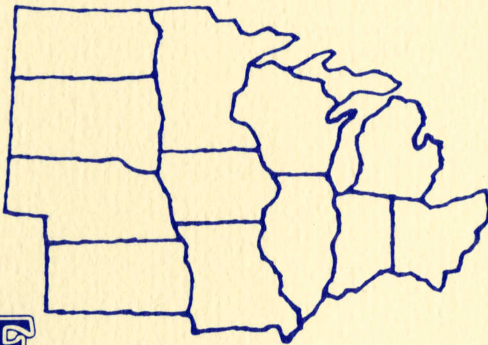

THE MIDWESTERN ARCHIVIST

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EDITORIAL POLICY

The Midwestern Archivist, a semi-annual journal published by the Midwest Archives Conference, is concerned with the issues and problems confronting the contemporary archivist. Submissions relating to archival theory and current practice are solicited. Diversity among topics and points of view is encouraged. Ideas and opinions expressed by the contributors are not necessarily those of the Midwest Archives Conference or its Editorial Board.

Material in a wide range of formats — including articles, review essays, proceedings of seminars, and case studies of specific archival projects or functions — will be considered for publication. Guidelines for authors of articles and case studies are available on request from the editorial board chair.

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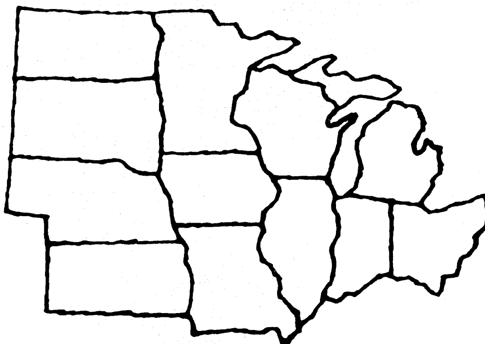

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ASSESSING THE HISTORICAL VALUE OF THE HISTORICAL RECORDS SURVEY

PATRICIA L. ADAMS

ABSTRACT: The Historical Records Survey is fifty years old and is best known for its survey of the local records in the nation's 3000 counties. This article describes the activities of the HRS and the types of information gathered by HRS workers. The article compares the expectations of HRS officials on how the HRS records would be used, with the results of a poll of research use of the 104 repositories holding HRS records. Although used by a variety of researchers, archivists feel that the records are underutilized based on their historical value. With the states assessing their archival needs in the recent National Historical Publications and Records Commission-sponsored grants, the article concludes with parallels between these two federally-funded archival surveys of the nation's records.

John Andreassen, a regional supervisor for the Historical Records Survey, wrote to Luther Evans, the director of the HRS, in 1939. Andreassen feared most of the HRS inventories, which contained the location, scope, and content of the nation's local government records, would never be published. "Maybe I've got the jitters," he wrote, "but I'd hate to see these files go into the limbo with all that is of value in them lost."[1] Andreassen's letter was prescient.

The Historical Records Survey is best known for its inventory of county records. Survey workers were the only Federal Art Project workers who had gone into every one of the nation's more than 3000 counties, chronicling the public records of everyday life.

The survey had been undertaken with high expectations. Relief workers completed the fieldwork for the inventories of 90% of the nation's counties, and published approximately 20% of these. The HRS conducted other projects in various states. Workers compiled bibliographical lists of all copies of imprints prior to 1876 for the inventory of early American imprints, inventoried church records, produced guides to manuscripts in historical societies and libraries, and even completed a few inventories of individual collections. HRS field workers prepared union lists of newspapers, indexed some newspapers, and inventoried portraits and statuary in public buildings. Other individual projects included an index of U.S. musicians, a bibliography of American literature, and an atlas of congressional roll calls. A survey of federal archives located in

