidelines were examined and work began from that point. Most importantly, CEPD decided that it needed to look at the “ideal” for graduate archival education programmes:

SAA’s first priority should be to establish standards for graduate archival education programmes and an implementation plan that will effectively serve the needs of the archival profession. These guidelines should focus on what should constitute the ideal programme rather than on expedient standards. As a part of this initiative the SAA should begin to formulate strategies for encouraging and nurturing programmes that are successful in meeting these new guidelines.¹⁷

Out of these activities and principles, we have received the present proposal for an SAA-endorsed MAS degree.

SAA CEPD in the mid-1980s and the 1988 Guidelines: Personal Observations

At this point, I want to depart somewhat from the immediate focus on the current proposed SAA MAS degree guidelines, to consider the presently-operating graduate education guidelines.¹⁸ This is a personal commentary, since I chaired the SAA CEPD subcommittee that prepared the majority of the text of these guidelines. However, I strongly believe it to be relevant to a consideration of the present MAS degree proposal.

In the autumn of 1985 CEPD determined that the 1977 guidelines needed revision; a subcommittee of three, also including Frederick Stielow and Susan Davis, was appointed to carry out this task. To this point in time, CEPD had been relatively inactive. While it had gathered annually to confer about education matters, it had been mostly a reactive body, in this case reacting to activities and tasks assigned by the SAA governing Council or by particular SAA presidents. In fact, my recollection is that CEPD had been asked to revise the 1977 guidelines by the SAA executive. Having been a member of CEPD since 1982, I was asked to chair this subcommittee since I was not an archival educator, either full-time or as an adjunct, and hence would be viewed as having no vested interest in any particular type of educational programme form.

The subcommittee gathered and met twice. We discussed initially the nature of our assignment. I prepared an annotated bibliography on the topic of archival education, mostly as a side activity as I determined to reread all I could on this issue. This bibliography was shared internally with the other two members of the subcommittee and was reflected in a later bibliography prepared by Paul Conway.¹⁹ Taking my task seriously, as a revision of the 1977 guidelines, I used these as a starting-point and prepared a preliminary working draft, which was sent off to Stielow and Davis. We gathered for an intensive one-day working session, where we tore this draft apart. I then reworked the document, shared it with the subcommittee, and sent our final version on to the full CEPD. Our work started in September 1985 and was completed in March 1986. CEPD debated and further revised the draft, which was then sent on to SAA Council,

where the document was finally approved in February 1988. The longer time-lag was due to the pressure of other issues before these bodies, and the generally slow time in adopting such documents because of the largely voluntary nature of the professional association.

I want to emphasize several major points about the nature and purpose of the 1988 graduate education guidelines. First, they were primarily a *revision* of the 1977 guidelines. For this reason, they were an effort to flesh out the rather bare-bones nature of that document. Secondly, they were done as a *foundation* document for other work by the CEPD, just as CEPD has defined the present MAS degree guidelines proposal. The subcommittee deliberately avoided the practicum issue, for example, because it was perceived that the knowledge base for archival work had to be defined first, and only then could the practical application be considered. In addition, the three-person subcommittee achieved no consensus among themselves about the viability of the practicum as an aspect of archival education.²⁰ That CEPD did not move from the 1988 guidelines to related guidelines on the practicum and continuing education is, of course, evidence that this Committee has struggled with its mandate, and that these graduate guidelines were not adequate at the time to serve the profession.

Thirdly, my subcommittee strongly believed that the three-course sequence was totally inadequate, and that more comprehensive programmes were required. However, the subcommittee also believed that the American archival profession in 1986 was not ready to support the MAS degree. We opted instead to draft guidelines that were seen to be a temporary solution, a stepping stone towards more comprehensive programmes. The manner in which we chose to do this was to try to articulate a curriculum content that could not possibly be handled effectively in three courses.

Fourthly, we hoped that our work would inspire the profession to move forward to better graduate programmes. I suspect that this has been too sanguine a hope, graduate programmes being little different in 1992 from what they were in 1986 or 1988, except for the addition of a few more full-time archival educators. Of course, those schools that have hired such regular faculty have probably expanded, or at the least solidified, their archives programmes.

