

# THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING DIVERSE: THE ARCHIVAL PROFESSION AND MINORITY RECRUITMENT

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**ABSTRACT:** Recent projections indicate that the American work force will become increasingly pluralistic during the 21st century. What implications do these changing demographics have for the archival profession? Regardless of racial background, individuals have joined the profession in small numbers. The field remains largely racially homogenous, however, despite some past and current efforts to remedy the situation. The author presents reasons why the issue of diversity demands archivists' concern, explores the reasons behind the shortage of minorities in the profession, and suggests possible means by which to encourage more people of color to enter.

As the 21st century approaches, considerable, if not much, ado is being made about the presence (or absence) of multicultural diversity<sup>1</sup> within various disciplines and professions. According to current forecasts, such as the oft-cited *Workforce 2000*, the appearance of the American labor pool is changing. The size of the total work force is growing more slowly, while the numbers of older, female, immigrant,<sup>2</sup> and non-white workers<sup>3</sup> are increasing. By the year 2000, forecasters predict, non-whites will compose 29 percent of new entrants into the work force, having doubled in size as a group since 1987.<sup>4</sup> Native-born white males will make up only 15 percent of newcomers in this future group of workers; at the time of the study's publication, their percentage stood at 47 percent.<sup>5</sup> How should the archival profession adapt to these shifting demographics? In her president's message to the membership, Brenda Banks, immediate past president of the Society of American Archivists (SAA), offers the following guidelines:

For many years SAA has made futile attempts to recruit non-whites into our profession. Yet, according to predictions, even without notable recruitment efforts, the profession will eventually begin to reflect U.S. population trends. We should, therefore, turn our attention from the narrow focus of recruitment to address the broad implications that this shift in the population and workforce anticipates. Perhaps we should be thinking about: how collections will change, how documentation

strategies may be broadened, who will be using the collections, what format will make collections most useful and accessible, who will manage collections, and how will they be trained.<sup>6</sup>

While Banks rightly asserts that these wide-ranging implications merit archivists' concern, the issue of minority recruitment should also remain part of the future archival panorama. Social, organizational, and economic benefits can result from building a multicultural workforce within the profession.

The social reasons for cultivating racial diversity might seem obvious but bear some elucidation. Simply put, cultural gaps ultimately can be bridged as individuals of various racial groups are encouraged to work together and learn about one another. Ideally, "[diversity] signifies an acceptance of difference and represents a commitment to valorize the full spectrum of cultural backgrounds and experiences *alongside* the perspectives of white, European males."<sup>7</sup> Within the archival profession and within society at large, the call for increased diversity is a call for *inclusion*, not *replacement*. Members of each racial group have already influenced American culture, contributing in areas ranging from literature and the arts to technology to enriching the general lexicon. Although the contributions of some of these groups have not necessarily been widely acknowledged, this inherent pluralism prevails and should continue to be nourished. In their article "Diversity: Ten Issues to Consider," Kathleen de la Peña McCook and Tosca O. Gonsalves offer an additional rationale for the social value of increasing diversity as they outline matters about which library professionals should be concerned. "The United States has been a fortunate nation," the authors contend, "because of the waves of new cultures and people who have found a home through successive generations. Recognizing that this has been our strength all along, fostering diversity based on historical precedent just makes good sense."<sup>8</sup>

From a management perspective, promoting diversity also makes good sense...good business sense. Diversity management expert R. Roosevelt Thomas aptly makes this case. "Managing diversity does not mean controlling or containing diversity, it means enabling every member of your workforce to perform to his or her potential,"<sup>9</sup> Thomas explains. The so-called melting pot metaphor, which discourages racial distinctions in favor of conformity to the status quo, no longer works in organizational management (if it ever did); much more effective is the incorporation of these employees' unique traits into the missions and daily business practices of organizations.<sup>10</sup> Lest it be thought that an increase in racial diversity will lead to a decrease in quality, Thomas disagrees: "...[C]ompetence counts more than ever. The goal is to manage diversity in such a way as to get from a diverse workforce the same productivity we once got from a homogeneous workforce, and to do it without artificial programs, standards—or barriers."<sup>11</sup> For archival institutions, Thomas's statements definitely apply. Expanding the numbers of staff members of color and tapping their potential should (and no doubt would) enhance the overall functions of archives and manuscript repositories. New ideas would likely be stimulated in areas that include, but certainly are not limited to, donor relations (for instance, how to approach and document members of growing communities of color most effectively) and reference/access (determining how to improve services as user groups become increasingly diverse, or how to attract a more diverse pool of researchers if society's changing demographics are not reflected).

