Finding and Using Archival Resources: A Cross-Canada Survey of Historians Studying Canadian History*

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RÉSUMÉ Les auteures présentent dans cet article les résultats d'un questionnaire postal de 2001 (en anglais et en français) sur l'usage par les historiens des ressources d'archives. La population ciblée par cette étude était constituée de professeurs dans les départements d'histoire d'universités canadiennes ayant pour domaine de recherche l'histoire du Canada. Le sondage a exploré leurs pratiques en recherche d'information au sein des institutions d'archives, les a invité à évaluer leur expérience de recherche et à faire connaître leurs préférences quant aux développements futurs. Les conclusions indiquent que, pour trouver et utiliser des sources dans ce début de 21e siècle, les connaissances et l'expertise des archivistes sont toujours nécessaires.

ABSTRACT This paper reports the results of a 2001 postal questionnaire (English and French) that gathered information about historians' use of archival resources. The population for this report consisted of faculty members in history departments in degree-granting institutions in Canada whose area of interest is the history of Canada. The survey probed their current information-seeking practices in archives, invited assessment of their experience doing archival research, and sought their preferences for developments in the future. The conclusions indicate that finding and using sources in the early twenty-first century continues to invoke the knowledge and expertise of archivists.

Introduction

The exponential growth of digital resources that can be accessed from personal computers has implications, both for archives that provide primary sources for consultation and for users who rely on sources for their research and benefit by the services an archives provides.[1] Recent technological innovations, coupled with a re-thinking of many archival functions – from appraisal to preservation – foster a discernible climate of change that will be

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1 Association for History and Computing Conference, "Recasting the Past: Digital Histories," 27 November 2004.

or is already affecting archives and their services. Demand for content to be made available electronically is rapidly reshaping well-established practices, such as preservation copying and archival reference, and inevitably will affect assumptions about archives users that are based largely on past experience. Current and future users are acknowledged stakeholders in Canadian archives. Their needs for services and their preferences for sources and access should play an important role in shaping the emerging archives and role of archivists in the twenty-first century.

Our goal in undertaking the research reported in this article was to collect data about the practices of one clearly recognized group of archives users so that we might understand better what they perceive to be their needs and preferences. Our questions asked for information, for opinions, and for concrete examples of experiences: our intention was neither to promote nor criticize archivists or their practices: rather we endeavoured to establish a reasonably accurate profile of one group of users' views and beliefs. We did not engage in any discussion with them about their responses nor did we censor any comments and observations we received.

Among the groups that regularly use archives are lawyers, geographers, town planners, and graduate students from a number of disciplines, many varieties of historians, civic action groups, and genealogists. The latter are acknowledged to be the most numerous users of archives as more people every year pursue family ties, clarifying the dates of major life milestones of relatives they know and seeking evidence of unknown or unremembered connections and their histories. Genealogists constitute a significant portion of regular and repeat users especially in repositories holding evidence of civil identity, property ownership, and records of religious affiliations or confession. Nevertheless, we chose to investigate historians: as a group, they constitute a small but nonetheless important group of users because their work has an impact far beyond their own academic communities, saturating textbooks used in public education and influencing new generations of undergraduate and graduate students. Historical literature in its popular and academic forms has a social impact far beyond the numbers who actually visit archives and consult their materials. More recently, archive sources mediated by historians reach even larger and more diverse audiences through films, television broadcasts, and popular fiction based largely on the records preserved by archives. Historians, as a result, are clients whose work has effects that far outweigh their numbers. For all of these reasons we chose them as the user group to investigate, to develop a clear view of their needs, opinions, preferences, and practices in seeking information about archival sources, using archival services and finding aids, and pursuing research using either original materials or copies of them. Historians often are knowledgeable users, especially of the historical contexts of documents. Many take time to explore topics and sources in considerable detail. As a result, they are, in many ways, sophisti-

cated users of resources and services. Consequently, exploring their experiences may provide a baseline against which to research the experiences of other groups, who have less knowledge of context, may be unfamiliar with research into primary sources, and have little time to accumulate this knowledge about sources and systems.

The connections between archives and historians have dimensions beyond that of provider and consumer. Most archivists have had some historical training, either formally at college or informally as an integral part of their job. However, by the late twentieth century, archival responsibilities increasingly rested less obviously on knowledge of history, and more on methods of practice informed by theory, and on rapidly developing standards for access, description, and appraisal. This change in the make-up of the archival practitioner was stimulated by the development of graduate professional archival education programs in the university.[2] Educators sought to develop programs and courses that struck the right balance between historical knowledge and the equally important knowledge of archival practices. Looking beyond education program architectures and professional standards for performance, archivists clearly must have a multi-dimensional sense of history to shape their notions of archives and of appropriate professional functions, whether this sense is consciously articulated or unconsciously assumed. Systematic and planned appraisal and acquisition of sources are aspects of archives work that most directly reflect the impact of historical interests, discourse, and debates, and in their turn, affect the nature of the materials that are available eventually to users.[3]

2 The different roles of archivist and historian in treating records and on the value of history in the education of archivists have a substantial literature. From among many titles, the following selection illustrates three themes: the differences in the responsibilities of historian and archivist; the balance of subjects for the professional education of an archivist for modern practice; and the role of formal historical training in archival education. Felix Hull, "The Archivist Should Not be a Historian," *Society of Archivists Journal* 6, no. 5 (1980), pp. 253–59; George Bolotenko, "Archivists and Historians: Keepers of the Well," *Archivaria* 16 (Summer 1983), pp. 5–25; Patrick Dunae, "Archives and the Spectre of 1984: Bolotenko Applauded," *Archivaria* 17 (Winter 1983–84), pp. 286–90; Terry Eastwood, "The Origins and Aims of the Master of Archival Studies Programme at the University of British Columbia," *Archivaria* 16 (Summer 1983), pp. 35–52. An entire issue of *American Archivist* (51, no. 3, Summer 1988) is devoted to the topic of archival education internationally. See also James M. O'Toole, "Curriculum Development in Archival Education: A Proposal," *American Archivist* 53, no. 3 (Summer 1990), pp. 460–67; Tyler O. Walters, "Possible Educations for Archivists: Integrating Graduate Archival Education with Public History Programs," *American Archivist* 54, no. 4 (Fall 1991), pp. 484–93; Richard Cox, "Education and the Archivist: View and Reviews," *American Archivist* 55, no. 4 (Fall 1992), pp. 526–29; Paule Réne-Bazin, "The Future of European Archival Education," *American Archivist* 55, no. 1 (Winter 1993), pp. 58–65. *American Archivist* 56, no. 4 (Fall 1993) features a special report "Historians and Archivists: Educating the Next Generation," pp. 714–49.