Fifthly, in 1986 we believed that one measure of better programmes was the employment of a full-time regular archival educator, removed from all the problems associated with the use of adjuncts, who often have little influence in the schools where they teach and themselves are usually more committed to their own archival programmes than to keeping up with archival research, writings, educational approaches, etc. All of this is reflected in the text of the finally adopted guidelines.

In hindsight, I can say that I think we were wrong in 1986. We should have moved towards more stringent graduate guidelines, if only to stimulate debate and to push us along. The 1988 guidelines most often seem to be the targets of criticism by both pro- and anti-MAS degree archivists and archival educators. More importantly, however, the guidelines have had little impact on individual certification of archivists or on the construction of graduate archival education programmes. Most education programmes have simply made do with a few courses and, as Tim Ericson has shown in two articles,²¹ assumed that they could cover all the curriculum content in a couple of courses (sometimes even a few lectures).²² SAA has also not used the guidelines as a basis for developing a coherent philosophy of continuing education, or even for the construction of its education directory. Schools continue to report a pot-pourri of offerings showing little discernible evidence of any relationship to the guidelines, and these schools are listed side by side with other programmes that have a stronger core curriculum (meaning an actual focus on archival work and theory). Despite an individual certification effort, American Archivists are as a profession still content to let others define our discipline and work; when we make efforts to do so ourselves we have to listen while misguided and misinformed colleagues charge us with being élitist or worse. It is also apparent that the guidelines have not been of much use in the basic debates about archival knowledge, theory, methodologies, and practice.

While I count the experience of working on these earlier guidelines as an interesting professional experience, useful for my later, unanticipated role as an archival educator, I also regard this effort largely as a professional failure. The lesson to be learned I believe, is to move on with the development of the MAS degree.

The American archival community needs to take some bold steps. We have been too cautious; we have not been opportunistic enough. We have also allowed the naysayers who tear away at our professional structures and mission to have far too much influence.²³

Evidence for the MAS Degree

It will be interesting to watch as the debate unfolds within the American archival profession about the proposed MAS degree guidelines and, of course, graduate archival education in general. I suspect that the debate will focus more on the structure and logistics of the degree than curriculum content, as I have already noted. I am also sure, however, that there will be debate that pits archival educators against other members of this group, concerning whether anything really was broken that needed fixing. We shall hear the old debates about whether such education should be located within library/information science schools or history faculties, whether there is enough substantial archival knowledge and theory to support such education, etc. I would like to suggest some of the evidence that supports the need for graduate programmes modelled on the MAS degree framework.

There has been a series of recent studies that support the need for the development of fully-fledged graduate education Masters in Archival Studies programmes. A few examples will suffice to reveal the nature of such findings. Alan D. Gabehart completed a study on employers' qualifications for entry-level archivists. Surveying 636 archival institutions, Gabehart found that

while almost half of the respondents said that the establishment of a graduate degree programme in archival science in the United States would probably be beneficial in some positions but would not be essential for the profession, one quarter claimed that the establishment of such a programme is essential for the advancement of the profession.

Gabehart then drew the following conclusion: "Consideration of this data suggests that, since the Society of American Archivists has already developed guidelines for graduate archival education programmes, a graduate degree programme in archival science be scrutinized as a possible alternative to its certification programme."²⁴ Extrapolating from his data, Gabehart also concluded that "more than 500 new full-time positions for archivists in the United States can be expected within five years."²⁵ This projection alone is enough to suggest the viability of the creation of half a dozen MAS degree programmes; if each programme annually graduated ten to twenty archivists holding the MAS, the vacant positions could be filled with such individuals and could support the further development of the MAS programmes. This research does not take into account, of course, the fact that many existing positions will be vacated and will also need to be filled, leading me to conclude that Gabehart's prediction may be a conservative one.