Closely related to the organizational rationale is the notion that the buck could, quite literally, stop here. If our archival stock is not diversified for the aforementioned reasons, then consider the financial imperative. As H. Nicholas Muller III warned in 1990:

Those historical societies which rely on public support must face some dawning demographic and political realities. In 1995, black, Asian, and Hispanic eighteen-year-olds will outnumber whites of the same age in the United States...Such 'minorities' will send larger delegations to the city councils, county boards, and state legislatures. In turn, these politicians—who may have little or no experience with historical societies and who may even regard them with hostility as bastions of an old white elite—will allocate public funds upon which public cultural agencies rely.<sup>12</sup>

This prophetic projection does not bode well for a profession already largely plagued by a lack of funds and staff. The implication for archivist is obvious; our very economic survival depends on how seriously measures are taken to embrace the burgeoning multiracial society.

As Brenda Banks has indicated, archivists' awareness of the need for attention to this issue is hardly new. In 1972, SAA's Committee for the 1970s advised the Society to "appoint a standing committee on minority groups to press for the rights and advancement of minorities."<sup>13</sup> Yet, no such action was taken until 1978, when Robert M. Warner developed a joint committee comprising members of SAA, the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH), and the American Association of Museums (AAM), to tackle the issue of such recruitment in cultural institutions. The committee set as its ultimate purpose:

to study the present situation, develop statistics and other information, and try to determine what the handicaps are that prevent minorities from being more involved in museums, archives and historical agencies. This includes, but is not limited to, personnel, programs, outreach activities and visitation. Further, the Committee is to work to develop ideas, programs, methods, and procedures that can be implemented nationwide to increase minority-group participation in all of the areas above. The Committee shall develop a preliminary plan for its activities and a preliminary budget and then proceed to a grant request for the necessary funds to accomplish the plan.<sup>14</sup>

Unfortunately, a lack of adequate finances curtailed the activities of this group, save for the writing of a grant proposal submitted to the National Endowment for the Humanities requesting funds to cover an ambitious recruitment campaign.<sup>15</sup>

The formation of the SAA/AASLH/AAM Joint Committee was not the only initiative taken by SAA to address the issue of cultural diversity during that period. At the 1981 annual meeting in Berkeley, California, Council passed a resolution to establish an internal SAA Minorities Task Force to complement the joint committee's efforts to promote the recruitment of minorities into the profession and increase their participation.<sup>16</sup> Thomas C. Battle was appointed to serve as chair. During the few years that followed, this group held open houses at the SAA annual meetings, along with a roundtable discussion at Howard University. In 1985, these activities caught the eye of

Vice President/President Elect Shonnie Finnegan, who suggested that the task force restructure itself as a roundtable.<sup>17</sup> Ultimately, members of the task force agreed; its regrouping culminated in 1987 with what is known now as the Archivists and Archives of Color Roundtable.

Surprisingly, virtually no articles have been published in archival journals about minority recruitment in the profession or about archivists of color. Ann Allen Shockley fills part of the gap with her essay, "Librarians, Archivists, and Writers: A Personal Perspective," by covering (albeit briefly) the past, present, and future of African Americans in the profession.<sup>18</sup> As archivists have broadened their repositories' collecting scopes, or established new institutions devoted to previously underdocumented areas, such as religion, ethnic groups, and social history, they have written case studies about them. But these publications often focus more on the materials collected than on the collectors.<sup>19</sup>

The archival profession's familiar bedfellow, librarianship, has generated a larger body of work that documents the presence of people of color in the field. For example, E.J. Josey, of the University of Pittsburgh's School of Information and Library Science, has been particularly prolific in the study of African-American librarians.<sup>20</sup> A recent spate of articles focuses on librarians' concerns about how the predicted changes in racial demographics may affect libraries and the profession as a whole.<sup>21</sup> As is the case with its allied fields, such as archives, records management, and the museum curatorial profession, the library profession cannot boast of a flawless past or present, where minority participation is concerned. For instance, according to the Association for Library and Information Science Education, a paltry 8.5% of graduates of library science master's programs in the 1991–1992 academic year were people of color.<sup>22</sup> To the field's credit, however, several of its professionals have continued to grapple with the issue of recruitment and to recommend measures for improvement. A few of these measures, which will be discussed later, can be applied to archives, adapted into strategies that are both viable and valuable. This paper is intended to further the general<sup>23</sup> discussion of cultural diversity in the archival profession by addressing two questions: One, why are relatively few minorities entering the profession, and two, what actions should be taken to recruit archivists of color?

