

“The Next Great Idea”: Loaning Archival Collections

TIMOTHY L. ERICSON and JOSHUA P. RANGER

Introduction

A 1998 article in *Maclean's* magazine told of a series of stunning art exhibitions at the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa, the Art Gallery of Ontario in Toronto, the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, and other institutions. The exhibitions featured some of “history’s most recognizable painters,” including Renoir and Picasso, and reportedly increased the year’s attendance at the National Gallery by a remarkable fifty percent.¹ The success of the shows was due to some extraordinary cooperation on the part of North American and European museums. Those institutions were willing to lend cultural treasures worth untold millions of dollars so that they could be viewed and appreciated by people who would never have otherwise had the opportunity to do so. The several Canadian museum curators interviewed for the article recognized that “reputation ... is an ephemeral thing and that it was necessary to be bold in order to continue their success.” Said one, “If a project has merit, we will consider anything. We are always looking for the next great idea.”²

Archivists frequently pay lip service to cooperation as a strategy for better accomplishing our mission and serving our researchers more effectively. In the United States, for example, “inter-institutional cooperation” was named specifically as an area of instruction in the Society of American Archivists’ 1988 “Guidelines for Graduate Archival Education Programs.”³ But archivists have not been so bold as our colleagues in the galleries and art museums, and our rhetoric frequently exceeds our willingness to take dramatic steps that might significantly improve the quality of our services and better meet the expectations and needs of our researchers. If it is true, as Gerald F. Ham writes, that the “use of archival records is the ultimate purpose of identification and retention”⁴ then one approach that archivists might adopt is to permit the temporary interinstitutional loan of original archival records for use by scholars, students, and other researchers. This is a step similar to ones that our colleagues in the library and museum professions have been taking for years.

One might argue that in the case of libraries the materials are not unique and can be replaced if lost or damaged. But such an argument is unpersuasive. If museums in Europe and the United States can transport priceless works of art thousands of miles, why can an archivist not loan more modest cultural treasures to another repository only a few hundred miles distant, thereby benefitting the graduate student or academic who would otherwise find it difficult and too expensive to use this material. In both cases the purpose of the loan is essentially the same: to make an important resource available to those who might otherwise never be able to see it or use it.

Interlending in Wisconsin

Even though most blanch at the idea, this practice of loaning archival collections has had a thirty-year record of success since its inception in 1965 within Wisconsin's regional Area Research Center (ARC) network, administered by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin (SHSW). Since then, the network has successfully and safely completed more than 10,000 such loan transfers.⁵ University archivists have built strong programs around their ability to benefit undergraduates, graduate students, faculty, administrators, and other researchers by bringing together critical masses of primary resources pertaining to a variety of chosen topics. Among other benefits, the ability to borrow archival collections from neighbouring institutions has dulled the competitive zeal that some archivists instinctively feel regarding acquisitions, and has laid the groundwork for cooperative efforts in user services that would otherwise be impossible. As just one example, in the Milwaukee, Wisconsin area several archives, which have limited public hours and staff, have experimented with using interlending to make collections more accessible to researchers. On several occasions a "loan arranger" (an archivist whose reading room was open during weekdays only) has, for the convenience of out-of-town researchers, temporarily transferred collections to a larger Milwaukee repository. There the records can be used during the larger repository's regularly scheduled evening hours. In a related initiative, the archives at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, the Medical College of Wisconsin, and Marquette University have drafted an agreement that would create a local version of the statewide network (to which the last two institutions do not belong) and permit the temporary transfer of selected collections between the three institutions.⁶

Wisconsin is not alone in having adopted a more liberal, practical view of temporary interinstitutional transfers of archival records for research purposes. The states of Missouri and Texas also have adopted loan provisions similar to Wisconsin's.⁷ But the skeptics always ask: what about the costs and risks that accompany these successes? Does the practice of loaning manuscript collections not endanger the safety of the records that archivists are responsible for preserving? After all, most archival records are unique,

and do responsibilities to prevent loss or damage not lie at the very core of archival practice? Does lending not work against the local use of archival collections both by researchers and the archival institution? What about the inconvenience to those who come to a collection's home repository expecting to conduct research, never having imagined the possibility that the unique archival documents needed to complete their work might be on loan like a common library book?

It is no surprise that many archivists find the idea of interlending original archival materials for research purposes to border on heresy. At first glance, lending does seem antithetical to the archivist's core responsibility as records custodian. Many will argue that it is simply not possible to monitor the safety of documents and integrity of a series when the materials are away from the protective embrace of their home institution. But the archivist's mission is not only to preserve records. We are active stewards of a cultural treasure as well and we have an equally important obligation to make these materials available to researchers.

Archivists need to seek a balance between the document's preservation needs and the research needs of the public which an institution serves. Some would argue that this role is a higher calling than simply that of being a custodian. It is one of the noblest of archival duties, codified in almost identical language in both the American and Canadian codes of ethics.⁸ Archivists have a responsibility for both preservation and access and they must make policies to serve both their documents and their patrons. Ideally, an archivist finds a policy whereby preservation activities provide for access, and research policies support the long term care of the documents. Certainly, the legitimate need for research materials at a distant location complicates this balance. However, if one accepts these distant research needs as important, then archivists must balance these needs *fairly* with those of the home institution for preservation and local access. The librarian James Woolley makes this point most clear when he writes,

The challenge before us is to maximize the advancement of learning by scholars distant as well as scholars present, by scholars present as well as scholars future. Our task is to find out how we can most effectively invest our intelligence, our energies, and the books entrusted to us, for that larger good. With the right provisos and not otherwise, special lending may be one good way to pursue this common mission.⁹

Traditionally, distant researchers have been served through services such as photocopying, circulation of published microfilm, and research by reference staff. These services do not normally make major demands on preservation or local research use; nor do they threaten the prestige that accompanies having custody of an important archival collection. However, there are many times when traditional reference services cannot provide for the research needs of

the off-site researcher. In such instances the alternative of interlending should be considered as a legitimate option, despite what might be considered its possible drawbacks.

In addition to being ethically important, expanded stewardship is also essential to the survival of many institutions. "Archives," writes David Bearman in *Archival Methods*, "do not receive sufficient use to justify their expense."¹⁰ He continues by criticizing archives for their failure to engage in systematic efforts to "build and nurture" constituencies. In a follow-up essay five years later in 1995, Bearman offered suggestions as to how to build this user base. Included in his strategies were inter-institutional lending programs to promote what he called "secondary and tertiary use."¹¹ Connell Gallagher of the University of Vermont agrees that in "an age of fiscal austerity, archivists and special collection librarians are asked to justify their operations, and research use is one of our main defenses." "Interlending," Gallagher writes, "expands research use of both an archive's collections [through lending] and reading rooms [through borrowing]."¹²

Interlending, therefore, can be very helpful for an archival institution's long-term success. In order to be both strategically and professionally sound, archivists and archival institutions must expand their commitment to collection stewardship. Simply put, institutional practices that do not address the needs of the distant researcher do not constitute good stewardship. Interlending is very effective in serving complex off-site research needs – an understanding that has been slowly growing in acceptance across the archival community. Evidence from the successes experienced in Wisconsin's ARC network suggests that the cost/benefit ratio is skewed heavily in the favour of the benefits. Costs are small and potential problems are merely hypothetical; the benefits are concrete.

How does the system work? The Area Research Center network of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin archives division is administratively centralized and physically dispersed. In addition to the SHSW headquarters in Madison, Wisconsin, thirteen institutions ("centers") constitute the network. These are located on eleven University of Wisconsin campuses, the Superior Public Library, and the SHSW's jointly operated Northern Great Lakes Center in Ashland, Wisconsin. With the exception of the Madison headquarters, Superior Library, and the center in Ashland, all of the centers are staffed by University of Wisconsin system archivists. Although SHSW collections themselves remain the property of the SHSW, they are placed on deposit at one of the regional centers.¹³ Over and above SHSW materials, individual SHSW centers may also hold additional collections, such as university archives, that they have acquired on their own over the years. Most of these collections are as well eligible for interlending.¹⁴ Those collections deposited by the SHSW include both public records and manuscripts. They are placed at Area Research Centers on the basis of mutually agreed geographic jurisdictions. A

formal agreement (See Appendix A for an example) binds the various members of the ARC system.