There is also the matter about what one can teach in the existing (pre-MAS) graduate archival education programmes in the United States. My personal experience, for example, suggests that even a cluster of seven courses at the University of Pittsburgh is still uneven in covering the full range of archival work and the knowledge base. Gaps persist when one steps back and looks at the overall content of the curriculum; at Pittsburgh we have two introductory courses that survey the basics of archival and records management, courses that cover in more depth basic archival functions such as appraisal, arrangement and description, reference, and preservation, and the beginnings of courses on specialized topics, such as scientific and technological archives. However, there is no course on electronic records management,²⁶ nor are we able to

consider archival public programmes. Moreover, the individual courses do not give me the sense of being anywhere near comprehensive. Archival appraisal is still cursory in many ways, despite being the subject of fourteen weeks of reading, discussion, research, lecturing, visiting, and testing. Frederick J. Stielow recently captured the nature of the dilemma I am trying to describe, when he examined how information technology fits into current archival curriculum, arguing that American archivists still confuse workshop training with graduate education:

The point is that archival graduate students have so much to debate, learn, research, and enjoy. The student experience should be designed with such Aristolean 'leisure' in mind and the hope that coming generations will push the archival knowledge base well beyond current comprehension."²⁷

James O'Toole argued along the same lines in his clustering concept, but his concept is predicated on the lamentable notion (lamented by him as well) that we can build such graduate curriculum only slowly and painfully, if at all. As he states, "a real course, whether in archives or any other professional discipline, is one that explores in some detail and at some leisure a defined and significant topic."²⁸ In other words, we are really talking about education here again.

Other studies, encouraging in that they are being done at all if not that they are particularly encouraging in their conclusions, also demonstrate how important the MAS degree will be to the education of future archivists. Donald L. DeWitt's recent study of the appearance of the MARC-AMC format in job advertisements, contrasted with how the format was being taught in graduate programmes revealed a significant gap between the two; while the US MARC-AMC format has become standard in job advertisements, it is being taught unevenly in the graduate programmes. As De Witt states, "only 55% of the programmes offered training in the MARC AMC format, and only 40% offered hands-on training using an online cataloging tool."²⁹ The reason is probably that it is difficult to squeeze much more into a typical, few-course sequence. DeWitt sees this as a challenge for future graduate archival education programmes; he could have been considerably more critical in his assessment.

We can also see this in other basic archival areas. A recent study that I completed found that while archivists in the United States had discussed in great detail the challenges and problems posed by electronic information technology for nearly thirty years, only a few electronic records programmes had actually developed. Why? I think the answer is quite simple. There have been no suitable educational structures to support the formation of specialized electronic records archivists. While continuing education efforts have been useful, they have not met the need. Only a few courses are taught on this topic. Graduate programmes, moreover, are simply not large or comprehensive enough to accommodate the integration of enough content on electronic records management.³⁰ Although Terry Cook has recently written about the arrival of a "second generation of electronic records archives" in North America,³¹ I suggest that we still lack the mechanisms to sustain this initiative in any serious manner.

In a more far-ranging essay, Elsie Freeman has argued that American archivists have ignored the concept of public programmes and public service in what we teach. Freeman lays the blame on the archivist's outlook:

I see an archivist who focuses on organizational rationality and not client needs; who still assumes that all researchers are, or ought to be, trained as he or she is trained, either with equivalent academic degrees or, lacking these, with extraordinary insight into how archives are organized and how archivists think; whose activities still reflect a preoccupation with records as objects, not as information developed in the context of time.³²

Freeman is correct, of course, that the public service aspect has been neglected, but I think the reason assigned is incorrect. The subject is not taught because there are few courses available to most archival educators, many archival educators are adjuncts as much concerned with fos-

tering student employees for their own programmes, and the perceived greatest need is reducing processing backlogs (hence the overemphasis on arrangement and description that Freeman discusses). Another reason may be the timidity of American archivists about believing that there is anything to teach.