Why are relatively few minorities entering the profession? This first question begs another: How many people of color are already archivists? To account for *all* minorities in the profession would be a difficult, if not impossible, task. A more manageable approach lies in focusing on the profession's national organization, the Society of American Archivists, and its minority membership. Unfortunately, according to J. Frank Cook, who maintains SAA's archives at the University of Wisconsin—Madison, SAA has never collected data about the racial backgrounds of its members in any systematic manner.<sup>24</sup> And unlike Mabel E. Deutrich and Michele F. Pacifico, who, in their respective studies, were able to identify most women archivists from SAA's records on the basis of first names,<sup>25</sup> minority archivists cannot be quite so easily discerned, even by last name. Since SAA membership applications do not routinely ask for such information (and of course, even if they did, members would not be *required* to provide it), precise figures of the minority membership as a whole are simply not available.

The mailing list of the Archivists and Archives of Color Roundtable provides some indication of minority representation in SAA. Currently, the list contains more than 400 individual members. But this tally is rather insufficient. After all, not every member of the roundtable is a person of color, nor do all SAA members of color belong to the round table. In 1993, roundtable leadership began gathering data for a membership directory via a questionnaire, which asked for racial/ethnic background. Despite a meager response (only 54 surveys were returned), the draft of the directory represented a promising step toward tracking the minority archivists who have joined SAA. The recently published edition contains more than 90 entries.<sup>26</sup> All of the individuals included classify themselves as archivists, but not all are SAA members.

Several reasons for the shortage of minorities entering the profession can be identified, each laden with complexities. This discussion offers three of the most significant: One, archivists' public image (or lack thereof); two, a tradition of neglect of communities of color by the information professions; and three, low graduation rates, particularly at the graduate level. A likely fourth contributing factor is a usual suspect: economics.

Archivists are not the only information professionals to be plagued by image problems. Librarians, for example, have faced many stereotypes of their profession over the years, including that of the perpetually patron-shushing, bookish, and bespectacled individual. Yet rarely do they encounter someone who has *no* idea of what librarians do. In regard to archivists, it is another story. As Richard J. Cox points out, "The general public and even employers now seem to lack any real comprehension of the nature or importance of archival work."<sup>27</sup> Timothy L. Ericson takes this notion of public perception a step further. "We either have no image at all or one that is a stereotype, or an image that is absolutely ridiculous, such as the occupational outlook that equated the work of archivists with that of crossword-puzzle makers and disc jockeys,"<sup>28</sup> he says. Naturally, it follows that since this lack of awareness affects the general population, some individuals of color experience it as well.

A particular image may persist in the minds of some people of color, however: that of archives as institutions that predominantly preserve the history of European Americans. After all, prior to the late 1960s, many historical agencies did just that, collecting primarily the papers of famous white men, and to a lesser degree, those of famous white women and famous black men.<sup>29</sup> The very shortage of minority archivists being examined here also fuels this lingering perception. Failing to see themselves as culturally represented on archival staffs, some members of minority groups may conclude that the profession is one that does not welcome their participation.

The relatively sparse number of people of color earning master's degrees also plays a part in minorities not entering the profession. Most archival employers seek candidates who have completed at least one master's degree program, typically in history or library science. Yet, according to a study released by the U.S. National Center for Education Statistics, of all master's degrees conferred in 1992, African-American students received 5.2%, Asian-Americans/Pacific Islanders 3.6%, Hispanics 2.7%, and Native Americans and Alaskan Natives .4%.<sup>30</sup> These figures may not sound particularly alarming, unless it is noted that according to the 1990 census, African-Americans constituted 12.1% and Hispanics, 9% of the U.S. population.<sup>31</sup> The education statistics then appear

to be quite low. Several reasons may account for this paucity, including the rising costs of graduate education and the lack of support systems for minorities within some institutions. Nonetheless, with the percentage of minorities earning master's degrees—irrespective of field—so small to begin with, how can the pool of applicants of color for archival positions be sizable? Let us not underestimate the influence of long-term economics: Many of these graduates have been lured—at least in part—by the lucrative salaries now available to them in such professions as law, medicine, engineering, and business. Generally speaking, the archival profession cannot compete on this level.