The crowning achievement of the ARC network has been its pioneering transfer system. This provides distant researchers in thirteen locations with access to almost any collection within the SHSW's internationally recognized holdings located at Madison. During the early years, transfers were completed on an irregular basis as couriers, mostly ARC network archivists or SHSW staff, became available. Beginning in 1995, the network contracted with a bonded interlibrary loan courier service. Since that time, there have been marked improvements in service and increased levels of usage. Statistics for the years since that time show a dramatic increase in demand as the more efficient service became more widely known. During 1995-96 the network recorded a total of 430 loans. During the following year this number increased to 484. By 1997-98 loan transactions had grown to 658 annually and during 1998-99 the number exploded to 1,007.¹⁵

Although lending frequently takes place directly between Area Research Centers most of the requests for historical material are directed to the enormous and well known archival collection at the SHSW headquarters. While in earlier years requests were made by mail or telephone, today they are most often made by an Area Research Center via e-mail. Because of the high volume of transfer requests, a paraprofessional reference position is dedicated principally to processing the requests. Occasionally, patrons will themselves contact the borrowing institution directly and request that a collection be transferred. Requests are generally easy to verify owing to excellent bibliographic access available in the ARC system. The SHSW archives collections are in the process of being catalogued in the Archives and Manuscripts Collections section of the Research Libraries Information Network database. These records have been used to create a cooperative online public access catalogue (OPAC) that is administered by the University of Wisconsin-Madison. By 1998, eighty per cent of the holdings of the SHSW were catalogued, including forty per cent of those collections housed at the Area Research Centers. Individual centers have as well created their own bibliographic records, which appear in campus OPACs and in the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) international bibliographic utility. The Area Research Centers also have access to a great many of the finding aids for SHSW's collections. Any interlending request made to the Society's headquarters building is entered into a relational database used to track collections as they move through the ARC system.¹⁶

The processing of administering interlending requests at the SHSW headquarters consists of first charging out the collection using reading room call slips and then entering pertinent information into the relational database. This work is done by the same paraprofessional who receives the orders. Most of the Area Research Centers also have designated staff to handle transfer

requests. Most collections are eligible for transfer; however, each ARC member can refuse to transfer collections that are particularly fragile or are in current use.¹⁷ Collections can also be withheld from transfer if a patron planning to use the collection notifies a reading room in advance of their visit.

The SHSW rules and regulations for using manuscript collections were adopted by each Area Research Center at the time it joined the network. Ongoing development of policies and procedures is handled at semi-annual meetings of the ARC network archivists. A potential drawback of a long and successful system is relaxation of the careful attention required for such an important function. Periodic review of policies and procedures helps address this problem.

There are two standard loan periods in the Wisconsin model: four weeks for most research use, and one semester for longer student university projects. Operating on a first come, first served basis, the system requires that once a collection is on loan it cannot be recalled until the end of the loan period. Although exceptions can be made in unusual circumstances, it is not the system's general practice to coordinate such adjustments.¹⁸

As noted above, the SHSW now uses a regular courier system to transfer collections. Historically, staff members of the Area Research Centers would transfer materials in their own vehicles. For the majority of transfers made today, the SHSW uses the South Central Library Service, an interlibrary loan (ILL) courier system used by public libraries and universities in the southern two-thirds of the state.¹⁹ During the work week, the courier's schedule permits a turnaround time of between twenty-four and forty-eight hours.²⁰ Collections are transferred within boxes in secure ILL bins. Accompanying each bin are labels distinguishing it as a SHSW collection and including pertinent shipping information.²¹ Generally, the system can handle any size shipment; however at times space restrictions keep an ARC transfer to five bins (approximately five cubic feet).

Even after more than thirty years, the ARC network can identify no damage to any collections due to its interlending system. Because the SCLC courier system in Wisconsin has increased the volume of transfers greatly in recent years, one must be cautious in celebrating this success. But the system, with its sealed plastic bins, protects the collections beyond what their boxes alone could do. Moreover, each shipment, regardless of whether it is transported by courier or a staff member, is accompanied by a packing slip that details each box in the transfer, the institutions involved, the name of the courier, and the date. This form, in triplicate, is used to verify transfer and receipt. It also provides the inputs for an automated circulation system, which is responsible for tracking the great majority of all transfers. Finally, each collection is available at various points for inspection to check for damage, or potential threats to the documents. Taking all these factors into account, the Wisconsin network has taken great care to ensure the long-term preservation of its original documents.

The State Historical Society of Wisconsin boasts its archival interlending programs as one its greatest achievements. This pride is rooted in the knowledge that the program brings annually, to hundreds of researchers throughout the state, original historical collections that they might have otherwise been unable to use owing to time, resources, or other reasons. Satisfaction can also be taken in the generous loan periods, records (as mentioned previously) being available for some users for up to a semester's length. Other factors are that the efficient courier system is able to deliver materials in as little as twenty-four hours and that the distant researcher benefits from an up-to-date OPAC containing bibliographic access to eighty per cent of the network's collection of public records and manuscripts.

Although researchers profit from the liberal policies of the SHSW in permitting interlending, there are limitations on what can be loaned. Birth, marriage, and death records as well as most naturalization records, heavily used by genealogists, are not available for transfer, although the reference questions that require these collections are often answered by Area Research Centers through correspondence. For the most part the ARC network goes far in its role as steward, providing access to collections to distant researchers while preserving the safety and security of collections and conserving, in part, local access to collections.

Misconceptions about Interlending

In order to consider the possibility of loaning archival collections in a broader context, it is necessary first to disabuse ourselves of several misconceptions that normally arouse passions during discussions about this topic.

The first is that this is a radical new idea. It is not. Archivists and allied professionals have acknowledged for years that lending archival records for research purposes is a legitimate strategy for making materials more accessible. As far back as the Fourth Annual Conference of Archivists in Boston in December 1912, advocates of the ill-fated, never completed *Manual of Archival Economy for the Use of American Archivists* proposed that a chapter in the manual deal with "the question of 'Interloan Methods with Officials and Departments.'" Far from recoiling at the prospect, those who were at the meeting sought ways to complete loans safely, advocating, for example, that:

Records should not be loosely managed or sent haphazard from the place of primary jurisdiction. There should be an office record of such transactions, with proper checks against loss or displacement. The authority for loaning out should repose definitely. A record thereof should be kept in ledgers, on temporary cards, or by means of a duplex card system, where the office keeps the receipt card on file and the borrowing official receives a duplicate discharge card.²²

The idea of loaning archival material was again later mooted, though more tentatively, in a 1955 *National Archives Staff Information Paper* entitled "Archival Principles: Selections from the Writings of Waldo Gifford Leland"²³ in which Leland acknowledged that even after records had been transferred to an archives, public officials should have the same right of access as they had prior to the time when the records were transferred. Leland simply advised that "documents should not be withdrawn without giving a receipt for them, and they should be promptly returned"; no distinction was made between official and "unofficial" (i.e., historical) use. The publication was issued, "for the instruction of the staff of the National Archives" and signed prominently by both Director of Archival Management Theodore R. Schellenberg and by Archivist of the United States Wayne C. Grover. The door to archival loans had been clearly left open.²⁴

A year later Schellenberg himself addressed the question in his 1956 monograph, *Modern Archives Principles and Techniques*, a treatise which was to become the basic text of the next generation of archivists. Although he doubtless did not envision anything remotely like the system that Wisconsin has developed, Schellenberg took an important step beyond what Leland had suggested, by allowing that loaning documents could, in fact, be permissible on broader terms, though cautioning that, "archives should be lent, if at all, on an institutional, not on an individual basis[,] ... under conditions that will preserve them physically and preserve their record character. The possible injury or destruction of archives by their use elsewhere ... should be weighed against the borrower's needs."²⁵