It will also be only in full MAS degree programmes that adequate grounding in archival science can be provided for students. I suggested this above when I commented on the difficulty of fitting in basic courses on archival functions, related disciplines, etc. The fact is even more obvious when one steps back and considers the full dimensions of archival theory and knowledge. No experienced professional archivist who understands what he or she is doing and possesses the requisite educational background will deny that there is a substantial body of such knowledge that can only be considered in the classroom of graduate programmes, or the rare specialized and intensive institute or seminar. Luciana Duranti has best captured the dynamics of what we are meant to know:

To say that archivology is a science is to say that it comprises a theory and a methodology. If *theory* is defined as the knowledge derived from the analysis of fundamental ideas, *archival theory* is the analysis of the ideas we hold about the nature of the material we work with. Analysis involves examining the meaning of each idea, determining what it is and what it amounts to. This analysis of ideas about *what* archival material is informs subsidiary ideas about *how* to treat such material. These latter ideas can be distinguished from the former ones by calling them *methodological*. The term *science* is useful because it is commonly divided into its *pure* and *applied* aspects. The pure side comprises theoretical and methodological ideas, while the applied side embraces the many uses made of those ideas in real situations. Archivists commonly refer to these applications as practice. Thus, theory, methodology, and practice constitute together the pure and applied science of archives.³³

It will only be when we have students educated to think as archivists—believing that their repositories are laboratories for pure and applied research—and graduate education programmes taught by regular archival educators that we shall see this develop in the United States. It has already done so in Europe and Canada.

Conclusion: Some Implications for Adopting the MAS Degree in the United States

I want to conclude with my own assessment of the implications of adopting the MAS degree as concept, and of developing graduate archival education programmes that really meet our needs. This is not a comprehensive list, but it is intended to emphasize some of the more important points.

(1) *It will enable the SAA to develop a full and coherent plan for archival education on all levels.* Canadian adoption of the MAS degree has clearly supported the ability to do so. The ACA first developed MAS degree guidelines as the basis for all graduate education, influencing the development of the first MAS degree programme at the University of British Columbia. Guidelines for post-employment and continuing education and training programmes were next developed. Now the ACA possesses a full plan to consider the accreditation of education programmes, the employment of an education officer, etc.³⁴ All of this should sound far more logical than what archivists have stumbled around with in the United States. Debate among American archivists can be fierce and ferocious on the specifics of the MAS degree, but there should be little discussion about the validity of such a degree itself.

(2) *The adoption of the MAS degree proposal will enable the American archival profession to foster the development of its own knowledge base.* Please do not mistake what I am suggesting here. I strongly believe that there is a broad theoretical and methodological basis for archival work that requires us to have comprehensive, rather than ad hoc, educational programmes. Liv

Mykland of Norway, at the recent ICA Congress, described the problem this way: "The lack of good educational possibilities is the Achilles' heal [*sic*] of the profession. It is vital that we develop our own knowledge; we cannot pick it up from other disciplines and professions, however much their knowledge might fertilize our own."³⁵ This is not new to American archivists of course, since Frank Burke stated it quite clearly in 1981.³⁶ However, it is obvious that while the degree of development which occurred in graduate archival education in the 1980s was substantial, it has not been enough. Pushing hard for the MAS degree guidelines, followed by the establishment of such programmes might be the exact impetus needed.

(3) *Adoption of the MAS degree programmes, given their greater abundance of courses, will ensure a better initial preparation of entry-level archivists for the increasingly standardized work of the archivist.* In the United States we have seen the impact of descriptive standardization on other archival functions. Increasingly, American archivists are making efforts to be more precise in their use of terminology, and there has even been some jettisoning of our peculiar ideas that functions such as appraisal should be more art than science. At the ICA Congress, Leopold Auer of Austria echoed what the SAA Committee on Terminology has stated: "Professionalism demands precision which in turn implies standardization."³⁷ We can add another demand or implication, of course: better education. A thorough grounding in standardization can be accomplished only when there is a comprehensive set of courses to guide a student through the terminology. The same is true for introducing a student to the standards. Hervé Bastien of France noted in his ICA Congress paper on the standardization of appraisal practice, that the "more standardized the process becomes, the more intelligence it requires."³⁸ We can again add, the more intelligence and standardization involved, the more education is needed. Yet, what archivists have done in the United States is to paste together "quickie" workshops and institutes in order to try to bring everyone up to speed. The dangers are obvious: we make the functions look easier; we create the illusion of being able to create instant archivists; and, perhaps even more importantly, we simply confuse. I am convinced that a series of one-day workshops on the archival documentation strategy model in which I participated between 1987 and 1991 had very mixed results, primarily because the archivists attending had weak knowledge of their own appraisal theory, methodology, and practice. The condition and status of graduate archival education in the United States is certainly close to the root of this problem.