the states started as an independent unit of the Work Projects Administration, but was transferred to the HRS in 1937. It published 86% of its inventories. Ideally, Franklin D. Roosevelt hoped that such New Deal work relief projects would create "future new wealth for the nation."[2] Evans predicted that the survey would improve record keeping by local officials and achieve uniformity of records across the country.[3] Archivists, librarians, and historians believed the inventories would be used by political scientists to study local government and by lawyers for legal research, and would provide the basic material for historians "to rewrite local history."[4] HRS officials saw the survey as a way to help communities realize the importance of their own historical records.[5] Some even believed the intent of the survey "was to produce scholarly work of lasting value."[6] But, in reality, Evans himself was more concerned with the daily administration of the survey than the future use scholars might make of the survey's results, and, as with other work relief art projects, Roosevelt's real goal with the HRS had been to give people jobs.

When the survey ended in 1943, all of the unpublished material was placed in state archives, libraries, and manuscript repositories. And, as Andreassen had predicted, the records did go into limbo, until Leonard Rapport began his search for them in the late 1950s. Rapport detailed his efforts during a session at the 1973 annual SAA meeting in St. Louis, and argued along with co-panelists Edward Papenfuse, Trudy Peterson, and Chester Bowie, for the preservation of the HRS records, and for using the survey as an example of how the federal government had dealt with historical records in the past. Panel members urged Congress, and the National Historical Publications Commission, to study the HRS before they added a records component to the NHPC program.[7]

As a result of this effort, the Society of American Archivists, with financial support from the National Endowment for the Humanities, hired Loretta Hefner to locate extant HRS records. Hefner found unpublished HRS records in 104 repositories and gathered information about the dates, volume, existing finding aids, and type of HRS records in each institution. Her findings were compiled in the 1980 SAA publication, *The WPA Historical Records Survey: A Guide to the Unpublished Inventories, Indexes, and Transcripts.*

But ever since the guide's publication, questions persist concerning who uses HRS records. Are they being used by the scholars and professionals that supporters of the HRS had predicted would use them in the 1930s? Has the guide increased the use of HRS records?

Assessments concerning the value of the survey records have ranged across the spectrum of public opinion. Many have made bold assertions. In 1958 David Smiley claimed that although the HRS inventories had been valuable for lawyers and genealogists, they had not been used as extensively as they might by other researchers. His poll of thirty-five historians revealed few who had used HRS records; some did not even know of their existence.[8] In his 1969 history of Federal Art Projects, William McDonald stated that the HRS must be judged by the numbers of inventories it published. Because only 20% of the county inventories were ever published, McDonald concluded that the survey value was diminished.[9] In her 1973 case study of the Iowa HRS, Trudy Peterson agreed that the publication output was a failure and because the inventories were soon outdated, the HRS was "doomed to futility."[10] Perhaps

the boldest assertion came from Burl Noggle, whose 1981 Ph.D. dissertation of the Louisiana HRS declared that "neither historians nor lawyers nor genealogists or public officials have ever made [significant] use of the records that the HRS salvaged or the inventories they so carefully compiled."[11] On the other hand, Chester Bowie found the Wisconsin HRS to be a success in the quality and quantity of its publications. He polled Wisconsin history professors and found that the majority were familiar with the HRS, two-thirds had used HRS records, and most wanted more such inventories.[12]

The records of the Missouri HRS are a good case study for determining both the variety of information gathered during the survey and its usefulness for research. The Missouri collection with 370 cubic feet is the second largest in volume nationally. The bulk of the collection documents the surveys of Missouri's 114 counties. More than sixty volumes were published between 1937 and 1942, including twelve county inventories, eleven federal archives inventories, eight church records guides, four surveys of manuscript collections in the state, one imprints inventory, several vital statistics inventories, training manuals, and reports of the survey itself. The entire collection has been microfilmed and is available through interlibrary loan.