In 1979 the Society of American Archivists (SAA), in concert with the American Library Association (ALA) and through the Rare Books and Manuscripts Section (RBMS) of the Association of College and Research Libraries, moved toward giving cautious support to the temporary lending of unique material. The three organizations issued the "ALA-SAA Joint Statement on Access to Original Research Materials." The statement read in part, "Normally, a repository will not send research material for use outside its building or jurisdiction. Under special circumstances a collection or a portion of it may be loaned or placed on deposit with another institution."²⁶ But in the most recent update of the joint statement, approved in 1994, the clause states: "The repository may, under special circumstances, loan or place on deposit with another repository part or all of a collection."²⁷ One can conclude that in removing the first, qualifying language about what is "normal" in repositories, both the ALA and the SAA were shifting toward greater acknowledgment that the interlending of unique material has a role in the routine operations of special libraries and archives (albeit in limited circumstances).²⁸

In fact, there had already been additional, more emphatic support for interlending from within the archival community, though with few immediate consequences. The 1986 report of the Society of American Archivists' Goals and

Priorities Task Force (GAP) recommended that the profession “provide a framework for planning and decision making by the associations, repositories, and individuals that comprise the archival community.”²⁹ The report’s recommended three goals and numerous objectives were largely non-controversial, but one such statement called on the research community and administrative bodies to “promote the temporary loan of original archival materials to other institutions through archival networks and other cooperative arrangements.”³⁰ Still, the recommendation attracted surprisingly little comment, positive or negative, and since that time – notwithstanding the GAP report’s call for the “research community and administrative bodies” to develop successful lending models – few models or even basic descriptions of archival interlending programs have been published. Likewise there has been little discussion in the archival literature of the fundamental shortcomings or merits of temporarily loaning archival materials.

Nevertheless, in 1987 the Research Libraries Group published a chapter in its *Shared Resources Manual* entitled “Additional Guidelines for Access to Archives, Manuscripts, and Special Collections.” In a manner similar to the Interlibrary Loan Code, the chapter outlines the responsibilities of borrowing and lending “libraries” for “research materials housed in the special collections departments of member institutions.”³¹ The guidelines reflect an understanding that special collections require lending procedures that are stricter than normal. In addition, the document is prefaced with a statement that the guidelines should be used for materials that “are not rare, expensive, unique or fragile.”³² If interpreted strictly, the RLG guidelines are seemingly of very limited use to many of the institutions for which they profess to be written, namely archives and manuscript repositories whose materials, by their very nature, fit these characteristics. Yet despite these apparent limitations, the guidelines again reflect the growing understanding of research institutions that interlending can support the research needs of distant patrons.

As well, more recently, Mary Jo Pugh’s 1992 Archival Fundamental Series Manual, *Providing Reference Services for Archives and Manuscripts*, has stated that loan policies should be in place to govern requests for temporary transfer of archival records for exhibits and administrative reference. Less enthusiastic about loans for research purposes, she nevertheless acknowledges that, while “repositories should not loan archival materials to individual users[,] ... the expanded use of interlibrary loan might considerably assist individual users and facilitate research. At this time few repositories loan original materials ... but more might consider it.”³³

More important, quite aside from what these publications suggest, some archives are already loaning manuscript materials, even though they do not belong to a formal network. Several years ago two boxes of literary manuscripts from Syracuse University in New York were delivered to the archives at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee along with some regular ARC

transfers. Attached was a note stating that the Syracuse material had just been received by the University of Wisconsin interlibrary loan department via a commercial courier. Fearing that some newly-hired student assistant may have received a request and, not yet familiar with the way archival materials are handled, had sent the records off, the Milwaukee staff decided to phone and confirm intentions. To their surprise, the head of archives and special collections at Syracuse said the loan had been fully authorized and completed through regular interlibrary loan channels, adding that it was better to have the manuscripts used in Milwaukee than collecting dust in Syracuse.

In fact, for decades many archivists have circulated microfilmed archival records through normal interlibrary loan channels. Records in automated form can be easily copied to a disk. Every day, many repositories circulate audiotape copies, and disk or photocopy versions of oral history transcripts. It is true that many of these items are, in the technical sense, copies, and are not being loaned in the precise sense of the word. But the more important point is that permitting and even facilitating the use of archival records at another location is not something *per se* that we as a profession reject out of hand. Any concern, then, must centre around such issues as the possible loss of irreplaceable original material.

Missouri's Interlending Network

A striking example of interlending is a program, similar to Wisconsin's, in the State of Missouri. The lending program of Missouri's Western Historical Manuscripts Collection (WHMC) has been in place since 1980. Administered jointly by the University of Missouri System and the Missouri State Historical Society, the WHMC is made up of archival collections owned by four separate institutions. It is an important source of unique historical material concerning the State of Missouri and the American West in general. Although intellectual control of the collection is decentralized, it has the unique quality of being physically centralized in a common storage facility. Owing to space limitations, all four university archives in the Missouri network keep a part of their holdings at an off-campus records center located in the city of Columbia. The four universities use the records center to varying degrees – the University of Missouri-Kansas City, for example, houses up to ninety per cent of its 13,000 cubic foot collection in the storage facility, which is located two and a half hours away.³⁴ (Indeed, owing to the fact that so many collections were already stored off-site, requiring transfers whenever the records were required for use at their home institution, it was only a short step further in 1980 to making most collections available for loan.) To facilitate use of its off-site collections, the WHMC, like Wisconsin, employs a regular courier system to shuttle collections back and forth. Interlending among these institutions was thus a natural extension of this system. Although simi-

lar in other respects to Wisconsin, the Missouri network provides a good working example of an interlending program among independent institutional peers.

Regardless whether the records are located on or off-site, requests for WHMC collections are made via e-mail or telephone to the lending institution. As was once the case in Wisconsin, there is no automated access to descriptive information in the WHMC. Instead, access is based on Web page descriptions of holdings, on traditional finding aids that are distributed throughout the network, and on the reference staff's knowledge of the other branches' collections. (The resulting limited access to descriptive information often requires patrons to contact the potential lending institution either directly or through local branch staff.)³⁵

The processing of transfer requests depends greatly on whether the collection is stored on-site. A request for an on-site collection is first verified and prepared for shipping by archives staff. Lending can occur at the folder or the box level and normally cannot exceed five cubic feet per day. An off-site request is made to and verified by the home institution which then delegates the remainder of processing work to a permanent staff member at the central records center.³⁶

Several factors promote efficiency. The University of Missouri-Columbia, where the WHMC began, has served as the institutional model for all three other institutions; as a result, most of the rules and procedures in effect at the Columbia campus are used throughout the system. In addition, all of the branches report to the same office at the State Historical Society, further minimizing problems in achieving compliance with set rules and procedures. Compliance is also strengthened by the understanding among the members of the WHMC that its holdings constitute a state collection. Although institutional ownership exists, the fact that so much of the collection is housed in a central location creates a perception of the collection as belonging to all. The basic loan period is two weeks, but is rarely enforced by member branches.

The WHMC is at its most systematic in its delivery and return program. A courier supplied by the inter-institutional mail system of the University of Missouri system provides the WHMC with a twenty-four to forty-eight hour turnaround in delivery of documents. All collections are shipped in attached-lid records-center-type cartons, taped shut, with smaller collections placed in Hollinger boxes within the larger boxes and spacers added to keep the collections in place. Many oversize collections never travel, though some are accommodated with custom boxes. While at one time a packing slip was attached to each box, this function has now been replaced with an e-mail that announces or verifies a transfer. These e-mail messages are saved at the WHMC branches as well as at the records center and form the tracking system for the lending operation.

It is important to keep in mind that within the WHMC system collections

require transfer from the records center *wherever* they are used. While this is less true with the Columbia branch, which keeps most of its material in-house, the network's assumption is that distant and local access are two sides of the same coin. In the Missouri network, interlending is no more threatening to the safety of a collection than use by the Kansas City branch of the ninety percent of its collection which, as previously mentioned, is stored off site. That being said, the fact that many loaned collections are returned directly to the records center requires that archivists vest large amounts of trust in the other institutions – a trust with which many archivists elsewhere might not feel comfortable. Furthermore, transfers for both home and distant use are threatened by relying solely on the use of e-mail correspondence as the record of transfer.³⁷

Local research use for many collections does not, however, suffer from the loan system since many collections are not at the home institution to begin with. In this way local and distant researchers are treated in much the same manner: both must call ahead to get materials they require. Local researchers can be inconvenienced when on-site collections have been loaned. Yet, with a twenty-four hour turnaround time, most problems of competing researchers can be dealt with in much the same cooperative way as if the individuals were all at the same institution.