(4) *Adoption of the MAS degree guidelines will focus attention on the proper credentials for entry into and advancement within the archival profession.* Just a few short years ago I made some sanguine statements about the role of the individual certification programme adopted in the United States: "Certification can result in the more precise definition of archival work, continued improvement of archival literature, and creation of a higher profile of archival administration; in short, certification can be a powerful impetus for more and improved archival education programmes."³⁹ This has not happened, unfortunately, and I see no evidence that it will happen at any time in the future. Why? Canadian archivists have suggested one reason why: American archivists have put the cart before the horse. Terry Eastwood recently stated, rather bluntly, that "it is difficult to see certification strengthening competence in the absence of strong and uniform standards of education."⁴⁰ I now am convinced that he is right. The other reason is that many of the archivists who have joined the Academy of Certified Archivists simply reflect the views of those who have low opinions of their own body of knowledge and the viability of graduate education; they are working to keep professional standards at a minimum.

It would be easy to enumerate other implications. One could address the fact that not all graduate archival education programmes are equal in their capacity to educate working archivists, that we shall need to define the levels of education and training required for certain kinds of archival positions, and that we shall need to consider some manner of accreditation process in order to support the development of legitimate MAS degree programmes.

The one thing I am certain about, however, is that there is no hope of meeting the objectives of better graduate archival education if American archivists cannot move towards the kind of MAS degree programmes at work in Canada, and now being proposed by the SAA CEPD. It is hard for me to imagine why any professional archivist would oppose the development of MAS degree programmes.

Notes

- * Paper originally presented at the 56th Annual Meeting of the Society of American Archivists, Montreal, 15 September 1992.
- 1 The final version of the draft guidelines was published in the May 1993 issue of the SAA newsletter, *Archival Outlook*, soliciting comment from the archival profession by 31 August 1993.
- 2 Association of Canadian Archivists, Education Committee, "Guidelines for the Development of a Two-Year Curriculum for a Master of Archival Studies Programme (December 1988)," *Archivaria* 29 (Winter 1989-90), pp. 128-41.
- 3 "Guidelines for the Development of a Curriculum for a Master of Archival Studies," p. 2.
- 4 James M. O'Toole, "Curriculum Development in Archival Education: A Proposal," *American Archivist* 53 (Summer 1990), pp. 462-63.
- 5 Angelika Menne-Haritz, "Archival Education: Meeting the Needs of Society in the Twenty-First Century," (Montreal, XIIth ICA Congress, 1992), pp. 6-11.
- 6 Ann Pederson, "Writing and Research," (Montreal, XIIth ICA Congress, 1992), p. 4.
- 7 "Guidelines," p. 4.
- 8 Tom Nesmith, "Hugh Taylor's Contextual Idea for Archives and the Foundation of Graduate Education in Archival Studies," in Barbara L. Craig, ed., *The Archival Imagination: Essays in Honour of Hugh A. Taylor* (Ottawa, 1992), p. 18.
- 9 "Guidelines," pp. 2 and 4.
- 10 *Ibid.*, p. 8.
- 11 *Ibid.*, p. 8.
- 12 *Ibid.*, p. 4. This statement was moved to the Curriculum section, but I have retained it in my paper as originally discussed.
- 13 *Ibid.*, p. 4.
- 14 "Committee Guidelines: Committee on Education and Professional Development," *SAA Council Handbook* (June 1990).
- 15 Society of American Archivists, Committee on Education and Professional Development, "Discussion Paper on Archival Education," [June 1992].
- 16 *Ibid.*
- 17 *Ibid.*
- 18 "Society of American Archivists Guidelines for Graduate Archival Education Programs," *American Archivist* 51 (Summer 1988), pp. 380-89.
- 19 Paul Conway, "Archival Education and the Need for Full-Time Faculty," *American Archivist* 51 (Summer 1988), pp. 262-65.
- 20 In my *American Archival Analysis: The Recent Development of the Archival Profession in the United States* (Metuchen, 1990), pp. 125-29, I have described this problem in more detail.
- 21 Timothy Ericson, "Professional Associations and Archival Education: A Different Role, or a Different Theater?" *American Archivist* 51 (Summer 1988), pp. 298-311 and "Abolish the Recent: The Progress of Archival Education," *Journal of Education for Librarianship and Information Science* 34 (Winter 1993), pp. 25-37.
- 22 The new guidelines emphatically state that "archival education can no longer consist of a few courses of 'introduction' to archives, records management, and conservation. It must be a coherent and autonomous whole having at its core the essence of archival knowledge;" "Guidelines," p. 2.
- 23 I am not arguing for extreme restrictive barriers to be erected to entry in the archival profession (I like the broader sense of an archives "community"), but I am worried that many think that this means there is no basis for archival theory, methodology, and practice. I see the archival community consisting of professionals, para-professionals, technicians, and support staff, but I do not see it as composed of individuals deemed to be equals regardless of education and experience.