The HRS records provide a microcosm of the political and social history of a critical time in American history, when the role of the federal government changed dramatically. HRS records can tell us about the Great Depression, the New Deal, the WPA, and work relief generally by revealing the relationships between the states and federal government, between the HRS and the WPA, and between the HRS and other Federal Art Projects, especially the Federal Writer's Project that administrated the HRS for its first year. The administrative records of the HRS can be used to compare one state's survey with another and to find out a state's criteria for choosing the various HRS projects.

The county records inventories for Missouri, created cooperatively by local officials, historians, lawyers, and businessmen, contain a wealth of information. The inventories begin with histories of the county which, while they are largely political and compiled from secondary sources, describe in some detail the origins of county offices being inventoried. The histories also contain general information on folklore, climate, geography, paleontology, early settlements, ethnology, parks, labor unions and labor conditions, railroads, schools, economic history, clubs, and the county's involvement in the Civil War.

However, the most valuable sections are the transcriptions of county court records. Since the completion of the survey some of the originals have been lost or destroyed and the HRS transcriptions are the only remaining records. The county records inventories also contain other valuable information such as photographs of the countryside, county buildings, people at work, and transportation, which were collected randomly by HRS workers. Drawings for most of the county courthouses, showing the location of offices with surveyed records, were included as well.

In Missouri, church surveys were done by county, and attempted to include information on all the churches in a county, both active and inactive. The typical church survey form contains information on the church's founding date, a description of the present building, racial or ethnic origins of members, the name and education of current pastor, and the types of records held by the

church. Genealogists and individual congregations have found the church surveys useful for locating records, writing church histories, and studying the changing demographics of church denominations.

County records were also surveyed on printed forms, indicating the office being surveyed, descriptions of the building in which the office was located, and of the types, dates, and volume of records housed in that office. These lists, though now outdated, can still be used to help locate or verify the existence of records.

In order to determine how extensively researchers were using the HRS records, Loretta Hefner and I sent questionnaires to the 104 HRS repositories listed in the 1980 SAA guide. The questionnaire asked repositories how many researchers had used the records, what percentage of total researchers these represented, what kinds of research had been done in the records (architectural history, church history, local history, genealogy, theses, etc.), and what publications (if any) had been based on HRS research. It also asked the respondent to evaluate the amount of use of the records; to indicate if any HRS records had been deaccessioned, microfilmed, or transferred since 1978; and to rate the historical value of the HRS records.

We received forty-five responses, for a return of 43%. Responses to a question inquiring about the number of researchers who used HRS records during the past year ranged from zero to 500, with the average being forty-seven. These numbers represented approximately 3% of all researchers for these institutions, although half of the respondents said HRS researchers accounted for less than 2% of their total. One repository, Louisiana Historical Center in New Orleans, departed significantly from this trend and reported that HRS records were used by 33% of all its researchers. The respondents reported that HRS records are used for a variety of research purposes, including church histories, genealogies, local histories, M.A. theses and Ph.D. dissertations. Not surprisingly, local history and genealogy ranked first and second, followed by church history and research on state and local government. The records are only seldom used for architectural and legal history. Only one in ten respondents reported that the 1980 guide to HRS holdings had increased the apparent use of the records; three respondents said they did not even have a copy of the guide.

The survey revealed that archivists value the HRS records. Not one had deaccessioned any HRS material since Hefner's 1978 survey, although Columbia University hopes to transfer its material to the National Archives. Only three respondents rated the historical value of the HRS records less than "very high" or "significant." Many based their high judgements either on the use of the records by researchers or because of their unique research value—in many states HRS records have the only historical information available on some counties.

Although archivists value the records, most felt that researchers do not. By almost a three to one margin, archivists reported that HRS records are underutilized. Half the respondents stated that no publications had been based on HRS records. Another reason for the perceived low use may be that only 23% of the responding repositories have reported their holdings to NUCMC.