Interlending and Preservation Concerns

Another misconception concerns the seriousness of problems with preservation of collections that are loaned to another institution. In her SAA manual *Preserving Archives and Manuscripts*, Mary Lynn Ritzenthaler dismisses the option of interlending outright, stating that “archival material should be non-circulating.”³⁸ (She offers no explanation, apparently assuming that the answer is self evident within in the context of her book.) Sharing her views is Thomas Lange of the Huntington Library.³⁹ Lange cites as a major concern the inability of originating repositories to monitor how an item is used at another institution. At another point Lange doubts that any standard of shipping could be upheld. “The fundamental difficulty,” he writes, “is that there will be as many opinions about proper packing and handling of rare materials as there are curators of rare books and manuscripts.” This, Lange believes, is unacceptable for the safety of rare and unique materials.⁴⁰

While the risks of loaning to the long term preservation of archival materials is undeniable, such threats can be reduced to acceptable levels with proper planning and risk management.⁴¹ Formalized and agreed-upon procedures form the core of any risk management program. Despite Lange's suspicion to the contrary, standards for interlending of unique materials are not only possible, but are already being used every day in the Wisconsin and Missouri systems. What many critics fail to understand is that most interlending (unique or

otherwise) presupposes the existence of a consortium or network to facilitate the process. Ellen Dunlap and Kathleen Reed, authors of a draft model for lending special collections for exhibits, acknowledge that a major obstacle to a loan for exhibition is the potential lender's uncertainty concerning the borrowing library.⁴² A well established network reduces uncertainty through the establishment of set procedures and standards with regard to packaging, shipping, security, loan periods, and research use.

Networks are certainly not new to public archives in the United States.⁴³ Much like those for libraries, archival networks promote cooperation in collection development and resource sharing. Networked partners sign detailed agreements that stipulate the partners' responsibilities, and sanctions for non-compliance. Such contracts can provide for the risk management necessary for an effective archival interlending program. Although agreements cannot guarantee against all potential threats to archival materials transferred through the program, well planned archival networks with a common purpose (such as state history) can bring the danger to collections well within any reasonable level of tolerance.

Risk management is not made up solely of procedures, agreements, and a conscientious network membership; it also involves knowing when to simply say no. Not all collections are the same and it would be a mistake to think that any one set of procedures could ensure the safety of every document. Collections with high intrinsic value may need to stay put. There are instances as well, certainly, where oversized and very fragile collections should not be transferred. The successes of practicing lending programs may well be due in part to knowing the limits of particular collections.

In other words, loaning archival materials does not mean that we open the flood gates and permit everything to circulate. In Wisconsin, for example, common sense restrictions govern loans of archives and manuscripts just as they do loans of library books. Many of the restrictions are the same as those that Schellenberg articulated in 1956.⁴⁴ For example, an archives will not loan an entire collection 250 cubic feet in size for practical, logistical reasons.⁴⁵ As previously noted, an Area Research Center can refuse to loan collections that are frequently used, such as naturalization records which are accessed almost daily by genealogists. Fragile records such as a collection of glass plate photographic negatives do not circulate for obvious reasons. Records with high intrinsic value such as the State Historical Society of Wisconsin's Draper Manuscripts, or a collection of documents featuring the signers of the American Declaration of Independence do not circulate. (These collections must be used at the Society's headquarters in Madison.)⁴⁶ But even if one were to list all the collections that merit such special consideration, these would constitute only a tiny percentage of the total holdings. To focus on the treasures that *cannot* circulate is to miss the point that all other records *can*. Other safeguards can as well be built into the transfer system. In Wisconsin,

transfers are completed by courier only; no original materials are sent through the mail.⁴⁷

Finally, interinstitutional transfer means only that materials are available at a different reading room at a different location. All members of the ARC network are required to use the same procedures regarding patron registration, security, and other practices governing the storage and use of materials. Although there is inevitably some variation in environmental conditions at various Area Research Centers, all are within tolerable limits that are at least as good as those at the SHSW's Madison headquarters.

Interlending and Inconvenience to Researchers

Yet another issue is the question of inconvenience to researchers who come to a repository where the records are supposed to be held, only to find them shipped to some distant location. Related to this issue is the argument that loaning poses a threat to that requirement for effective local use of archival materials which dictates that interrelated archives holdings not be separated, even temporarily. Because of their interrelatedness, these holdings serve researchers best when the entire body of interrelated collections is intact and available on an ongoing basis in the one place. Interlending, the reasoning goes, complicates traditional research by permitting an entire collection, or part of a collection, to be made unavailable to an on-site researcher. In fact, in defending the Huntington Library's policy of not lending its archival collections, Thomas Lange writes, "Without a doubt the greatest virtue of our policy of not participating in any form of loan arrangement is that all Huntington Library materials are available at one time in one place."⁴⁸

Others contend that archival institutions are often equated with the collections they hold or the subject areas in which they collect. This provides them not only with a reputation among researchers, but also helps constitute the institution's identity and symbolic culture.⁴⁹ Interlending threatens this identity potentially every time an on-site researcher requests a collection that is currently on loan to another institution. Many scholar-researchers travel great distances to use archival holdings. Would it not be difficult and embarrassing for an archivist to explain why an important collection, critical to the researcher's work, has been loaned out for the next four weeks?

But archivists have an obligation as well to promote the use of their holdings. Writing about rare book interlending, James Woolley admits there is a risk that a desired book will not be available to a researcher; however, he also reminds us of the less "quantifiable risk" that the book will otherwise receive no research use and thus be unable to serve the "advancement of learning."⁵⁰ What is true for rare books is equally true for most archival collections. Among others, David Bearman has pointed out clearly that the bulk of archival holdings go unused on an annual basis.⁵¹ Even a collection closely identi-

fied with a particular repository may only be requested once or twice a year. Does this justify denying a legitimate research request received at a borrowing institution?

Maurice Line, “sage” of British interlibrary loan thought and practice is probably closer to the mark with his first “law of interlending.” This states that “remote users have equal rights to access with local users.”⁵² Notably, Line believes that equality of treatment does not mean that an institution cannot discriminate on the basis of clear local need. A fonds (such as naturalization records) may have such heavy use that it could not possibly be removed from the archives for even a day, and some collections mean so much to an institution that it would be a mistake to permit their loan. But others are not so heavily used and do not mean so much to the home institution. In such cases the demonstrated needs of actual users should outweigh the more hypothetical issues surrounding local use and loss of prestige associated with local custody.

Benefits of Interlending

But if we are to consider the idea on a cost/benefit basis, what are the costs, and what are the benefits? First the benefits.

In Wisconsin probably the most important gains have been to nurture the development of strong archival programs on campuses throughout the state where no programs previously existed. Although there are many reasons for this, most agree that one of the most significant is that the temporary interinstitutional loan of manuscript collections improves service; it makes archives a more efficient and valuable institutional asset. In Wisconsin it permits university professors to assemble a critical mass of collections of a given size, or on a given topic, for use in graduate and undergraduate instruction. It also facilitates research by faculty. While similar benefits would have doubtless emerged eventually with the normal growth of the local archival collection, the ability to bring in processed collections allows archives to have an immediate impact without waiting the decade or more it would take to build a sufficient local base of primary resources. During the early years of the ARC network, the use of primary materials in classes attracted a good deal of attention and gave a number of archives programs the academic respectability they needed in order to prosper and grow.⁵³

A second important benefit is closely related to the first. The establishment of Area Research Centers and the scholarly and pedagogical use of manuscript collections they attracted, led to the establishment of formal university archives programs in several locations. The fact that a university archives could be attached to the existing ARC program, with no immediate increase in staff or space, eased the archives' establishment on most campuses. Whereas in the network's early years, staffing at the Area Research Centers was normally done on a part-time basis by a member of the local history society or

library faculty, the combined and expanded programs led eventually to the hiring of full-time professional archivists. Today, almost all of the centers are staffed on a full-time basis – many with professionally trained archivists.