- 24 Alan D. Gabehart, "Qualifications Desired by Employers for Entry-Level Archivists in the United States" (Ed.D. dissertation, Texas Tech University, 1991). An article of the same title, from which I have extracted this quotation (p. 439), was published in the Summer 1992 issue of the *American Archivist*.
- 25 *Ibid.*, pp. 435, 437.
- 26 The records management course is being expanded into an electronic records management programme and offered, in this revised form, for the first time in the Fall 1993 term.
- 27 Frederick J. Stielow, "The Impact of Information Technology on Archival Theory: A Discourse on an Automation Pedagogy," *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 34 (Winter 1993), p. 62.
- 28 "Curriculum Development," p. 463.
- 29 Donald L. De Witt, "The Impact of the MARC AMC Format on Archival Education and Employment During the 1980s," *Midwestern Archivist* 16, no. 2 (1991), p. 83.
- 30 Richard J. Cox, "Archivists, Electronic Records, and the Modern Information Age: Re-Examining Archival Institutions and Education in the United States, With Special Attention to State Archives and State Archivists" (Ph.D dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1992).
- 31 Terry Cook, "Easy To Byte, Harder To Chew: The Second Generation of Electronic Records Archives," *Archivaria* 33 (Winter 1991-92), pp. 202-16.
- 32 Elsie Freeman, "Soap and Education: Archival Training, Public Service and the Profession - An Essay," *Midwestern Archivist* 16, no. 2 (1991), p. 88.
- 33 Luciana Duranti, "The Archival Body of Knowledge: Archival Theory, Method, and Practice, and Graduate and Continuing Education," *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 34 (Winter 1993), p. 10.
- 34 See Association of Canadian Archivists, *Education Programme and Plan* (Ottawa, 1992) for what is being proposed for Canadian archival education. This plan cites other relevant publications, including the occasional paper on the MAS degree published in a revised form in 1989.
- 35 Liv Mykland, "Protection and Integrity: The Archivist's Identity and Professionalism," (Montreal, XIIth ICA Congress, 1992), p. 9.
- 36 Frank G. Burke, "The Future Course of Archival Theory in the United States," *American Archivist* 44 (Winter 1981), pp. 40-46.
- 37 Leopold Auer, "Standardizing Archival Terminology," (Montreal, XIIth ICA Congress, 1992), p. 6.
- 38 Hervé Bastien, "Standardizing the Appraisal and Selection Process," (Montreal, XIIth ICA Congress, 1992), p. 8.
- 39 Cox, *American Archival Analysis*, p. 104.
- 40 Terry Eastwood, "Building Standards of Competence," *Janus* 1992, no. 2, p. 213.