Speculation about the reasons for low use included some who contended that researchers were simply unaware, either of the survey itself or the potential uses for the information it contains, and that archivists do not promote it. Others cited the fact that only a portion of the HRS records are catalogued, or that

the information in them is obsolete. Still others saw universities placing less emphasis on local history, and graduate students are inadequately prepared to do historical research. However, one archivist from Wisconsin placed these feelings into perspective when he pointed out that, in his opinion, all of his repository's collections are underutilized.

Confusing the issue of use is that five of the respondents referred to Federal Writer's Project (FWP) material, such as the ex-slave narratives and life histories, and stated they were among the most used. This confusion probably reflects the increased interest in New Deal Art Projects. The American Historical Association has recently published a guide to FWP repositories much like Hefner's SAA guide. Fifteen repositories have FWP and HRS records interfiled with one another or with other WPA records. Since the HRS was under the FWP for over a year, the files could easily have been placed together.[13]

Perhaps the biggest problem in determining the frequency with which HRS records are used is the fact that published inventories are available in the open stacks or reference areas of public, private, and university libraries. Although the published inventories are not the same as the unpublished records, they are out there on library shelves and they are being used. However, their location makes it impossible to know how often or for what purpose these publications are used. One repondent said she knew the HRS inventories were consulted frequently, but had no idea by whom.

It is not surprising that in many libraries HRS records are used extensively by genealogists. According to Hefner, the SAA guide has sold well to genealogists and their societies. Many genealogy reference books refer to the HRS and how it may be used by researchers working on their family history. *The Handy Book for Genealogists*, for example, states that the HRS records are vital to genealogical research. The sixth edition describes the survey and the information it contains and subsequent editions list those counties for which published HRS inventories exist. The latest and most comprehensive reference book for genealogists, *The Source*, mentions HRS indexing projects of interest to genealogists, the church surveys, as well as Hefner's guide.[14]

Citation studies of HRS records use proved disappointing. The past six years of the *Social Science Citation Index* contained references to the SAA guide, but all of these were book reviews. A study of *Journal of American History* footnotes for the past ten years turned up only two articles on federal work relief during the 1930s—one on the Federal Arts Project and one on the philosophy of New Deal work relief. Neither mentioned the HRS.[15] There were no references to the published inventories. The obvious drawback of citation studies, of course, is that they only reveal scholarly, published use, not genealogical or even much local and church history.

In many ways, the HRS records seem to be of most value to archivists. Even though records have been transferred or destroyed, Rapport and others have used the inventories successfully to locate local records. Rapport used the inventories in the 1950s in his attempt to locate eighteenth century New England town records. The HRS inventories enabled him to convince town clerks that the records had existed as recently as the 1930s, and he could even show them where the records had been located twenty years previously.[16] The Illinois State Archives published *A Guide to County Records in the Illinois Regional Archives* in 1983 and dedicated it to the "men and women of the Historical

Records Survey in Illinois, 1936-1942." As the director wrote, "those [HRS] inventories were most useful, of course, and there was further, something deeply satisfying in building upon foundations set by professional forebears."[17]

The HRS materials should be useful to state archivists as they contemplate the status and needs of local government records. Ironically, during the recent NHPRC-financed state needs assessment reports—along with the HRS one of the two largest archival surveys ever financed by the federal government—this did not appear to have been the case. Out of thirty-seven assessment reports examined, only eight mentioned the HRS at all. Of these, Arizona said the HRS records were obsolete and Kansas stated that HRS had little or no impact on its state archives. Alabama and Pennsylvania used HRS material in writing the archival histories of their states. Only Massachusetts indicated that it had benefited from consulting the working files of the HRS deposited in the state archives.

At the end of the HRS, county records were probably in the best shape they have ever been. Virtually every county in the nation had been surveyed and many county records had been cleaned, arranged, and described. But what has happened during the last fifty years? At the time of the survey, archivists warned that inventorying without adequate preservation programs would be disastrous. Luther Evans had even proposed that each county hire an archivist. Others urged that the inventories be routinely updated.[18] None of these recommendations were acted upon.