A third benefit has been that the ability to borrow collections from the State Historical Society of Wisconsin's nationally known collection of archives and manuscripts made possible undeniable improvements in the quality of instruction offered at University of Wisconsin campuses. Classroom involvement thus gave the archives yet another highly visible way to make an impact. As one instructor observed after receiving more than thirty term papers based on collections of soldiers' letters from the American Civil War, "If I have to read all of these term papers, they might as well be on a topic I like." As well, much to his delight and that of others, his students enjoyed using original archival records. Most benefitted more than if they had taken yet another trip through the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*.⁵⁴ The increase in documentary access was significant. The ARC network gives students and faculty access to collections of national significance in the areas of mass communications, the American labour movement, socialism, civil rights, and contemporary social action, as well as a host of other collections, such as those of governors and legislators, that are of statewide significance. Although historians were predictably among the first to take advantage of this opportunity, they were by no means the only ones to do so. Professors from journalism, architecture, sociology, mass communications, economics, political science, agriculture, women's studies, nursing, and other departments soon followed.⁵⁵

Service to the cause of scholarly publication has been one of the most striking benefits of the transfer provision. Dozens of scholarly studies owe their existence to the ability of scholars to have easier access to research materials through the ARC network. Archivists have long been plagued by the problems associated with attracting scholarly researchers and frustrated by our inability to make significant progress in this important area of our work. These frustrations are due in part to the fact that, as Ann Gordon noted in her 1992 report, *Using the Nation's Documentary Heritage*, "Historical sources are widely dispersed across [the United States]." Basing her findings on a survey undertaken for the report, researchers, she said, "identified inability to travel to distant sources as the most common obstacle to their use."⁵⁶ Indeed, the inability to travel to sources was cited by sixty percent of the survey respondents – a significantly higher number than those accorded to more highly publicized problems such as government security classifications (cited by just over ten percent), the physical condition of records (cited by approximately twenty-five per cent) and lack of arrangement and description (cited by one-third).⁵⁷ According to one Wisconsin archivist, the temporary archival loan provision was clearly "the most valuable part of the [SHSW] program, for it ... enables scholars, whose time and money will not permit long stays in Madison, to make use of ... extensive [research] collections."⁵⁸ And in

fact, the loan provision is also a welcome benefit to scholars outside of the University of Wisconsin System: researchers at in-state campuses such as Marquette University and at out-of-state institutions near the Wisconsin border such as the University of Chicago, Northwestern University, and the University of Minnesota may request that records be transferred to an archives closer to home.

Similar evidence pertaining to researchers' needs regarding the availability of primary materials can be found in the Public Archives of Canada's 1985 evaluation of its researcher assistance and public service programs. The study, which cited Wisconsin's experience with interlending, found that a majority of the researchers it surveyed thought that services enabling them to work off site were "very important." It noted that notwithstanding the availability of useful microfilm and other tools, "original documents [still] had to be studied." Canadian archivists as well as researchers favoured "better diffusion of PAC research tools and collections" because, they said, these would enable their archives to "be better able to offer researchers more service rather than forcing the researcher to visit the PAC."⁵⁹

Another important benefit has been, as noted earlier, to dull the competitive zeal that sometimes accompanies collecting efforts, for even with the most carefully crafted acquisition development policies there always will be records, such as the papers of politicians, faculty members, or certain organizations, that simultaneously document several important broad historical topics, or that pertain to a large geographical region. This can create conflict, yet the ability to borrow such materials, even though they might be housed elsewhere permanently, makes it easier to resolve these problems. Competitive instincts similar to those in the United States have been encountered in Canada. As Marion Beyea noted in her chapter, "The Canadian Archival System," in the publication, *Canadian Archives in 1992*, "competition for acquisition of private sector records [has] limited cooperation and often strained relations between repositories."⁶⁰ A loan network permits the best of both worlds: placing records in their area of origin where they will most likely be used, while serving the needs of those researchers interested in special subjects regardless of geographic locale. This, in turn, in the American experience has encouraged cooperative appraisal and joint collections development where such efforts would otherwise have been difficult, at best, because of the need to "protect one's turf."

Finally, the transfer provision has appealed to a significant number of donors such as statewide organizations with chapters in different locations, or donors who appreciate how this service ensures maximum use of archival collections they have donated. Still others like the prestige of donating records to the State Historical Society of Wisconsin's collection while having the records remain close to home at one of the regional centers, or available for loan in the future, if they should ever wish to consult them.⁶¹

Costs of Interlending

The evidence is clear that interlending archival materials in Wisconsin works well and that over the years there have been remarkably few problems. The major difficulties have been logistical in nature. However, whereas previously, archival loans could take several months to arrive at some of the distant archives, that problem has all but disappeared with the advent of the courier service. Area Research Centers are, almost without exception, able to deliver in the timely manner that its brochures have promised.

The costs associated with the courier service are modest when compared to the benefits. During the 1998-99 fiscal year the State Historical Society of Wisconsin paid a total of \$8,926 in fees to the South Central Library Service (SCLS). The only other major expense was for a part-time paraprofessional employee to coordinate manuscript transfers to and from the SHSW. This came to \$7,840 for a combined total of \$16,766 for the year. Based upon a total of 1,007 transfers, the cost per transfer was slightly more than \$16.⁶² None of the Area Research Centers pay fees for manuscript transfers to the SCLS and none needs to employ personnel to coordinate loan activities. Transfers are still made by staff members on occasion, but only when making trips to other Area Research Centers for meetings or other purposes.

Notwithstanding the increased use that results from the loan service, some observers continue to criticize the system on the basis that it is not good for the physical preservation of records. It is a fact that archival collections are sometimes transferred during the winter months when temperatures in the trunk of a car or back of a van make a mockery of talk about temperature and humidity controls. It is also true that records transferred several hundred miles in the back of a van are jostled around more than if they had been left on their shelves at home. Both are legitimate concerns, but almost all of the transferred records are paper-based and durable; there has been no demonstrable evidence of damage as a result. And it is also true that most of the records held in the system are never transferred, and only a few more than once. In almost all of the 10,000 cases, the records may have been better preserved in their secure vaults, but they would also have sat unused.

Still others continue to fear for the inconvenience to the occasional scholar who, coming from a far distance on a research trip, finds that the collection he or she wishes to use has been hustled off to a distant location. This has in fact happened, but not very often. Publicity for the SHSW and the Area Research Centers emphasizes the need to make prior arrangements before visiting a repository, something, in any event, that scholars are accustomed to doing. Most situations like this can be resolved with a telephone call and some photocopying, or an early return of material by the repository where the collection temporarily resides.

A more common concern is in-state competition for collections during par-

ticular times of the year. For example, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee finds that its manuscripts relating to civil rights activist James Groppi and its records from the Milwaukee chapter of the NAACP are frequently requested during Black History Month. Occasionally, professors at several different universities teach similar courses in women's history at the same time and, as a consequence, request the same collections. But such instances are extremely low given that the aggregate size of the SHSW and Area Research Centers' collections is enormous and that at any one time less than one per cent of any repository's holdings are out on loan to another institution.

Security remains a concern, both during the transfer and at regional centers, where procedures are less easily monitored to ensure they remain at the same level as at the State Historical Society. A 1992 study indicated that some Centers had become lax in following certain security procedures – but security is a concern at all archival repositories and is certainly not always directly related to loaned archival collections.⁶³ Certainly none of the lapses were as blatant as the infamous case of the National Archives of the United States and the document thief Charles Merrill Mount, or the Library of Congress' practice of allowing supposed scholars to run loose in the stack areas.⁶⁴ Even so, following the study the ARC network archivists examined the problem and in April 1994 adopted a new set of "Guidelines for Collection Security" that made standards and expectations clear to everyone in the network.⁶⁵ Evidence suggests that this effort has been effective in ameliorating the problem.

Security risks are increased whenever collections are used, but one could also argue that the ease with which researchers are able to use materials helps suppress any predacious instincts they might have. In fact, the increased use by the Area Research Centers has actually helped reclaim records that were stolen. In at least one incident, records were transferred from Madison to a regional archives where they were used by a graduate student to write a thesis. Several important letters were later pilfered from the collection. The footnotes in the thesis were valuable both in pinpointing the approximate time of the theft, and in establishing the SHSW's claim to the letters once located.