3 Two diverse contributions to the discussion of the connections between historical discourses

Although archivists exercise a pivotal responsibility in selecting records for continuing uses, they also discharge related responsibilities that are equally important ingredients in the archival mix. These include preserving the records they choose with careful attention to maintaining their original identity and integrity intact, and supporting many types of user in finding the sources and information they need. Historians are only one among many groups of user whose research coalesces around records and sources and whose needs have to be considered in a balanced mix of services. The notion of trust, of a trusted professional who provides a service, and of trustworthiness, especially of the records and of other types of historical sources, whether these be textual, graphic, or sound, is important for archivists and for users. The bond of trust is established, in part, by the methods that archivists use in discharging their responsibilities over time. These include deploying the critical and research skills that they share with historians, to which are added knowledge and skill in appraisal, description of sources, exhibition design, reference services, and records management. Through in-depth research of procedures, functions, structures, customs, and technologies archivists locate records in their many contexts of creation. They ensure that these lines of provenance and connectivity among documents and functions are preserved uncorrupted and undertake to keep them visible and understandable to succeeding generations. This is accomplished by deploying an array of strategies from arrangement, through description to preservation, duplication, and diffusion.

This paper reports the data from a survey of historians studying Canadian history and addresses such questions as: What are the main thematic interests and areas of specialization of historians today? What topics and time periods are historians pursuing currently in archives? What types of archives do historians use and how frequently do they use them? What sources do historians use to locate material to support their research? What materials do historians find most useful? What barriers do they encounter as users? What formats do they like most and least, and which ones do they find most useful? What is their experience in assessing the authenticity and reliability of the sources they use in archives? What are the concerns that archivists need to address as they move more sources and services to the World Wide Web?

Literature Review

In the last ten years interest in studying the behaviour and preferences of archival users has increased. For example, the Spring/Summer 2003 issue of *Amer-*

and archival acquisitions are Elizabeth Lockwood, "'Imponderable matters': The Influence of New Trends in History on Appraisal at the National Archives," *American Archivist* 53, no. 3 (Summer 1990), pp. 394–405; and John Roberts, "Practice Makes Perfect: Theory Makes Theorists," *Archivaria* 37 (Spring 1994), pp. 111–21.

ican Archivist had a special section on "Users and Archival Research" with articles by Tibbo,[4] Yakel and Torres,[5] Duff and Johnson,[6] and a commentary on the relationship between archivists and users by Craig.[7] However, only Tibbo's article focussed solely on historians and gathered data by means of a questionnaire. Tibbo surveyed 700 historians to discover how they searched for archival material. She found 98 per cent of respondents followed leads in citations; 79 per cent used published bibliographies; 57 per cent consulted documentary editions and only 76 per cent searched printed finding aids. On the other hand, 90 per cent of respondents indicated they used print finding aids when visiting archives and approximately 75 per cent visited an archives to gain advice. Finally 43 per cent of respondents used the Internet to locate material.

Although five other surveys, by Anderson, Stieg Dalton and Charnigo, Stevens, Stieg, and Uva,[8] have investigated how American historians access or use research material, only one previous study by Beattie[9] examined the information-seeking behaviour of Canadian historians. Beattie surveyed historians studying women's history in Canada and found that respondents used archivists, footnotes, and colleagues to locate information more frequently than they used formal tools.[10] However, though informal sources were more frequently *used* by these historians "they are not more *useful* than the formal descriptive tools available."[11] She also found that though they relied heavily

4 Helen R. Tibbo, "Primarily History in America: How U.S. Historians Search for Primary Materials at the Dawn of the Digital Age," *American Archivist* 66, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2003), pp. 5–50.

5 Elizabeth Yakel and Deborah A. Torres, "AI: Archival Intelligence and User Expertise," *American Archivist* 66, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2003), pp. 51–78.

6 Wendy M. Duff and Catherine A. Johnson, "Where is the List with All the Names? Information-Seeking Behaviour of Genealogists," *American Archivist* 66, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2003), pp. 79–95.

7 Barbara L. Craig, "Perimeters with Fences? Or Thresholds with Doors? Two Views of a Border," *American Archivist* 66, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2003), pp. 96–101.

8 Each of these studies was published: Deborah Lines Andersen, "Academic Historians, Electronic Information Access Technologies, and the World Wide Web: A Longitudinal Study of Factors Affecting Use and Barriers to that Use," *Journal of the Association for History and Computing* 1, no. 1 (1998), available electronically at <http://mcel.pacificu.edu/history/jahcI1/Anderson/Anderson.HTML>; Margaret Stieg Dalton and Laurie Charnigo, "Historians and their Information Sources," *College and Research Libraries* 65, no. 5 (September 2004), pp. 400–25; Michael E. Stevens, "The Historian and Archival Finding Aids," *Georgia Archive* 5 (Winter 1977), pp. 64–75; Margaret F. Stieg, "The Information of [sic] Needs of Historians," *College and Research Libraries* 42, no. 6 (1981), pp. 549–60; and Peter A. Uva, *Information Gathering Habits of Academic Historians: Report of the Pilot Study* (Syracuse, 1997).

9 Diane L. Beattie, "An Archival User Study: Researchers in the Field of Women's History," *Archivaria* 29 (Winter 1989/90), pp. 33–50.

10 Ibid., p. 43.

11 Ibid., p. 44.

on textual materials, they were "turning increasingly to non-textual forms of documentation such as photographs and oral histories."[12]

Research Design

The data on which this paper is based was collected via a questionnaire mailed in the spring of 2001 to all historians in history departments in degree granting institutions in Canada. This paper reports only on the 173 responses from those whose sole specialty is Canadian history. Findings from the entire response set (600 historians) and a description of the administration of the questionnaire survey are provided in Duff, Craig, and Cherry (2004).[13]

The Questionnaire

The questionnaire had twenty-three questions, grouped into four sections: A) questions about the historian's current research; B) questions about the historian's use of archival sources in her current research; C) questions about judging authenticity and reliability of archival resources; and D) questions about the historian's area of specialization, experience with archival materials, and demographic information about the historian. If the historian's current research did not involve the use of archival sources, she completed sections C and D only. A copy of the questionnaire is provided in Appendix A. The questionnaire was available in English and French. Seventeen per cent of respondents returned a French version of the questionnaire.