To uncover additional reasons why more minorities are not pursuing archival careers, I decided to “begin at the end” by asking *current* archivists of color how they started their careers. I developed a brief survey instrument, which posed this question as well as asked respondents for the academic and professional degrees they have obtained, the length of their careers to date, their racial background, and their ages (See Appendix). The questionnaire is hardly scientific; in fact, it was never meant to be. Instead, it can be best described as an experience survey—a tool borrowed from social science research—that is designed to reveal the insights of a particular group of professionals.<sup>32</sup> I sent the survey to 100 archivists and special collections librarians whose names were taken from the Archivists and Archives of Color Roundtable's mailing list.

Despite the relatively low percentage of surveys returned (nearly 30%),<sup>33</sup> some interesting information was generated. As this survey instrument is largely of the experiential type, it follows that the experiences of the respondents are of greatest significance. Nonetheless, a brief profile of the makeup of the respondents is in order here as well. In terms of ethnicity, archivists of African descent composed a substantial majority of respondents (27 out of 29). Of the remaining respondents, one was Asian American and the other, Latino. Ages of respondents ranged from 25 to 81 and amounted to an average of 46.62 years.<sup>34</sup> Most of the respondents were 40 to 49 years old (10 of 28). Several individuals who reported their academic credentials had received a master's degree in library science (16 of 28), while seven received master's degrees in history or a related discipline, such as African-American Studies. Two respondents had earned both degrees. Another two respondents received degrees with special emphases on archives. Five obtained doctoral degrees in history. Still others earned master's degrees in areas not entirely common among archivists, such as counseling and divinity. Finally, a majority of respondents had spent eleven to twenty years in the profession (12 of 29 respondents). The number of respondents who had been in the profession between five and ten years or more than twenty (7 and 6 respondents of 29, respectively). Naturally, then, four archivist respondents had been employed by archival institutions for fewer than five years.

The question of how the individuals entered the profession generated an array of responses, which fell into seven broad categories. Respondents were introduced to archival work via: 1. college coursework, 2. participation in archival projects, 3. recruitment by archivist friends, 4. a shift in job responsibilities or promotion, 5. entrepreneurial opportunities, 6. general interest, or 7. sheer accident. No one category had a clear majority of responses. It should also be pointed out that the descriptions that respondents provided sometimes fit into more than one category. In those cases, I tried

to determine which reason predominated and placed the response accordingly. A sample of responses from each category follows.

Archives sparked the interest of four of the twenty-nine respondents while they were undergraduates. As a junior, one respondent “became completely enthralled by the profession” after taking a tour of an archives for a class on historiography. This fascination led her to enroll in a library science program and specialize in archives and special libraries. Another respondent had to write an extensive research paper, making use of primary source material in the archives of her institution, to fulfill the requirements for a major in history. While completing this assignment, she spoke with the university archivist about the profession. “After that rewarding exposure,” the respondent explains, “I decided to pursue the necessary graduate degrees to enter the archival profession as a professional.”

Four other respondents, not yet formally educated in archival studies, found themselves working on archival projects. They so enjoyed the work that they decided to build careers in the field. One such respondent was a graduate student in library science who volunteered at a local manuscript repository. Intrigued by the collection that she was assigned and confident that her interests in “research and literature” corresponded with archival practice, she sought out other opportunities to work in archives. Another respondent began his career in archives as a researcher for a national institution’s documentary editing project.

Approximately five respondents indicated that they had been recruited by friends or mentors to enter the profession. One retired librarian was encouraged by a friend and former colleague, as well as by the head of an institution’s archives department, to accept a position as a part-time processing archivist. Another respondent, who had been an English teacher and director of a number of education-related programs, was invited to apply for a position as an archival assistant. She was soon encouraged to obtain the professional training necessary to become a processing archivist, which she accomplished via attending an archives institute and a workshop.

Eight individuals experienced a shift in job responsibilities—typically from librarian to archivist—or some type of appointment. For instance, one respondent was a special collections librarian but was promoted to a position that required that she receive archival training. A second respondent moved from high-ranking positions in public services and circulation at his institution to become the head of Special Collections. The new position entailed his managing and overseeing manuscript collections. Still another respondent served as a clerk-typist for a federal repository before enrolling in its archival-training program. As a graduate student in history, one respondent had intended to pursue a university teaching career. He passed a civil service examination and fairly soon thereafter received an offer from a national repository to join its staff as an archivist. Yet another respondent had been studying law in his native country when he was selected by that country’s president to direct the nation’s archival research center.