In *Documenting America*, Richard Cox evaluated the local government records section of the assessment reports. He observed "few new concerns or plans outlined in the reports," and noted that, while the HRS located and described local records, it made no effort to improve the preservation and management of local records. Cox summarized the status of local government records as being characterized by an absence of trained records administrators in the counties, a disinterest by local officials, a poor relationship between state archives and local governments, inadequate storage, and inaccessible records. Cox calls this neglect of local records the "strongest indictment" against the archival profession.[19]

It is particularly ironic that the county records were salvaged by the HRS; then archivists and historians treated the HRS records with the same neglect as local officials had treated the records themselves. Today archivists have salvaged the HRS records but the county records have deteriorated to their pre-HRS state.

Trudy Peterson warned in 1973 that for the federal government to revive any project like the HRS it would have to overcome the "apathy and indifference of public officials."[20] Edward Papenfuse suggested that the "HRS is still capable of exerting its influence on a new generation of archivists, if they strive to understand how the HRS achieved its measure of success."[21] The value of the HRS records for scholars, genealogists, and other historical researchers has been established. But the records have value for archivists as well. As preservers of the nation's past, archivists should look to their own past before embarking on new records programs. Archivists can use the HRS as a role model in planning future actions with local records and learn from its successes and failures. The success of the HRS was due to the committment the federal government gave it in money and staff and the centralized leadership and vision of its

director, Luther Evans. Its failure to publish inventories for all the nation's counties was due to its diffusion of purpose in trying to inventory all historical records, not just local records. And the county inventories, while valuable for historical research today, were soon obsolete for everyday use by local officials. Archivists should heed Papenfuse's warning that for the "revival of a great idea . . . there must be at least a modicum of committment to do the necessary work."[22]

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NOTES

1. Edward Francis Barrese, "The Historical Records Survey: A Nation Acts to Save Its Memory" (Ph.D. dissertation, George Washington University, 1980), 93.
2. James T. Patterson, *America's Struggle Against Poverty, 1900-1980* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981).
3. Luther H. Evans, "The Local Archives Program of the WPA Historical Records Survey," in *Public Documents with Archives and Libraries*, ed. A.F. Kuhlman (Chicago: American Library Association, 1938).
4. David L. Smiley, "The W.P.A. Historical Records Survey" in *In Support of Clio*, eds. William B. Hesseltine and Donald R. McNeil (Madison, WI: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1958).
5. Kuhlman, *Public Documents with Archives and Libraries*, introduction.
6. Smiley, "The W.P.A. Historical Records Survey," 3.
7. The *American Archivist* published their papers in the April 1974 issue.
8. Smiley, "The W.P.A. Historical Records Survey."
9. William F. McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1969), chapters 29-31.
10. Trudy Huskamp Peterson, "The Iowa Historical Records Survey, 1936-1942," *American Archivist* 37 (April 1974): 245.
11. Burl Noggle, *Working With History: The Historical Records Survey in Louisiana and the Nation, 1936-1942* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1981), 75.
12. Chester W. Bowie, "The Wisconsin Historical Records Survey, Then and Now," *American Archivist* 37 (April 1974): 246-61.
13. The increased interest in the Federal Writers Project is evidenced by the reissue of several of the FWP guides to the states. This, along with the fact that more scholarly histories of the FWP have been written, may help account for its greater notoriety than the HRS. Because the FWP interviewed people rather than records, it has achieved a romantic patina that the HRS does not have. And, one product of the FWP, the interviews with ex-slaves, caused considerable debate in the historical profession when George Rawick edited them in 1972.
14. Arlene Eakle and Johni Cerny, ed., *The Source : A Guidebook of American Genealogy* (Salt Lake City: Ancestry Publishing Co., 1984); George Everton, ed., *The Handy Book for Genealogists* (Logan, UT: Everton Publishers, 1981). The genealogical interest was there right from the start. The Daughters of the American Revolution assisted the HRS in inventorying records and received copies of the published inventories for its Washington office.
15. William W. Bremer, "Along the 'American Way': The New Deal's Work Relief Programs for the Unemployed," *Journal of American History* 62 (Dec. 1975); and Jane De Hart Mathews, "Arts and the People: The New Deal Quest for a Cultural Democracy," *Journal of American History* 62 (Sept. 1975).