Profile of Respondents

Table 1 shows a profile of the respondents by gender, age, and academic rank.[14] The profile is one of a group that is overwhelmingly male (71%), and over forty-five years of age (73%). The group is also senior in rank: 45 per cent were Full Professors and only 16 per cent Assistant Professors. This matches fairly closely the profile of full-time faculty in Canada in 1999–2000: 72 per cent were male and 66 per cent were forty-five or over.[15] The profile mirrors the general population, with the preponderance (70%) in the post-Second World War (age 46–65) boom generation. Fewer younger historians are

12 Ibid., p. 42.

13 Wendy Duff, Barbara Craig, and Joan Cherry, "Historians' Use of Archival Sources: Promises and Pitfalls of the Digital Age," *Public Historian* 26, no. 2 (Spring 2004), pp. 9–22.

14 This profile is very similar to the profile of all historians who responded to the survey (n = 600).

15 CAUT, *Almanac of Post-Secondary Education in Canada*, 2d ed. (2003), Table 4.7, <http://www.caut.ca/english/publications/>, accessed 21 January 2004.

Table 1: Gender, Age, and Academic Rank of Respondents

Gender	Female	29%
(*n* = 167)	Male	71%
Age	26–35	5%
(*n* = 171)	36–45	22%
	46–55	36%
	56–65	34%
	Over 65	3%
Rank	Lecturer	6%
(*n* = 167)	Assistant	12%
	Associate	35%
	Full	45%
	Emeritus	2%

Table 2: Number of Years Respondents Have Been Doing Research in Archival Institutions

Ten years or less	5%
11–20 years	29%
21–30 years	31%
More than 30 years	35%

working in the university – a graphic confirmation of stagnation in hiring that occurred in the late 1970s and 1980s.

Ninety-four per cent of these respondents reported that their current research involves the use of archival sources. As a group, the respondents have been doing research in archival institutions for many years. As shown in Table 2, 66 per cent have been doing so for over twenty years, while only 5 per cent of the respondents have been doing research in archival institutions for ten years or less.

Areas of specialization

We asked respondents (Question 15) to provide information about their specialization in terms of the theme or themes that best described their area(s) of interest. We provided thirteen options and allowed space for respondents to write in other categories they believed better captured the thematic focus of their research interests. They were encouraged to check all categories that they believed applied to their research. Fewer than 20 per cent of total respondents

indicated that they were pursuing either business (13%), First Nations (16%), medical (10%), military (15%), science and technology (10%), or transportation (5%) history. Between 20 and 50 per cent of respondents replied that their thematic interests were cultural (45%), economic (23%), gender (33%), labour (28%), political (40%), religious communities (20%) or were better classified in another category (31% other). The most numerous themes or subjects entered in the category "other" were education and youth, family and childhood, health care, the environment, legal history, urban history, the North, and the history of ideas. But the largest number of responses was received for social history: 64 per cent of respondents to the survey indicated that the general theme of social history and society best characterized their research and their historical interests.

Topics of Research

One hundred and sixty respondents (160) provided us with a title and a brief description of their topic of research (Question 1). These cover a wide spectrum of interests and are not easily amenable to classification by subject; however, the following topics are examples selected to demonstrate the breadth of historical interests: "community identity formation," "employment discrimination [during wartime]," "social identities of [political party members] across Canada in the 1930s and 1940s," "charitable fund-raising in Canada," "land use [of indigenous peoples] in [areas of the North]," "gambling in [areas of Canada]," "drinking in Canada," "history of adoption and family," "impact of ethnic studies programmes in [selected] Canadian universities," "consumption and exchange in material life in [rural and village society]," "group biography of [military leadership]," "impact of health insurance on [women religious]," "history of [a zoo]," "development of human rights since W[orld] W[ar] Two," "furniture manufacture and furniture as cultural artefact," and "milk production, consumption, and marketing in [an urban area]."

Time Period

Question 17 asked respondents to indicate the time period that embraced their research: while we used the century as the unit of chronology, we asked respondents to indicate each century that applied to their research. Three per cent responded that their interest is in the sixteenth century or earlier while 8 per cent are interested in history in the seventeenth century. Twenty-three per cent are studying the eighteenth century. Most Canadian historians, over 70 per cent, are studying topics in the nineteenth (73%) and twentieth (83%) centuries. The historians also indicated which area(s) of Canada they studied. Table 3 shows the specific geographic areas. The largest group study Central Canada (41%). In this group, many respondents crossed out "Central Canada"

Table 3: Percentage of Respondents Who Study Specific Areas of Canada
(Respondents could indicate more than one area)

Atlantic Canada	26%
Central Canada	41%
Prairies	18%
West Coast	10%
North	5%
Not applicable	3%

and wrote in "Quebec," suggesting that the history of Central Canada is not a coherent or uniform area of study.

Archives Used by Respondents

Respondents to this survey consulted numerous archives: 30 per cent used six to ten institutions, and 51 per cent, two to five institutions. They also used many different types of archival institutions as shown in Table 4. The greatest number of respondents used government archives: 90 per cent used provincial archives, and 83 per cent consulted federal archives. University archives were consulted by 80 per cent of respondents. Other types of archives were used by far fewer respondents: just over half used municipal archives (53%) and religious institutions (51%). Only 8 per cent of the respondents reported using First Nations archives.

Government archives are extremely important institutions for historical research. Provincial and federal archives have extensive holdings so the high ranking is not surprising. However, more than half the respondents reported using municipal archives, though these holdings tend to be more limited. The findings also indicated that university archives play a vital role in historical research though once again these collections are narrower in scope. Perhaps what university archives lose in breadth they make up in availability, or their collections may be particularly valuable to the study of social history, a subdiscipline of 64 per cent of the respondents. On the other hand, though corporate archives often restrict access to their collections and fewer than 20 per cent of the respondents indicated they studied business history, more than a quarter (28%) of the respondents reported using business archives. Finally, only 8 per cent of respondents reported using First Nations archives even though 16 per cent of the respondents indicated that they specialized in First Nations history as noted earlier. The reasons for the relatively low use of First Nations archives are unknown.

Table 4: Type of Archival Institution Used (percentage of respondents who reported using each type of institution)

Provincial government	90%
Federal government	82%
University	80%
Municipal government	53%
Religious institutions	51%
Museum	43%
Historical society	36%
Corporate (e.g., business, hospital)	28%
Other institutions	13%
Other governmental level	10%
First Nations	8%

Sources for Becoming Aware of and Locating Material

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of twelve types of sources in becoming aware of and locating material needed for their research. Sources included both published and unpublished formal sources as well as many informal sources. Table 5 shows the percentage of respondents who rated each source as *Very Important* or *Somewhat Important*.