Ultimately one must ask, "What's not to like?" For generations, archivists have been bemoaning the difficulty we have in attracting scholars to our doors. This is a way to serve scholarship more effectively. Many of us are concerned with the quality of education at colleges and universities. This is a means of improving it and in the process educating a whole generation of undergraduate and graduate students in the importance of primary records. We wail about our lack of a positive public image. This is a way to rectify this. We fret about "living with change in an archival world." This is a way to better use our existing resources and better serve the needs of both researchers and archives at the same time. But should one consider such a system, what are some of the more important considerations?

First, the experience in Wisconsin and Missouri suggests that all interlend-

ing should be done within the context of a formal agreement, network, or consortium where each party is familiar with the facilities, staff, and policies of the other participants. A formal relationship supports risk management and helps to reduce uncertainty about threats to the safety and security of collections. Solid, well-defined networks with formal policies, procedures, and resource sharing agreements are essential to the long-term preservation of archival materials. All of the various member institutions within the Wisconsin's Area Research Center network have entered into formal agreements and are bound by jointly developed policies and procedures governing security, transfers, preservation, and other aspects of their operation.

Second, the availability and use of alternative shipping possibilities is essential to any interlending program. The phrase "alternative shipping" here means that no collections should be transferred via regular mail. Although groups such as the American Library Association and the Research Libraries Group do not rule out the postal service, the sheer size of archival collections makes this means largely impractical. Sending a collection of even only one cubic foot via the postal service is not only dangerous from a preservation standpoint but also financially burdensome to most institutions. In the Wisconsin model, staff members using their vehicles have in the past provided adequate, if irregular service (and still do to an extent). During this time no collections were lost or damaged during transfer.

Third, it should be understood from the outset that some collections will never transfer. Existing archival and library network models stipulate exclusions to protect rare, fragile, or particularly valuable material. Special consideration must also be given to audiovisual and other media that must be given special handling because of the nature of the media. Beyond these initial restrictions, each lending institution should treat loans on a case-by-case basis.

Fourth, there should be equal treatment for local and distant researchers. It is difficult to imagine that an amicable sharing relationship could endure if an institution routinely (or even occasionally) recalled a collection prior to the end of an agreed-upon loan period. Wisconsin archivists have been able to work around occasional conflicts by emphasizing the principle that legitimate research needs are not determined on the basis of locality.

Fifth, prior planning is required before any such network is implemented. Participants need to agree on rules and procedures. Information sharing is crucial to the success of such a network. There, adequate descriptive systems must be in place so that researchers will be able to identify collections they need from other institutions and such that archivists can order those portions that they require. And finally, minimum standards regarding security, temperature and humidity control, staffing, and other administrative matters are critical to ensure that inter-institutional cooperation can be undertaken efficiently and equitably among all network members.⁶⁶

Notes

- 1 John Demont, "Pablo Wows Ottawa: The National Gallery's Picasso Show is a Huge Hit," *Macleans* (4 May 1998), pp. 9–11.
- 2 *Ibid.*, p. 11.
- 3 "Guidelines for Graduate Archival Education Programs," *American Archivist* 51, no. 3 (Summer 1988), p. 385.
- 4 Gerald F. Ham, *Planning for the Archival Profession: A Report of the SAA Task Force on Goals and Priorities* (Chicago, 1986), p. 22.
- 5 The actual count from the 1965–66 academic year through the 1992–93 academic year was 11,000 transfers. This figure does not include loans that have gone directly between network centers without passing through the State Historical Society. The exact total number also becomes difficult to calculate because over the years certain records, such as microfilm copies of state census records, have been made available through regular interlibrary loan channels.
- 6 The draft agreement is based upon that governing the statewide network. The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee will loan only university records and those manuscript collections that it owns. For the present time, collections kept on deposit in Milwaukee by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin are not eligible for loan to the Medical College or Marquette, although all three institutions are confident that this will change once the viability of the new local network is established.
- 7 Timothy L. Ericson, "Survey of Archival Networks," *Midwestern Archivist* 6, no. 2 (1982), pp. 107, 115.
- 8 Society of American Archivists, *Code of Ethics for Archivists and Commentary* (1992), p. 1; Association of Canadian Archivists, *A Code of Ethics for Archivists in Canada* (n.d.), p. 1. The American *Code of Ethics for Archivists and Commentary* states that archivists "encourage use of [their holdings] to the greatest extent compatible with ... [the] preservation of holdings." The *Code of Ethics for Archivists in Canada* states that archivists should "encourage and promote the greatest possible use of records in their care, giving attention to ... the preservation of records."
- 9 James Woolley, "Special Collections Lending: A Reader's View," *Rare Books and Manuscripts Librarianship* 3 (Fall 1988), p. 124.
- 10 David Bearman, "Archival Methods," *Archives and Museum Informatics Technical Report* 3, no. 1 (Spring 1989), p. 47.
- 11 David Bearman, "Archival Strategies," *American Archivist* 58, no. 4 (1995), p. 404. Secondary and tertiary users, Bearman explains, are people who, for whatever reason, would not normally come to an archives themselves but use other types of institutions for "archival evidence," be it at a public library, or other similar institution. In Wisconsin, secondary and tertiary users have been brought to the numerous university libraries across the state. These users might not have traveled to the state's archives in Madison. Over the years the Area Research Centers at many of these institutions have become archives in their own right.
- 12 Connell B. Gallagher, "Resource Sharing Among Archival Institutions and Special Collections: Focus on the User While Protecting the Collection," *Mississippi Libraries* 58, no. 4 (Winter 1994), p. 94.
- 13 The eleven Wisconsin campuses are located at Eau Claire, Green Bay, Kenosha (University of Wisconsin-Parkside), La Crosse, Menomonie (University of Wisconsin-Stout), Milwaukee, Oshkosh, Platteville, River Falls, Stevens Point, and Whitewater. For more information see <http://www.shsw.wisc.edu/archives/arcnet>.
- 14 For example, each of the eleven University of Wisconsin campuses own their own university archives and many have developed their own collections of manuscripts, maps, and oral histo-

- ries that are not technically part of the ARC network. Most of these materials can circulate using the same ARC loan procedures. Exceptions are the large collection of Mississippi steamboat photographs at the University of Wisconsin La Crosse and a large collection of more than 30,000 glass plate negatives originating from a Milwaukee photography studio and owned by the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. However, in these cases, ownership is not the issue. It is unlikely, in any event, that either of these collections would circulate because of their fragility and intrinsic value.
- 15 These figures were obtained by Joshua Ranger, who coordinated SHSW loans for part of this time. The numbers reflect transfers that involved the SHSW headquarters alone, although this amounts to roughly ninety per cent of the total.
 - 16 At this time only the headquarters' building uses an automated record-keeping system, using it for tracking exclusively collections it lends or borrows (approximately ninety per cent of the transfers).
 - 17 Owing to the fact they are used daily, naturalization papers almost never transfer in the system; likewise the Lyman Draper Manuscript collection, a corner stone of the SHSW collections and arguably the most prestigious of the SHSW collections does not transfer.
 - 18 Due in part to the increased number of loans brought about by introduction of the network courier system, on 25 April 1996 the University of Wisconsin System Archives Council (which includes a representative from each of the Area Research Centers) adopted a document with guidelines to govern loan periods and resolve competing requests.
 - 19 Two of the northernmost institutions, at the Superior Public Library and the Northern Great Lakes Center, are not served by the courier system at this time. Transfers to these institutions still must be made by the Area Research Center or SHSW staff.
 - 20 The ARC network has elected not to transfer materials on weekends, so that a collection does not sit at the SCLS warehouse for more than one night. For this reason, collections are not shipped on Fridays and the resulting turnaround time is somewhat longer.
 - 21 This information includes the destination and language detailing each bin's place within a larger shipment (i.e., number one of five, number two of five, and so on).
 - 22 "Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Conference of Archivists Boston, December 28, 1912." Appendix A, *Proceedings of the American Historical Association*, (1912) p. 258.
 - 23 National Archives and Records Service, General Services Administration, "National Archives Staff Information Paper #20" (Washington, March 1955).
 - 24 Ibid. The earlier report from which this extraction was taken was the "Report on the Public Archives and Historical Interests of the State of Illinois," (Springfield, 1913), p. 52.
 - 25 T.R. Schellenberg, *Modern Archives Principles and Techniques* (Chicago, 1956 [Midway Reprint, 1975]), p. 233.
 - 26 "ALA/SAA Joint Statement on Access to Original Research Materials," *College and Research Libraries News* 4 (April 1979), p. 111.
 - 27 "ALA/SAA Joint Statement on Access to Original Research Materials: A Draft," *College and Research Libraries News* 54, no. 11 (December 1993), p. 649.
 - 28 The evolution of the joint statement may have reflected work done that same year by the RBMS toward a special collections interlending model to be incorporated into ALA's interlibrary loan procedures. In early 1993, a committee of the RBMS presented a document titled "Draft Guidelines for the Loan of Rare and Unique Materials" to the RBMS executive committee. The document was approved by the section and later approved by the ALA Standards Committee at that group's midwinter conference in 1994. Its guidelines are extremely important because they represent the strongest endorsement of archival and special collection interlending known to the profession. That being said, the document was not unique.
 - 29 Society of American Archivists, *Planning for the Archival Profession: A Report of the SAA Task Force on Goals and Priorities* (Chicago, 1986).
 - 30 Ibid., p. 29.