16. Leonard Rapport, "Dumped from a Wharf into Casco Bay: The Historical Records Survey Revisited," *American Archivist* 37 (April 1974): 201-10.
17. *A Guide to County Records in the Illinois Regional Archives* (Springfield, IL: Illinois State Archives, 1983).
18. Evans, "The Local Archives Program of the Historical Records Survey."
19. See Richard Cox's consultant report in *Documenting America: Assessing the Condition of Historical Records in the States*, ed. Lisa Weber (Atlanta: National Association of State Archives and Records Administrators in cooperation with the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, 1984).
20. Peterson, "The Iowa Historical Records Survey, 1936-1942," 245.
21. Edward C. Papenfuse, " 'A Modicum of Commitment': The Present and Future Importance of the Historical Records Survey," *American Archivist* 37 (April 1974): 218-19.
22. Ibid.

"McCARTHYISM WAS MORE THAN McCARTHY": DOCUMENTING THE RED SCARE AT THE STATE AND LOCAL LEVEL

DON E. CARLETON

ABSTRACT: Although the post World War II red scare is popularly associated with the activities of Senator Joseph R. McCarthy and his impact on the federal government, the anti-Communist hysteria of the 1950s actually went far beyond McCarthy and Washington, D.C. Institutions and individuals in communities throughout the United States experienced their own local versions of the red scare. The purpose of this article is to urge archivists involved in documenting local history to be aware of the need to collect materials related to the extreme anti-Communist reaction at the local level. Using the example of the author's study of the red scare in Houston, Texas, the article discusses types of records that are likely to prove useful for research in this important subject.

The cold war between the United States and the Soviet Union has loomed darkly over American life since the end of the Second World War. This conflict between two superpowers with opposite world views has provided a frightening framework for everyone living in an era of incomprehensibly destructive nuclear weapons. The cold war has been a primary determinant of United States foreign policy for the last forty years. But the cold war has also had a domestic manifestation which has been labeled by one historian as "the Great Fear," by a playwright as "Scoundrel Time," and by another writer as the "Time of the Toad." This domestic manifestation of the cold war, however, is more frequently called "the red scare."[1]

The red scare is best defined as a widespread series of actions by individuals and groups whose intentions were to frighten Americans with false and highly exaggerated charges of Communist subversion for the purpose of political, economic, and psychological profit. The usual tactic employed by those carrying out the red scare is known as McCarthyism: the use of indiscriminate, often unfounded accusations, inquisitorial investigative methods, and sensationalism ostensibly in the suppression of communism. The red scare's best known symbol was Joseph R. McCarthy, the Republican senator from Wisconsin whose own behavior provided a name for the principal red scare technique.[2] Although Senator McCarthy embodied the phenomenon nationally,

the postwar anti-Communist movement actually permeated all levels of society, affecting nearly every facet of American life for almost ten years. Opposition was nearly nonexistent at its height and what little did exist was generally ineffective. Indeed, the anti-Communist hysteria of the late 1940s through the 1950s may have been the greatest crisis America has ever suffered in terms of her liberal and democratic values.

Historians know much about how the red scare operated at the national level. We have definitive biographies of Joe McCarthy, in-depth studies of blacklisting in the entertainment industry, and memoirs written by many of the red scare's key participants (both victims and perpetrators). But the red scare was more than the "Hollywood Ten" and the House Committee on Un-American Activities. As David Caute has shown in a broad and generalized way in *The Great Fear*, the red scare had a virulent effect in components of American life outside the national political and entertainment arenas. There were red scares in labor, education, religion, business, the fine arts, and, in a multiplicity of forms, at the local community level.