Both archival sources and archival finding aids received extremely high ratings: 95 per cent of the respondents rating archival sources as either *Very Important* or *Somewhat Important* and 94 per cent of respondents rating archival finding aids this way. Eighty-seven per cent of respondents rated footnotes and archivists as either *Very Important* or *Somewhat Important*. In comparison, fewer than 30 per cent of respondents indicated that abstracting services (29%) and students (27%) were either *Very Important* or *Somewhat Important* sources for becoming aware of or locating material. The World Wide Web received a rating of either *Very Important* or *Somewhat Important* from almost half (49%) of the respondents.[16]

Historians appear to depend upon an informal network for finding material for their research. The network includes archivists and colleagues and is supplemented with leads from archival material and footnotes. Formal sources

16 Using the full data set, we compared the data supplied by respondents whose sole speciality is the study of the history of Canada only (n = 173), against the data supplied by respondents who do not study Canada (n = 296). While 49 per cent of the group whose sole speciality was Canada rated the World Wide Web as either *Very* or *Somewhat Important*, only 35 per cent of the group who did not report Canada as one of their specialities rated the World Wide Web this highly.

Table 5: Percentage of Respondents Who Consider the Following Sources as Either *Very Important* or *Somewhat Important* in Becoming Aware of and Locating Needed Material

Archival Sources	95%
Archival Finding Aids	94%
Archivists	87%
Footnotes or Other References	87%
Colleagues	78%
Published Bibliographies	67%
Book Reviews	52%
World Wide Web	49%
Indexing Publications	40%
Abstracting Services	29%
Students	27%

that facilitate access to published material, such as indexes and bibliographies, received lower ratings of importance than formal sources that provide access to primary material. Ninety-four per cent of respondents considered finding aids as *Very* or *Somewhat Important,* but published bibliographies, the highest ranked formal source to published material, was rated as *Very* or *Somewhat Important* by only 67 per cent of respondents.[17] Perhaps the degree of importance is not so much the type of source, i.e., whether it is formal or informal, but the type of material it helps locate. The findings from this study suggest that sources that provide access to unpublished material, e.g., finding aids, archivists, footnotes, and colleagues are more important than sources that provide access to secondary material, e.g., published bibliographies, indexes, and abstracting services. This conclusion is consistent with the findings of the Getty Online Searching Project,[18] which found that though humanities scholars were satisfied with their traditional methods for finding published information they wanted databases that provided access to original or primary materials.[19] However, the data from this study are not consistent with all of the findings from a study by Stieg Dalton and Charnigo. They found that when

17 Some bibliographies may include archival sources. For example, Carl Spadoni's *Bibliography of Stephen Leacock* (Toronto, 1998) refers to the Leacock fonds in the "Sources Consulted" section and also includes citations to archival records in the section on "Sources for lost leads." But most bibliographies focus on published rather than unpublished sources.

18 The Getty Online Searching Project studied the use of on-line databases by Visiting Scholars at the Getty Research Institute.

19 Marcia Bates, "The Cascade Interactions in the Digital Library Interface," *Information Processing and Management* 38 (2002), pp. 381–400.

seeking primary sources historians frequently used finding aids and footnotes but relatively few – only ten – historians (4%) stated they frequently used archivists for this task.[20] The reasons for the discrepancies between the two surveys are unknown. Stieg Dalton and Charnigo's study surveyed American historians and inquired about the use of both primary and secondary material while our survey addressed Canadian historians and inquired only about their use of archival material.

Importance of Types of Material for Current Research

One question asked respondents to rate the importance of eight types of material for their current research. Table 6 shows the percentage of respondents who rated each type of material as *Very Important* or *Somewhat Important*.

Three types of textual records received very high scores of importance. Ninety-seven per cent of respondents rated manuscript records as either *Very Important* or *Somewhat Important,* 96 per cent indicated that published primary sources were either *Very* or *Somewhat Important* and 91 per cent of respondents rated typescript records this way. For non-textual records, photographs received the rating of *Very* or *Somewhat Important* by 76 per cent of respondents, followed by maps (52%), films and moving imaging (34%), sound recordings (29%), and finally architectural plans (28%). These findings need to be viewed in conjunction with the time-periods of interest – certain materials did not exist prior to the nineteenth century and 33 per cent of respondents' research related to the eighteenth century or earlier.

As Beattie's study also indicated, textual records including manuscripts, printed records, and typescripts are the most important type of material for the majority of respondents.[21] This finding is not surprising considering that textual records is the most predominantly held type of material in archives, and the majority of records documenting the early history of Canada before Confederation are manuscripts and printed sources. But the age of the records is not the only indicator of importance. Photographs, though a more modern type of material, received higher ratings of importance than maps. Furthermore, films and moving images received higher ratings of importance than sound recordings or architectural plans although the oldest moving image held in archives only dates from the 1890s. The importance of some types of material is dependent upon the time period researched. For example, photographs have little importance to historians studying the sixteenth century, but historians studying the late twentieth century may rate photographs as very important. Of the 173 respondents in this survey, 144 studied the twentieth century. To better understand the importance of types of material to historians studying

20 Stieg Dalton and Charnio, "Historians and their Information Sources," p. 401.
21 Beattie, "An Archival User Study."

Table 6: Percentage of Respondents Who Consider the Following Material as Either *Very Important* or *Somewhat Important*

Manuscript records (handwritten)	97%
Printed records (published sources)	96%
Typescript records	91%
Photographs	76%
Maps	52%
Films & other moving images	34%
Sound recordings	29%
Architectural plans	28%

history prior to the twentieth century, the responses of the twenty-nine historians who studied earlier centuries were examined. This group provided slightly different ratings of importance for the different types of material. For example, manuscript records were still the most important type of material. Ninety per cent of the respondents rated them as either *Very* or *Somewhat Important*. However, maps received the second highest rating of importance, with 69 per cent of the respondents rating them as either *Very* or *Somewhat Important*. Photographs were less important: only 52 per cent of these respondents rated them as either *Very* or *Somewhat Important* and sound recordings were far less important with only 3 per cent of respondents indicating that this type of material was either *Very* or *Somewhat Important* for their current research. This finding suggests that historians who study the twentieth century are increasingly turning to different types of material as noted by Beattie, but that historians who study earlier centuries do not have the same tendency because sources that predominantly document these time periods are limited to manuscripts, printed records, and maps.

Barriers Encountered in Current Research

The questionnaire identified thirteen potential barriers to research and asked respondents to check all that they had encountered in their current research.