- 31 Research Libraries Group, *RLG Shared Resources Manual*, 3rd ed. (Stanford, 1987), p. 39.
- 32 *Ibid.*, p. 127.
- 33 Mary Jo Pugh, *Providing Reference Services for Archives and Manuscripts* (Chicago, 1992), pp. 89–91.
- 34 Information regarding WHMC comes from an interview between Joshua Ranger and David Bourtos of the Western Historical Manuscript Collection, Kansas City, 12 November 1997.
- 35 The lack of online bibliographic access is perhaps the network's most significant drawback. With its limited finding aids to the other parts of the collection, distant researchers are required to contact the reference staff of the lending institution. Some researchers travel to the lending institutions, confer with reference staff, and arrange for the transfer of materials back to their more local branch. This is not the most ideal way to facilitate a lending system.
- 36 This individual, it is important to understand, is not an archivist, and therefore does not scrutinize the potential danger to a collection of a transfer.
- 37 One might argue that a system this complex needs a more rigorous, preferably automated, system of tracking transfers of materials. All of these concerns are magnified when one considers Missouri's risky practice of transferring at the folder level. This policy should be reconsidered.
- 38 Mary Lynn Ritzenthaler, *Preserving Archives and Manuscripts* (Chicago, 1993), p. 115.
- 39 Thomas V. Lange, "Alternatives to Interlibrary Loan," *Rare Books and Manuscripts Librarianship* 3 (Fall 1988), p. 111.
- 40 *Ibid.*
- 41 James Woolley, "Special Collections," p. 123.
- 42 Ellen Dunlap and Kathleen Reed, quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 121.
- 43 The entire issue of *The Midwestern Archivist* 6, no. 2 (1982) consists of the proceedings of the National Conference on Regional Archival Networks, funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities and sponsored by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, the Midwest Archives Conference, and the University of Wisconsin System Archives Council. The conference was held in Madison, Wisconsin, 14–17 July 1981. Although dated in parts, this issue is still a useful source for information pertaining to regional archival networks in the United States. It contains eleven papers that were given at the conference and a "Survey of Archival Networks" that includes nine statewide networks, the NARS (now National Archives and Records Administration) regional network, and the U.S. Presidential Library Network.
- 44 Schellenberg, *Modern Archives Principles and Techniques*, pp. 233–34. In considering loans, Schellenberg advised that "the possible injury or destruction of archives by their use elsewhere than in the archival building should be weighed against the borrower's need." He specifically mentioned that records must be loaned under conditions that "preserve them physically and preserve their record character." He cautioned against loaning records that were damaged or in fragile condition, as well as records with high intrinsic value.
- 45 Smaller portions of such collections may be requested by patrons, and once these are returned, additional portions may be borrowed.
- 46 Josephine L. Harper, *Guide to the Draper Manuscripts* (Madison, 1983). The Draper Manuscripts were collected by Lyman Copeland Draper, one of the founders in 1846 of the State Historical Society. Draper was interested in the history of the trans-Allegheny Western United States, from Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia, through the Ohio River Valley and the upper Mississippi River. The collection encompasses the period from the 1740s through the American Revolution and the War of 1812. The collection includes material relating to Canadian history, particularly in Series F, Joseph Brant Papers.
- 47 Before the advent of the courier service most of the transfers – well over ninety per cent – were made by archivists from the State Historical Society of Wisconsin or one of the regional archives. Occasionally small deliveries are entrusted to university chancellors and less frequently to local government legislators traveling to or from a session in the state capitol. Both

- of these latter strategies had tremendous outreach potential for those archivists who chose to exploit them.
- 48 Lange, "Alternatives to ILL," p. 108. Megan Mulder quotes Lange's same words in making a similar point in her article, "Just Say No?: Special Collections and Interlibrary Loan," *North Carolina Libraries* (Fall 1995), p. 113.
- 49 This is not true of most libraries, since their collections are largely duplicated by peer institutions. Instead, most libraries tend to emphasize the sheer size and diversity of their collections instead of specific titles or collecting areas.
- 50 Woolley, "Special Collections," p. 123.
- 51 Bearman, "Archival Methods," pp. 39–40.
- 52 Maurice Line, "Interlending and Conservation: Friends or Foes?" in *Line on Interlending* (Boston Spa, 1988), p. 265.
- 53 Richard A. Erney and F. Gerald Ham, "Wisconsin's Area Research Centers," *American Libraries* (February 1972), pp. 135–140.
- 54 Timothy L. Ericson, "Sharing the Wealth," *MRRRC News* 2 (May 1980), p. 1.
- 55 Erney, "Wisconsin's Area Research Centers," p. 138.
- 56 Ann D. Gordon, *Using the Nation's Documentary Heritage* (Washington, D.C., 1992), p. 8.
- 57 *Ibid.*, p. 41.
- 58 Erney, "Wisconsin's Area Research Centers," p. 138.
- 59 Public Archives of Canada, "The Detailed Findings of the Researcher Assistance and Public Service Program Evaluation Study," Vol. 2 (Ottawa, 1985), pp. 14, 23, 25.
- 60 Marcel Caya, *Canadian Archives in 1992* (Ottawa, 1992), p. 58. In the footnotes to her chapter, Beyea also cites the example of a 1968 meeting of the Archives Section of the Canadian Historical Association where "competition over acquisitions provided the theme for one of the liveliest sessions in the history of Canadian archival meetings" (p. 67).
- 61 Ericson, "Sharing the Wealth," p. 2.
- 62 These figures were obtained by Joshua Ranger and are based on a conversation with employees at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin.
- 63 Vincent A. Totka, "Preventing Patron Theft in the Archives: Legal Perspectives and Problems," *American Archivist* 56 (Fall 1993), pp. 664–72.
- 64 Mark Stevens et al., "The Tale of a Frog Prince," *Newsweek* (31 August 1987), p. 22. Charles Merrill Mount was a document thief who was arrested in 1987 by the Federal Bureau of Investigation for the interstate transportation of stolen goods, largely manuscripts taken from the American National Archives in Washington, D.C. The case brought nationwide attention to a lax security system at the National Archives and the risks of granting preferential treatment to supposed scholars. Mount's success in stealing documents was largely the result of his being permitted to conduct his "research" in an unsupervised area and not being closely searched when he left the building each day.
- 65 "State Historical Society of Wisconsin Area Research Center Network Guidelines for Collection Security," (April 1994). The guidelines dealt with the layout of area research center space, collection storage, handling of collections, public service, and procedures for dealing with theft or suspected theft of materials.
- 66 The influential "Core Mission & Minimum Standards for Archives in the University of Wisconsin System," adopted in 1978, emerged from concerns among Wisconsin archivists that basic operating standards within the Area Research Center network be adopted. The document was heavily used a year later when the Society of American Archivists' Committee on College and University Archives developed its own *Guidelines for College & University Archives*. In acknowledging this, the SAA committee chair noted, "indeed, many passages in this document were adopted directly from [the Wisconsin] work."