Three archivists created their own positions: one established a religious archives, another an African-American history archives, and the third convinced the president of a university to support the creation of a campus archives. General interest in archives appeared to best describe the reasons for two respondents having entered the

profession. "Through my advanced studies in history and the excitement of researching old documents, I acquired this interest in the archival profession," one respondent said. The other respondent remarked that, while she was introduced to manuscript material as a library science graduate student, her "love of black history brought [her] to the archival field ultimately."

Two individuals entered the field purely by accident. One respondent, for example, dissatisfied with a career in social services, considered shifting to museum work. She volunteered at a state historical society, where she was introduced to manuscripts. Another respondent had recently earned a bachelor's in history and sought an alternative career to teaching. At that time, working in an archives had not occurred to her until she became an intern at the local state archives.

One archivist's response defied categorization. She reported that she "[v]oluntarily, but grudgingly" entered the profession because the graduate program in historical editing, which she sought, did not exist at the time. Before taking the plunge completely, however, she conducted an investigation of the profession to discover what it entailed. My own entrance into the archival profession—while somewhat of the "sheer accident" variety—slightly resembled that of the last respondent cited. I, too, used my investigatory skills to look into the field. As a former journalist, I am accustomed to taking a thread of an idea, conducting research and interviews, and weaving the data gathered into an informative story. Ironically, this very approach guided me into the archival profession. I was a graduate student in journalism, completing a class assignment, when the first thought of building an archival career set in. I wrote a feature profile about Bob DeFlores, a Minneapolis-based film collector, who preserves motion pictures and short jazz films (called "soundies") and makes them accessible to the public through free showings and lending them for use in documentaries and commercials. Although not a trained archivist, DeFlores showed such enthusiasm for his work during the interview that he piqued *my* curiosity to learn more about the archival profession. After graduation I served as a writer and an editor for a national art magazine. I enjoyed journalistic work but dreamed of finding a career that would combine writing and research with history and preservation. For nearly two years, I spent much of my spare time investigating books on careers. I discovered the existence of the Society of American Archivists in the aptly-titled book *Careers for Bookworms and Other Literary Types* by Marjorie Eberts and Margaret Gisler<sup>35</sup> and wrote to the organization for more information. I also conducted an informational interview with Penelope Krosch, university archivist at the University of Minnesota. The more I learned about the field, the more convinced I became that it was the right one for me. I then pursued a master's degree in library science at the University of Michigan.

The aforementioned archivists managed to settle into the profession. But what should be done to recruit more minorities? Broadly speaking, the answer is rather a trite-and-truism: take a proactive approach. Some measures have already been taken by SAA and two regional groups. One effort was the formation of the Archivists and Archives of Color Roundtable, a group within SAA, in 1987. This special-interest group, according to its mission statement, serves three primary purposes: "[To] identify and address the concerns of archivists of African, Asian, Hispanic, and Native American descent; [to] promote wider participation of said archivists in the archival profession,



and; [to] promote the preservation of archival materials that pertain to people of color.”<sup>36</sup> Members of this round table were instrumental in establishing the SAA Minority Student Award, which is an outreach effort intended to encourage students of color to consider archival careers and to participate in SAA.<sup>37</sup> The Midwest Archives Conference also offers a scholarship specifically to students of color, while the Kansas City Area Archivists offers a summer internship in an archival repository. Additionally, SAA now features a mentoring program, which is designed to introduce newer members into the profession and promote communication between the various generations that comprise SAA.<sup>38</sup> Although not aimed *specifically* at minority archivists, this program could go a long way toward fostering a positive atmosphere for, and advancing the professional growth of, recruits of color. In this respect, it has the possibility of moving beyond recruitment and into retention.