As shown in Table 7, half of the respondents (50%) had experienced problems because access to sources was limited by their geographic location, while 47 per cent of respondents identified the lack of a finding aid as a barrier to access. Respondents reported having encountered problems because access was restricted by privacy legislation (42%), the format was difficult to deal with (34%), finding aids were not detailed enough (31%), permission was required by the donor (31%), and sources were in fragile condition (27%). Only 7 per cent of respondents indicated that they had experienced problems because of copyright restrictions.

Table 7: Percentage of Respondents Who Encountered Problems in Current Research with Archival Sources Due to the Following Barriers

Access limited by geographic location	50%
Lack of finding aid (e.g., index, inventory, list)	47%
Access restricted by privacy legislation	42%
Format difficult to work with (microform, etc.)	34%
Permission required from donor	31%
Finding aid (e.g., index, inventory, list) not detailed	31%
Sources in fragile condition	27%
Relevant sources in original form not available	23%
Access prohibited by donor	21%
Finding aid (e.g., index, inventory, list) out of date	19%
Unable to identify relevant sources	17%
Use of sources restricted by copyright	7%
Finding aid (e.g., index, inventory, list) too detailed	0%

Some respondents discussed other problems that they had encountered. Four historians suggested archivists were barriers and one stated "archivists who overinterpret access laws, i.e., who do not understand the content of the sources, and make them unavailable 'as a precaution'" were a problem. Another suggested she had had "difficulty getting access to archivists with specialized knowledge of a field" and yet another felt that "archivists [were] more interested in retention rather than use by researchers." Four respondents noted that the hours archives were open was a problem, and two commented on finding aids that contained errors or were incomplete.[22]

Respondents were asked how the barriers had affected their research. Sixty-three replied that barriers had slowed down their research and nineteen noted financial repercussions. Seventeen historians stated that the barriers had caused them to redirect their research or "stopped a major theme from being developed." One historian who had been denied access to material described the impact in the following way:

> The fonds of a central tourism promoter is for the moment closed to the public. This could force me to revise my research objectives, the way I had intended to answer some of my central questions. In other words, not having access to this very promising "fonds"

22 Again we compared the data supplied by respondents who specialized in the study of the history of Canada only, against the data supplied by respondents who did not specialize in the study of Canada. We found some small differences, e.g., a greater percentage of historians who specialized in the study of Canada only had encountered problems because access was restricted by privacy legislation. These differences could have resulted from differences in the time period studied by respondents of the two groups.

could weaken my study, force me to revisit considerably my initial plans. (I know this "fonds" is rich because of the detailed finding aids that document its content.)

Most historians reported having experienced problems because access was limited by geographic location, collections lacked finding aids, and access was restricted by privacy legislation. Historians in Stieg Dalton and Charnigo's study also reported problems because materials were geographically remote or inaccessible because of political or governmental restrictions. Some respondents in the American study noted that they "had tailored their research topic to minimize travel."[23]

Repercussions of the barriers in this study were predominantly related to time and consequently money, and to a lesser degree, redirection of research. Records at distant or geographically remote archives require funds to cover travel costs. When historians use collections without finding aids or with only brief or summary descriptions, they need to skim vast quantities of material to locate relevant information. This activity costs time and can have financial repercussions if archives are remote. Some of the cost of using distant archives might be reduced with the availability of on-line finding aids accessible via the Web. Such finding aids, especially if they contained file-level descriptions, would enable the researcher to identify relevant material from his/her home or office. Researchers could also pre-order material to ensure records are on-site when they visit the archives. Web-accessible finding aids would facilitate the process of locating information and reduce, though not eliminate, the difficulty of accessing geographically remote archives. These finding aids may begin to address two barriers that the majority of respondents had experienced.

Privacy legislation, which limits access to records, can stop research and create great frustration. With new privacy legislation proposed in many provinces and with more historians studying relatively current topics, the number of historians who will experience problems due to privacy legislation in the future will probably increase.

Formats Historians Use, Like Most, Like Least, and Find Most Useful

The questionnaire asked respondents which formats the historians had used, which they liked the most, which they liked least, and which they found most useful. As presented in Table 8, originals were used by 90 per cent of the 173 respondents.

Ninety-two per cent of the 137 historians who answered the question relating to the format liked best also indicated a preference for the original. How-

23 Stieg Dalton and Charnigo, "Historians and their Information Sources," p. 414.

Table 8: Formats Historians had Used, Liked Most, Liked Least, and Found Most Useful

	Used $n = 173$	Liked Most $n = 137$	Liked Least $n = 132$	Found Most Useful $n = 146$
Originals	90%	92%	2%	68%
Photocopy	69%	2%	2%	16%
Transcribed	29%	1%	23%	1%
Photographic facsimile	13%	0%	1%	0%
Microfiche	50%	0%	17%	1%
Microfilm	76%	2%	47%	8%
E-reproductions	25%	2%	8%	7%

ever, only 68 per cent stated that they found original material most useful. Microfilm was used by 76 per cent of respondents, but 47 per cent of respondents liked this format least. Although very few respondents indicated they liked any format other than the original the most, 32 per cent of respondents found other formats including photocopies (16%), microfilm (8%) and e-reproductions (7%) most useful.

The questionnaire asked why they liked a particular format the most, why they liked a format the least, and why they found a format most useful. Twenty-five respondents indicated they liked the original format because it was the easiest to read, and a further six stated it was the most legible. Ten respondents suggested originals are the easiest format to use, with some indicating that paper facilitates scanning and browsing. Fifteen respondents suggested it was the most authentic, eight indicated it was the most accurate, and another two historians stated it was the most reliable. Completeness of originals was noted by eleven respondents and a further twelve respondents suggested that reproductions often failed to capture annotations or marginalia. Fourteen respondents noted a physical connection with the past or a greater sense of context when using the original format. One historian stated that "I think a historian needs that physical connection with the past" and another noted "Contextual features (condition, type of paper) that contribute to one's understanding, (that is, aside from content as such), is missed often or masked in copying." The importance the physical or spacial attributes of the original was highlighted by four respondents. One stated that "It provides the actual 'texture' as well as the actual 'text'! This allows the user to reconstruct the full 'sense' of the document."

As previously noted, 47 per cent of respondents liked microfilm least and a further 17 per cent indicated they liked microfiche the least. Thirty-four respondents indicated that the physical demands of reading microfilm and/or

microfiche caused headaches, eyestrain, and physical pain and another thirty respondents suggested that microforms were difficult to use and/or read. Ten respondents noted the poor quality of reproduction and a further ten indicated that technical difficulties caused by poor machinery made these formats the least liked. Finally, the lack of context was the reason three respondents liked microfilm the least.