APPENDIX A**AREA RESEARCH CENTER AGREEMENT****INTRODUCTION**

On 14 December 1962 the State Historical Society of Wisconsin (SHSW) and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM) entered into an agreement to cooperate in the administration of an Area Research Center (ARC) on the UWM campus ... In the ensuing 35 years, the UWM's archival program has developed far beyond what it was at that time and the cooperative relationship between the SHSW and the UWM has developed in areas that were unforeseen when the original agreement was signed. ...

In order to reflect new circumstances, to better take advantage of new venues for cooperation, and to build upon their longstanding working relationship, the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee Golda Meir Library and the State Historical Society of Wisconsin hereby amend their December 14, 1962 agreement according to the terms stated in Section VII-1 of that document.

In so doing, both institutions reaffirm their prior commitment to cooperate in the operation of an Area Research Center at the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee, under the provisions of Section 44.10, *Wisconsin Statutes*, 1961.

This document replaces in its entirety the document executed December 14, 1962. In exchange for the mutual consideration contained herein, the parties agree as follows:

A. GOALS

In maintaining a Milwaukee Area Research Center, the SHSW and the UWM have as their primary goals to:

- encourage historical studies and enrich the resources for historical research
- provide more adequately for the collection, preservation, and administration of such resources
- assist the SHSW to better fulfill its mission to the people of the State of Wisconsin by making available resources and maintaining a presence throughout the state
- enable UWM to better fulfill its mission of teaching, research, and service by providing to students, staff, and the local community, access to archival records

- provide to the local community archival services and technical expertise in establishing an archives, preserving documents, organizing and administering archival collections and promoting the value and use of historical records.

B. GEOGRAPHICAL AREA ENCOMPASSED BY THE AREA RESEARCH CENTER

1. The ARC agrees to be responsible for the geographical area consisting of the Wisconsin counties of Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Sheboygan, Washington and Waukesha.

C. UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN – MILWAUKEE RESPONSIBILITIES

The Milwaukee ARC is part of a larger commitment by UWM to promote the preservation and use of historical records in the Milwaukee metropolitan area. The ARC is operated by the Archives and Special Collections Division of the Golda Meir Library in conjunction and cooperation with other formal programs and relationships that include the UWM University Archives and Records Management program, the UWM Manuscripts Collection, the University of Wisconsin System Archives Council (UWSAC) and the Library Council of Metropolitan Milwaukee (LCOMM) Archives Committee.

In its role as an ARC, the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee Golda Meir Library agrees to:

1. Provide suitable storage and research space and professional supervision for the storage, protection and servicing of all materials placed in the ARC under this agreement. Guidelines for this are specified by the UWSAC *Core Mission and Minimum Standards for University Archives in the University of Wisconsin System* the *American Library Association/Society of American Archivists Joint Statement on Access to Archival and Manuscript Materials*, and by ARC security guidelines and other such guidelines as may be adopted for use by the ARC Network.
2. Make available to the public at such regular hours as the ARC may maintain, the materials placed in the ARC under this agreement.
3. Coordinate collecting interests and cooperate with the SHSW in the acquisition and preservation of historical records and documents within the geographical area assigned to the ARC.
4. Share with the SHSW and other ARCs, bibliographic information about UWM Archives and UWM Manuscripts collections.
5. Make available to the SHSW or to other ARCs, by temporary transfer through the ARC loan network, such records or documents as may prudently be physically transferred, or transmitted via facsimile or other electronic means. In addition to ARC materials, this includes records from the UWM Archives and from the UWM Manuscripts Collection.

Loan decisions will be made with proper regard for statutory limitations, donor restrictions, preservation concerns, and other considerations relative to the safety and most effective scholarly use of the materials. Conditions and periods of transfer shall be in accordance with the "UWSAC/ARC Statement on Archival Loans."

The temporary transfer of cartographic and photographic records will be considered only on a case by case basis.

6. Maintain an appropriate collection of reference works, guides, and other printed materials for the use of researchers who use the ARC collection.
7. Fulfill in accordance with UWM policy and with guidelines contained in the "UWSAC/ARC Statement on Fees and Reference Services," any reasonable requests for reference service on ARC materials, and to maintain satisfactory records of such service.
8. Acknowledge the interest of the SHSW in the professional qualifications of persons hired to direct the ARC by seeking an evaluation of candidates by the SHSW Archives Division during the hiring process.

D. STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WISCONSIN RESPONSIBILITIES

The State Historical Society of Wisconsin agrees to:

1. Offer for deposit in the ARC all local and county public records originating in the area assigned to the ARC (Section B-1 above) that have been acquired by the SHSW; and such state records as may be placed in the ARC in accordance with Section 16.80 (13)(a), *Wisconsin Statutes*, 1961.
2. Offer for deposit in the ARC all private manuscript material acquired by the SHSW pertaining to the area assigned to the ARC, with the following exceptions:
 - (a) records or documents that the SHSW determines to be of such statewide or national focus that the needs of research would be better served if they are maintained elsewhere;
 - (b) records or documents which are additions to collections already at the SHSW, or directly related to the SHSW's national collecting areas in Labor History, Social Action, Mass Communications, and Film and Theater History in which cases the needs of research would best be served by placing them in Madison;
 - (c) such other records and documents or types of collections as the parties to this agreement shall agree should be placed at the SHSW.
3. Include with materials deposited at the ARC, documents such as photographs and maps that are integral to the collection and whose separation would be detrimental to the needs of research.
4. Process and catalogue in a timely way all records and document collections

placed in the ARC except when the SHSW and the ARC mutually agree that the needs of research are better served by having the collection processed by the ARC.

5. Provide, or reimburse the ARC for, such supplies as boxes and folders used in processing SHSW collections at the ARC.
6. Create, maintain, and make available to the ARC, online and printed bibliographic information about SHSW records and documents located in Madison or at other ARCs.
7. Make available to the ARC by temporary transfer through the ARC loan network, such records or documents as may prudently be transferred, or transmitted via facsimile or other electronic means.

Loans will be made with proper regard for statutory limitations, donor restrictions, preservation concerns, and other considerations relative to the safety and most effective scholarly use of the materials. Conditions and periods of transfer will be made in accordance with the "UWSAC/ARC Statement on Archival Loans."

The temporary transfer of cartographic or photographic records will be considered only on a case by case basis.

E. MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WISCONSIN AND THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN – MILWAUKEE AREA RESEARCH CENTER

The SHSW and the UWM-ARC agree to the following shared responsibilities:

1. To cooperate in the temporary transfer of archival collections between the SHSW and the ARC or between the ARC and other ARCs. Such cooperation may be via staff members in state vehicles, or via courier service, facsimile, or other electronic means.
2. To cooperate in addressing requests by either party to reconsider where an archival collection should be permanently deposited or to suggest strategies such as microfilming designed to make records more quickly available to researchers.
3. To determine where newly acquired collections should be deposited until they can be processed.
4. To consider requests from other institutions concerning the temporary transfer of ARC materials if such transfers will better serve the needs of researchers.
5. To coordinate and cooperate as much as practicable in collection development priorities and acquisitions.
6. To administer on a case by case basis details relating to such matters as:
 - loans that take place directly between ARCs
 - collection development priorities

- responsibility for providing copies or reproductions of documents, photographs, audiotapes, and videotapes
- processing guidelines, procedures, and standards related to ARC processing of SHSW collections
- the review of draft finding aids or other mutual documents.

F. UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN – MILWAUKEE ARCHIVES AND MANUSCRIPTS

1. It is mutually agreed that UWM Archives and UWM Manuscripts collections belonging to the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee shall not be subject to any of the terms of this agreement except as noted in Section C-5 above.

G. TITLE TO MATERIALS

1. It is mutually agreed that in order to guarantee continuity of responsibility for the collection, and to provide statewide uniformity in the administration of such records, title to all archives and manuscripts deposited by the SHSW in the ARC established by this agreement shall reside in the State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

H. AMENDMENT OR TERMINATION

1. This agreement may be amended at any time by agreement of both parties.
2. This agreement may be terminated by any party thereto, on one year’s notice in writing to the other party. In event of termination of this agreement, custody of all archives and manuscripts placed in the ARC by the SHSW shall revert to the State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin	Date
Chancellor, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee	Date
Director, Golda Meir Library	Date