While these measures to address the need for a more pluralistic work force are good first steps, certainly more can and should be done. Generally speaking, archivists might begin by minding our c’s and u’s—colleges and universities. At historically black Fisk University, university archivist Ann Allen Shockley proposes to focus particularly on history students, encouraging them to use archival collections in their honors projects. Such experience introduces students both to historical documents and provides a glimpse into archivists’ responsibilities.<sup>39</sup>

Bibliographic instruction can be an effective tool in attracting undergraduates, but the net should be cast beyond the traditional fields of history and library science. Reaching out to students in area studies programs, such as Asian Studies, Chicano Studies, and the like, should yield prospective candidates. By establishing contact with the chairs and professors within the departments, college and university archivists could keep abreast of events that are taking place pertaining to and promoting the use of institution’s archives. Professors could be encouraged to work the archives into their curricula or to at least bring their students in for tours, for example. The archives might profit from extra assistance while offering students a chance to learn about archives via work-study or volunteer experiences. Meanwhile, the archivists could stay aware of potential recruits to the profession.

Concentrating exclusively on students of color at the college and graduate levels would be a drastic mistake, however. After all, before progressing to college and advanced degrees, students must receive high-school diplomas. Archivists from various types of repositories might consider volunteering to speak to students in high schools—and perhaps even in junior high schools—about what archival work entails. Of course, these presentations, tailor-fit for audiences of that age group, might best take place in the archives, so as to enable archivists to illustrate them with unusual, attention-grabbing materials. Career Day and other special programs involving young people are also possible venues for talking about archives. Schools with especially high concentrations of students of color should be targeted. In addition, young people’s clubs, such as the traditionally African-American Jack and Jill of America organization, also show promise as sources of eventual recruits. Granted, the results might not be immediately tangible; nonetheless, it is probably never too early to try to plant this professional seed in the minds of the young while imparting the significance of preserving historical documents. A few of them might actually listen.

Looking to the archival profession's allied field, librarianship, provides some additional inspiration. Em Claire Knowles makes sound suggestions for bringing people of color into librarianship in her article, "How to Attract Ethnic Minorities to the Profession." Among them, she recommends the establishment of networks within professional organizations and library personnel offices, the contacts for which would seek out potential recruits of color.<sup>40</sup> This idea can be broadened to encompass building relationships with the administrative staffs and members of local and national chapters of cultural, civic, and political organizations. The Asian Pacific American Heritage Council, the NAACP, the Hispanic Organization of Professionals and Executives, the Urban League, and the National Association of Asian-American Professionals, are but a few possible resources. Archivists from every type of archives or repository could benefit from establishing contacts of this sort. These individuals often have their fingers on the pulses of their respective communities. Not only might prospective recruits be revealed through such contact, but also potential donors of papers and resource allocators. Activities that might ordinarily be undertaken for the purpose of archival advocacy in general, such as attending cultural events and fairs, could be specially adapted to attract a few interested individuals. Find out if there are special events planned around Chinese New Year, Cinco de Mayo, or Juneteenth, for example, and try to arrange to participate in them. Some of the attendees encountered might become intrigued by the field. Simply put, archivists would likely learn how to better serve communities of color by requesting advice on outreach straight from the source.

Cultivating cultural organizational or community contacts offers additional perks. Like the Kansas City Area Archivists, members of other archival organizations and institutional staffs might develop internship programs for people of color. These interns would receive an introduction to archival work, and, once the contacts realize the mutual benefits of such programs, they might agree to sponsor the programs jointly. Ethnic newspapers should be considered essential resources as well. These newspapers typically reach segments of communities of color that might not always consult the mainstream media. Archival job opportunities most definitely should be advertised in the ethnic press.

This study serves as the proverbial tip of the iceberg of a highly complicated issue. Brenda Banks implies in her aforementioned forecast that recruitment is not necessarily as compelling an issue as retention of those archivists of color who have already joined the ranks. This and the factors that she demarcates all merit greater discussion, particularly as they relate to communities of color. Multicultural diversity is clearly a multifaceted matter. With its description of cultural diversity's ethical and financial significance to archives, consideration of some reasons for the shortage of minorities within the profession, and recommendations for developing and implementing recruitment measures, perhaps this article has introduced but a few threads into a tale yet to be completely woven.