Transcriptions were the least liked format for 23 per cent of respondents. Thirteen of the respondents suggested that transcriptions were least liked because of problems of errors and in the same vein a further nine respondents questioned their trustworthiness. Seven historians liked this format least because of the inherent editorial process and three commented that transcriptions were often incomplete.

E-reproduction was the format liked least by 8 per cent of respondents. Reasons for liking this format least included lack of computer knowledge (four respondents), difficulty using or reading e-reproductions (two respondents), and lack of context or links to other documents (two respondents).

The majority of respondents indicated that they found the original format to be the most useful with ten respondents suggesting it was the easiest to use or access, nine noting that the original was authentic, and a further two respondents suggesting that it was the most accurate format. Six respondents highlighted the link between context and the original format and another two historians noted that most documents were only in original format.

Many respondents (16%) suggested that a photocopy was the useful format with six respondents indicating that it allowed them to study at home and to save time, three other historians noting that it preserved the originals, and two suggesting that it was easy to use.

Factors that Affect Historians' Evaluation of the Trustworthiness of Archival Sources

The use of and preferences for the formats of sources provides the context for responses to questions 13 and 14, which asked historians for their evaluation of the trustworthiness of the archival sources they used and requested examples of instances when they questioned either the authenticity of a source or its reliability. Responses to these questions provided information about historians' perceptions of qualities that characterized the formats they used and about archival roles and responsibilities in making their sources widely accessible to users. For this study, we provided definitions for authenticity ("a record has not been altered or changed since its original creation") and reliability ("the degree to which the record accurately reflects what happened") to be a consistent point of reference for respondents.

Almost three-quarters of respondents (71%) *always* or *often* question the reliability of archival resources. By contrast, fewer than one-fifth of respon-

dents (18%) *always* or *often* question the authenticity of archival sources.[24] Many provided examples of situations in which they questioned either the authenticity or reliability of sources, identifying the source and format involved, and briefly describing the actions they took to resolve the matter. These examples were diverse and often idiosyncratic. Nevertheless, some issues were repeated, suggesting possible strategies that archives may use in the future to enhance general access to their materials using electronic communications and digital technologies, and minimize problems in media conversions and digitization.

Historians questioned authenticity when they suspected either the source of the document, or doubted the identity of the named or implied creator of the document, or were otherwise suspicious of its genuineness.[25] Historians whose sole speciality is the study of the history of Canada provided us with examples from modern sources as did most of the historians who do not study Canada. These included some of the records of inquisitorial agencies – for example, intelligence or security agencies – records of official bodies located in the fonds of private persons, copies of documents of unclear provenance, and records from grassroots organizations whose procedures were haphazard and unclear. Some cited examples of documents whose alleged provenance was suspicious given the nature of the collection in which it was found.

Many respondents told us about cases where texts or photographs were misidentified. In virtually all instances, these errors occurred because the best evidence available to the archives was inadequate. Respondents indicated that the repository quickly corrected the majority of errors once these were pointed out and the evidence supporting the change was confirmed. It was less easy to emend mistakes that occurred during copying. Several respondents cited such errors and they appeared to be a recurring problem. Individual mistakes in copying not only undermined belief in the continuing authenticity of the specific source, but also compromised the credibility of copies of other sources. The manual transcription of sources selected for publication was suspected for its absolute fidelity to the original and raised frequent questions about the sources' relationship to other documents which were not chosen. Micro-format publications of documents also prompted questions about the completeness of the conversion of the entire collection or about the quality of the reproduction. Finally, some respondents were concerned with pre-deposit editing of records, or of subsequent changes that were not clearly documented in the finding aids.

Most respondents equated the reliability of a source with its historical accu-

24 These results almost exactly match that for the larger group of historians despite the greater spread of topics/themes and centuries of interest in the larger group.

25 The clearest instances in the larger survey came from historians who were using medieval sources that are notorious because of the well-known practice of contemporary forgery.

racy: only a few made comments about the reliability of the document as an accurate reflection of what it was designed to do and say. A fair conclusion is that a general scepticism, especially for the content of texts such as diaries, memoranda, and even official reports or judicial judgements, permeates historical methods and affects historians' general outlook on sources. Few respondents addressed the reliability of the source either as trusted evidence of a corporate procedure, or as an unselfconscious instrument of administration. The following response was unusual in addressing the distinction that archivists make routinely between relying upon a document as an image of procedure and relying on its historical accuracy. "I read court documents. Perjury was a way of life. BUT I do trust their image of court procedure. That much is secure." One respondent wrote "... of course basic facts (dates, names of people involved) are generally 'reliable' but that order of fact [is] not the stuff of history."

The processes that historians use for verification include analysis of the source in its context of contemporary materials, tracking clear lines of provenance from source to archives, understanding the criteria for selecting material for copy formats, and confirming contemporary statements and their own hypotheses in similar records or even contemporary duplicates of records. One respondent told us that "[u]nderstanding the historical logic of a source is ... a prerequisite to its entry into a discourse of historical proof." Another told us that "[i]t is more the gaps in the record that I find more disturbing than what is there." Historians who used copies for their work, either because these were accessible or convenient, nevertheless counted on having recourse to original sources, considered to be indispensable for assessing the authenticity and reliability of any one source and the information it contained. For both purposes, our respondents underscored the value of having complete examples of documents from the same creator or from other creators contemporary with the source being investigated. One respondent told us that s/he would "double-check ... using other manuscript sources," while another told us of "... exhaustive research in all available sources." Many spoke of seeking "... as many versions of the event as possible, from as many different perspectives," of making "*... des croisements avec d'autres sources*." Redundancy of information from a plurality of sources emerged from the comments to become a value to be protected rather than a fault to be addressed in appraisal or processing.

Our respondents indicated that archivists are important partners in their processes of verification. Historians rely on archivists to ensure the authenticity of sources archives acquired and described. Most apparently agree with our respondent who said "[w]e assume the archives have established and explained the provenance ..." When the users had cause to withdraw this trust, the first line of investigation was the knowledgeable archivist. "When in doubt, first consult the archivist." Several respondents cited cases where they

had noticed discrepancies in dating, attributions, or provenance; these were brought to the attention of the archivist and, as a result, changes were made in lists or other finding aids. This exchange of information was a frequent comment. The interaction between archivists and expert users has mutual benefits. Historians profit from the archivists' extensive knowledge of the history of the records on both sides of the archival threshold. Archivists profit from the historians' focus and topic interests which can reveal new connections among sources and may turn up additional knowledge that strengthens description. The opportunity for this exchange, now provided most commonly by in-person meetings at the archival repository, should be catered for by services developed to support remote access and delivery of digitized originals to individual desktops.

The historian, by education and in practice, is skeptical about documents and sources because these are shaped by the "world view, gender, class, [and] ideology of [an] author...." A continuing, on-going "questioning [is] part of the historical process." The historian's approach to the source and its contents suggests that archival actions, especially appraisal, selection for preservation, and choice for copying to another media for wider access, should be made explicit and visible. As one respondent wrote, "any record by a human, then edited and selected by humans will always have problems of reliability." Users need to know "... as much as possible about the creation and preservation of the documents" they are using. While one might agree that an element in the beauty of original sources is that these "... are partial and contingent, personal and unreliable," this observation reinforces the value of plurality, the need for redundancy and the requirement for archives' actions to be clear and clearly declared, recognizing that the archives itself is a "historical construction." For the historian, *"Dubito ergo sum* [I doubt, therefore I am]" aptly locates his/her epistemological bedrock.

The questions raised by the respondents about the authenticity of copies suggest that digital documents will require even more careful attention by the archivist to their contextualization through explicit description of the choices they have made.

Conclusion

Our review of the responses to the survey, especially to the many narratives provided by respondents, suggests clear conclusions. It is worth re-iterating that respondents to the survey relied heavily on the sources provided by Canada's government archives – federal, provincial and to a lesser extent, the municipal level – and on the sources in its university and college archives and in religious foundations. Clearly, new technology provides archives with a unique opportunity to enhance their support of historical scholarship. Digitization especially will facilitate access. Our respondents clearly would like to

have the archives' finding aids accessible at their computers or work stations and would benefit also by direct access to digitized historical documents, especially complete fonds or collections. The historians' preferences for completeness suggest that the digitization of selections of materials might meet some of their needs, but only if such selections are provided with explicit descriptions of what has been selected and why. The often-repeated criticism of microfilm and transcriptions, particularly of their technical quality, should inform new projects of filming and digitization. These also should be planned with the needs and preferences of the target communities in mind. Historians value complete and comprehensive reproduction of sources by repositories.

Our respondents want better and faster access to finding aids. This appears to be their priority. Finding aids and archival description provide context for records, situating them in relationship to other sources whose custody may be dispersed among several institutions. Moreover, they indicate that a clear and comprehensive description of the many contexts for sources, including descriptions of the physical nature of the supports for the source, is increasingly important when copies, be they microform or digital, are used. Our respondents emphasized the importance of complete conversions, including, for example, the recto and verso of documents, marginalia and other items affixed or included with the original. The Internet and electronic connections between distant parts of Canada promise to broaden access to archival descriptions, to sources, and to archivists too. Broader access generally increases the need for knowledgeable archivists to mediate sources and users. Digitized finding aids and a well-thought-out electronic reference service from subject specialists will enhance the accessibility of all documents whether these are digitized or not.

Historians trust archives to ensure the continuing authenticity and integrity of their documentary holdings. This trust should be built upon with protocols and processes that provide similar assurances for documents and records born digital. The measures that are put in place should be made known to users. Clear statements by the archives will help bridge the gap that will occur in the future when the user cannot follow self-evident trails of paper independently. Our respondents perceive that modern privacy legislation is having an impact on research, especially on the topics that a historian will choose to pursue and the timing of their work. The frequency with which this belief was reported suggests that it would be useful to do further research to confirm whether these perceptions are accurate. Historians rely – implicitly and explicitly – on the availability of a plurality of sources and duplication of information in assessing the bias and slant of any one source and weighing its utility in historical scholarship. Redundancy of information or records that document the same event may not be a problem that needs to be remedied, but rather an insurance against unexpected loss and an assurance for scholarly trust. This requirement has implications for archival appraisal, both at the macro level,

when strategic principles are articulated, in project plans at finer levels of selection, and during holdings maintenance and processing.

Modern topics of research embrace more types of documents than in the past. Despite the continuing strength of well-established formats in historical research, historians' use of materials associated with new records-making technologies, developed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, may be a bellwether for continuing diversification of use in the future. These new materials, such as photographs, also reflect the expanding documentary practices of people and organizations in the past century. The expansion of the documentary universe has many implications for archives not only for preservation but also for appraisal, acquisition, and description.

The plurality of interests of our respondents, who employ a broad range of approaches to the past, emphasizes the continuing importance of a network of many types of archives with a plurality of sources. Moreover, historians' use of different materials, including sound records, photographs, and moving images, underscores the expansion of ways and means people communicate with each other, and points to the larger contemporary reality that more diverse documentary forms are being employed by choice. Archivists should be encouraged to undertake research into the evolving documentary practices of Canadians, their patterns of information production and uses, and their habits of communication with contemporaries. This research would inform acquisition, appraisal, as well as description and reference.

Historians' preference for photocopies and their habits of printing sources and finding aids, either those in microform or sent electronically, highlights the importance of experience with a format in shaping preferences where choice is provided and points clearly to the unique advantages of paper for a reader. Even when sources are available in digital format, historians will prefer to print the documents for use. Historians will always want and need to have recourse to the original, in whatever format. But in most cases, they prefer to have a paper copy because its utility is well understood, its stability has been experienced, and it can be used and viewed without the aid of a machine.

Excellent finding aids, digitization to increase accessibility, and the many other positive benefits to users of new information systems have not diminished the need for a knowledgeable intermediary, or broker, in the form of the archivist. In fact, new technologies and systems and the wider accessibility they enable have heightened the need for expert archivists. They underwrite the continuing authenticity of sources by their work in appraisal and description. When the format of an original source is changed by reproduction or in conversions, archival reference, either in face-to-face encounters or remotely by electronic communications, is increasingly needed to provide expert mediation. Archivists understand the complexity of records and their relationships to functions, processes and issues, and they are dedicated to the service of users who require their help. The role of the archivist as a broker between

users and sources is enlarged in a world of born-digital and digitized documents, especially in the preparation of descriptions to provide a thick context for the source and in underwriting presumptions of authenticity and genuineness of source. Finding and using original sources in the early twenty-first century continues to invoke the knowledge and expertise of archivists.

Appendix A: Questionnaire
Using Archival Sources

Section A: Your current research
This section focuses on your current research involving archives.