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## APPENDIX

### *Diversity in the Archival Profession: A Survey*

This questionnaire was developed for the purpose of determining how archivists of color—both active and retired—originally entered the profession. Although respondents will not be referred to by name, survey results will be used in an article that examines the shortage of minorities in the profession. (Information relating to the return of the surveys omitted)

#### **Diversity in the Archival Profession: A Survey**

Academic or professional degree(s) obtained: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of years in profession: \_\_\_\_\_

Race/ethnicity \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_

How did you enter the archival profession? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(Please continue response on other side, if necessary)

Signature (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

## NOTES

1. Throughout this article, the terms *multicultural diversity* and *racial diversity* will be used synonymously to refer to the inclusion of persons of African, Asian or Pacific Islander, Latino, Native American, or Inuit descent. Members of these groups will be referred to collectively as *minorities* or *people of color*. The latter terms are hardly adequate. In some areas of the country, the numbers of individuals within these groups and the number of individuals of European extraction are roughly equal, thereby rendering the concept of *minority* meaningless. The phrase *of color* may be considered preferable but is also problematic. Superficially speaking, certain members of the aforementioned groups bear complexions similar to persons of European descent; sometimes the converse is true. And, if one person is described as being *of color*, does that mean that another can be colorless? It is, perhaps, a case of incurable semantics.
2. William B. Johnston and Arnold E. Packer, *Workforce 2000: Work and Workers for the Twenty-first Century* (Indianapolis, Ind.: Hudson Institute; Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Labor, 1987), xiii.
3. *Ibid.*, xx.
4. *Idem.*
5. *Ibid.*, xiii.
6. Brenda Banks, "SAA Beyond the Year 2000," *Archival Outlook* (November 1995), 3.
7. Carla J. Stoffle and Patricia A. Tarin, "No Place for Neutrality: The Case for Multiculturalism," *Library Journal* (July 1994), 48.
8. Kathleen de la Peña McCook and Tosca O. Gonsalves, "Diversity: Ten Issues to Consider," *The Bottom Line* 6:3/4 (Winter 1992/Spring 1993), 44.
9. R. Roosevelt Thomas, "From Affirmative Action to Affirming Diversity," *Harvard Business Review* 68 (March/April 1990), 112.
10. *Idem.*
11. *Idem.*
12. H. Nicholas Muller III, "Including Everyone," *Columns* (bimonthly newsletter of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin) 11:4 (August/September 1990), 3.
13. Philip P. Mason, "The Society of American Archivists in the Seventies: Report of the Committee for the 1970s," *American Archivist* 35:2 (April 1972), 205.
14. Joint Committee on Opportunities for Minorities in Museums, Archives, and Historical Agencies, "Recruitment and Training of Minority Groups in Cultural Institutions," undated draft of grant proposal, Committees, 1981-82: Joint SAA/AASLH/AAM on Minorities, SAA Archives, University of Wisconsin—Madison Archives, Madison, Wisconsin, 3. At the time that the grant proposal cited was developed, the committee consisted of: SAA representatives Philip P. Mason, chair (Wayne State University) and Elsie Freeman Freivogel (National Archives and Records Service); AASLH representatives H. Alonzo Jennings (African American Historical and Cultural Museum, Philadelphia) and Martha M. Bigelow (Michigan History Division, Department of State); and AAM representatives George H.J. Abrams (Seneca-Iroquois National Museum) and Raul A. Lopez (Riverside Municipal Museum, Riverside, California).
15. Philip P. Mason, "Archives in the Seventies: Promises and Fulfillment," *American Archivist* 44:3 (Summer 1981), 204.
16. "Minutes: Council Meeting, 4 September 1981," *American Archivist* 45:2 (Spring 1982), 239.
17. Shonnie Finnegan to Thomas C. Battle, 16 August 1985, Committees, 1985-86: Task Force with AASLH on Recruiting Minorities, SAA Archives, University of Wisconsin—Madison Archives, Madison, Wisconsin.
18. Ann Allen Shockley, "Librarians, Archivists, and Writers: A Personal Perspective," *The Black Librarian in America Revisited* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1994), 316-323.
19. For a general examination of the rise of such special-subject repositories and acquisitions issues facing them, see Linda J. Henry, "Collecting Policies of Special-Subject Repositories," *American Archivist* 43:1 (Winter 1980), 57-63.
20. A selection of Josey's works include: *The Black Librarian in America*, ed. (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1970); *What Black Librarians Are Saying*, ed. (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1972); *The Handbook of Black Librarianship*, ed. with Marva L. DeLoach (Littleton, Colo.: Libraries Unlimited, Inc., 1977); *Opportunities for Minorities in Librarianship*, ed. with Kenneth E. Peebles, Jr. (Metuchen,