1. Does your current research involve the use of archival sources?
   No → *Please go directly to Section C.*
   Yes
   If you answered *Yes*, please briefly describe your current research project involving the use of archival sources.

Please answer the rest of the questions in this section in terms of your current research using archival sources.

2. At present, with what activity(ies) are you primarily engaged? *Please check all that apply.*
   Selecting a topic
   Gathering background information (e.g., using secondary sources)
   Identifying primary documents (e.g., using finding aids, talking to colleagues or archivists)
   Data collection (e.g., reading primary documents)
   Writing
   Other (*Please specify:* _____)

3. How important or not are the following sources in becoming aware of and locating needed information in your current research?
   (Scale: Very Important; Somewhat Important; Neither Important nor Unimportant; Very Unimportant)
   Archivists
   Footnotes or other references
   Published bibliographies
   Abstracting services
   Archival sources
   Other (*Please specify*)

4. Have you encountered any of the following problems in your current research with archival sources? We are interested in the nature of any barriers you have encountered. *Please check all that apply.*
   Unable to identify relevant sources
   Access to sources prohibited by donor
   Permission required from donor to access sources

Access to sources restricted by privacy legislation
Use of sources restricted by copyright legislation
Access to sources limited by their geographic location
Relevant sources in original form not available
Sources in fragile condition
Format difficult to work with (microform, etc.)
Lack of finding aid (e.g., index, inventory, list)
Finding aid (e.g., index, inventory, list) out of date
Finding aid (e.g., index, inventory, list) too detailed
Finding aid (e.g., index, inventory, list) not detailed enough
Other (*Please specify:* _____)

5. How did this problem or these problems affect your research?

Section B: Use of archival sources in your current research
This section explores your use of various types and formats of archival sources and their importance to your current research.

6. What format(s) of archival sources do you use? *Please check all that apply.*
   Original
   Photocopy
   Transcribed documents or facsimiles published in books
   Photographic facsimile
   Microfiche
   Microfilm
   Electronic reproduction (e.g., digital image)

Questions 7, 8, and 9 explore your preferences for archival formats in terms of those you like best, like least, and find most useful.

7. Which of the following formats of archival sources do you like best? *Please check only one.*
   Original
   Photocopy
   Transcribed documents or facsimiles published in books
   Photographic facsimile
   Microfiche
   Microfilm
   Electronic reproduction (e.g., digital image)

Why do you like this format best?

8. Which of the following formats of archival sources do you like least? *Please check only one.*
   Original
   Photocopy
   Transcribed documents or facsimiles published in books
   Photographic facsimile
   Microfiche
   Microfilm
   Electronic reproduction (e.g., digital image)

Why do you like this format least?

9. Which of the following formats of archival sources do you find most useful? *Please check only one.*
   Original
   Photocopy
   Transcribed documents or facsimiles published in books
   Photographic facsimile
   Microfiche
   Microfilm
   Electronic reproduction (e.g., digital image)

Why do you find this format most useful?

10. How often is it important for you to be able to get a personal copy of the finding aid (e.g., index, inventory, list)?
    Always
    Often
    Rarely
    Never → *Please go to question 11.*

Under what circumstances is it important?

11. How often is it important for you to be able to get a copy (e.g., photocopy or microfilm) of archival sources?
    Always
    Often
    Rarely
    Never → *Please go to question 12.*

Under what circumstances is it important?

12. How important or not are the following materials as sources of information for your current research?
(Scale: Very Important; Somewhat Important; Neither Important nor Unimportant; Very Unimportant)
    Maps
    Architectural plans
    Photographs
    Films & other moving images
    Sound recordings
    Manuscript records (handwritten)
    Typescript records
    Printed records (published primary sources, e.g., newspapers, sessional papers)

Section C: Evaluation of archival sources
This section explores two factors that may affect your trust of archival sources: authenticity and reliability. In this study, authenticity is defined as the fact that the record has not been altered or changed since its original creation. Reliability is defined as the degree to which the record accurately reflects what happened.

13. Have you ever questioned the **authenticity** of an archival source?
    Always
    Often
    Rarely
    Never → Please go to question 14.

If you answered Always, Often or Rarely:

(a) Please describe one such situation. Please identify the type of archival source (map, photograph, textual record, etc.) and tell us why you questioned its **authenticity**.

(b) What did you do to resolve your concern over the **authenticity** of the source?

14. Have you ever questioned the **reliability** of an archival source? (Again, **reliability** is defined as the degree to which the record accurately reflects what happened.)
    Always
    Often
    Rarely
    Never → Please go to question 15.

If you answered Always, Often or Rarely:

(a) Please describe one such situation. Please identify the type of archival source (map, photograph, textual record, etc.) and tell us why you questioned its **reliability**.

(b) What did you to do resolve your concern over the **reliability** of the source?

Section D: Information about yourself
This section asks about your area of specialization. Also, we would be grateful for information about your academic career and yourself.

15. Please characterize your area of specialization in terms of theme.
Please check all that apply.
Business
Cultural
Economic
First Nations
Gender
Labour
Medical
Military
Political
Religious Communities
Science and Technology
Social
Transportation
Other (*Please specify*: _____)

16. Please characterize your area of specialization in terms of geography.
Please check all that apply.
US
South America
Asia
Europe
Africa
Australia
Canada
Please specify further if you wish.
Atlantic Canada
Central Canada
Prairies

West Coast
North
Not applicable

17. Please characterize your area of specialization in terms of time period. *Please check all that apply.*
    20th Century
    19th Century
    18th Century
    17th Century
    16th Century
    Other (*Please specify*: _____)
    Not applicable

18. How long have you been doing research in an archival institution?
    10 years or less
    11–20 years
    21–30 years
    More than 30 years

19. How many archival institutions have you used in the past 5 years?
    None
    1
    2–5
    6–10
    More than 10

20. Which of the following types of archival institutions have you used? *Please check all that apply.*
    Religious institutions
    University
    First Nations
    National/Federal
    Provincial
    Municipal
    Other governmental level (*Please specify*: _____)
    Historical society
    Museum
    Corporate (e.g., businesses, hospitals, or other organizations)
    Other (*Please specify*: _____)

21. What is your professional rank?
    Lecturer
    Assistant Professor

Associate Professor
Full Professor
Professor Emeritus

22. What is your gender?
    Male
    Female
    I prefer not to answer.

23. What is your age category?
    Under 26
    26–35
    36–45
    46–55
    56–65
    Over 65
    I prefer not to answer.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Your assistance in providing this information is very much appreciated.

Please use the space below to comment on any other aspect of your use of archival sources that may be of interest to our study.