- N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1977); "The State of Diversity," *The Reference Librarian* 45/46 (1994), 5–11; and *The Black Librarian in America Revisited*, ed. (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1994).
21. Besides the works that pertain to multicultural diversity in librarianship cited elsewhere in this article, see also: Ann Knight Randall, "Minority Recruitment in Librarianship," in *Librarians for the New Millennium*, ed. William E. Moen and Kathleen M. Heim (Chicago: American Library Association Office of Personnel Resources, 1988), 11–25; Benjamin F. Speller, Jr., ed., *Educating Black Librarians: Papers from the 50th Anniversary Celebration of the School of Library and Information Sciences, North Carolina Central University* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Company, 1991); Roberto G. Trujillo and David C. Walker, "Academic Library Responses to Cultural Diversity: A Position Paper for the 1990s," *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* 17:3 (July 1991), 157–161; Barbara Hoffert, "Dragon Dancers and Eastern Westerns: Serving the Asian American Community," *Library Journal* (July 1994), 42–45; Kathleen Hoover Hill, ed., *Diversity and Multiculturalism in Libraries*, Foundations in Library and Information Science, vol. 32 (Greenwich, Conn.: Jai Press, 1994); and Lorna Peterson, "Multiculturalism: Affirmative or Negative Action?" *Library Journal* (July 1995), 30–33.
  22. Kathleen de la Peña and Paula Geist, "Diversity Deferred: Where Are the Minority Librarians," *Library Journal* (1 November 1993), 35.
  23. Casting these groups into a collective multicultural basket introduces the risk of oversimplifying differences in histories, perceptions held by the so-called mainstream society, and cultural values within the groups. It is, of course, essential to take into account the aforementioned factors when addressing the issue of diversification, whether in an individual institution or within the entire profession. Given the paucity of literature on the subject of multicultural diversity and archivists, however, a broader focus will be taken in this discussion.
  24. Electronic mail response to author's query, J. Frank Cook, University of Wisconsin—Madison, 17 April 1994.
  25. Mabel E. Deutrich, "Women in Archives: Ms. Versus Mr. Archivist," *American Archivist* 36:2 (April 1973), 171–181, and Michele F. Pacifico, "Founding Mothers: Women in the Society of American Archivists, 1936–1972," *American Archivist* 50:3 (Summer 1987), 370–389.
  26. Carol A. Rudisell, comp., "African American and Third World Archivists Roundtable Membership Directory," preliminary edition (September 1993); Karen L. Jefferson, comp., *Archivists of Color Directory*, (Society of American Archivists: Archivists and Archives of Color Roundtable, 1995).
  27. Richard J. Cox, "Professionalism and Archivists," *American Archivist* 49:3 (Summer 1986), 239.
  28. Timothy L. Ericson, "'Preoccupied with our own gardens': Outreach and Archivists," *Archivaria* 31 (Winter 1990–91), 120.
  29. James O'Toole, *Understanding Archives and Manuscripts* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1990), 39–40.
  30. Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 115th Edition* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Commerce, 1995), 192.
  31. Figures issued by the Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce, in *The World Almanac and Book of Facts 1993*, 125th ed. (New York: Pharos Books, 1992), 388.
  32. Claire Selltiz, *Research Methods in Social Relations*, 3d ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1976), 94.
  33. A total of thirty surveys have been returned, but two factors are worth noting. Six surveys came from individuals employed by the same institution, but none of the respondents (each of whom signed his or her survey) were part of the original sample group. Because this instrument was not undertaken to produce complex quantitative results, these responses were deemed valid for the study. One exception, however, was the survey returned by an archivist of European descent; this respondent's data was not included in the overall results since the purpose of the survey was to garner information specifically from archivists of color. Additionally, surveys have continued to arrive rather infrequently since the original deadline of 1 March 1995. In fact, I received one as recently as June 1996. Data from these late arrivals also have been incorporated into the overall findings.
  34. One respondent could provide only an estimate of his actual age because he was born into a tribe in an African country that does not maintain birth records. The estimated age range that he described (35 to 40) was not included in the average.
  35. Marjorie Eberts and Margaret Gisler, *Careers for Bookworms and Other Literary Types* (1990; 1992 printing, Lincolnwood, Ill.: VGM Career Horizons, 1992).

36. "Mission Statement," *Archivists and Archives of Color Roundtable Newsletter* 10:1 (Spring 1996), 8.
37. "Minority Student Award," *Archival Outlook* (January 1995), 14.
38. Application for New Mentoring Program, *Archival Outlook* (March 1994), 21.
39. Shockley, 321.
40. Em Claire Knowles, "How to Attract Ethnic Minorities to the Profession," *Special Libraries* 81:2 (Spring 1990), 142.