Study of the red scare at the local level holds as much promise as any for understanding the extreme anti-Communist impulse in American life. Indeed, a study of the red scare at the local level tells us as much about the ethos of the community studied as it does about the red scare. This is because the red scare was basically a technique, a tool, a simplistic device for some members of the community to use against a whole set of unwelcome developments threatening those members' conception of the perfect and proper community. These unwelcome developments usually included the growth of labor unions, the rise of racial and ethnic consciousness, and the penetration of local schools and churches by non-traditional ways of looking at the human condition.

These developments *usually* included these perceived problems. With a few exceptions, however, we don't really know how or why the red scare worked itself out at the local level. More local case studies have to be done before we can make well-founded judgments and conclusions. And, as we are all aware, those studies must necessarily be based on the historical record. Thus, the purpose of this paper is to encourage archivists and manuscript curators at agencies with a local focus to incorporate the need to document the red scare in their collection development strategies and to be aware of materials within previously accessioned collections that pertain to the phenomenon.

As professionals, all of us know that the value of any component of a collection changes with the passage of time, usually due to shifts in concerns of scholarly research. We have all seen material originally ignored (such as that related to blacks and women) become important as perceptions of importance evolve. This is the case with the red scare at the local level. There is already in place in the manuscript and archival repositories in this country a rich lode of material of great potential use to anyone wishing to do research in this topic. Too often, however, reference staffs are unaware of it. This is usually because the red scare was simply not perceived as a topic during the subject analysis stage of processing. The result is that finding aids fail to reflect it.

This brings me to specifics about not only the types of old collections that should be reevaluated as possible sources for local red scares, but also the range of material that should be collected in the future. My own recently published book on the red scare in Houston serves as an example of where these primary

sources may be found.[3] The following list is neither at the archival edge nor especially profound, because the same types of sources can be and have been used to document other historical developments. My purpose is to indicate how one historian pieced together this particular story with the hope that archival agencies in other localities will put into place or identify the same sort of material for studies of the red scare in their area.

The most obvious sources are the personal papers of individuals who were red scare participants; in other words, the victims, accusors, and first-hand observers. In Houston, the most publicized victim was the deputy superintendent of the public schools, Dr. George W. Ebey. The Houston school board fired Dr. Ebey in 1953 after a red scare campaign had been waged against him for over nine months. Ebey and his wife accumulated and subsequently kept everything they could find that documented his experience, including local ephemera that is almost impossible to find anywhere but in the Ebey papers. Red scare victims often collected such material in a comprehensive way, usually for the purpose of clearing their names in what they hoped would be a saner future.

Observers of red scare incidents or campaigns who kept records were usually writers, mainly journalists. In Houston, Ralph S. O'Leary, an investigative reporter for the *Houston Post*, assembled an invaluable record of the red scare at the grassroots level when he gathered material for an exposé which the *Post* published in eleven installments. O'Leary's material included notes, memoranda, and transcripts of his interviews with members of red scare organizations. The vast majority of O'Leary's material never made it into the newspaper series, so he stored it in an old suitcase in a closet to be used for a book after his retirement. His early death prevented that, but his widow kept his collection and eventually placed it in the Houston Metropolitan Research Center.

In Houston, individuals who *accused* their neighbors of subversive tendencies tended not to keep records. I am convinced, however, that there are such collections in other communities. For one thing, there were usually two or three persons among grassroots red scare leaders whose main function was to find potential victims for their groups to attack. This was often accomplished by compiling material, usually lists, distributed by what I call the national red scare network. This informal network served as a means for the exchange of information among members of national organizations which had local chapters, such as the Daughters of the American Revolution. In Houston, the local chapter of Pro-America was in contact with the Pro-America group in Portland, Oregon. The two chapters exchanged information about Dr. Ebey, who had been a Portland school administrator prior to coming to Houston. Those who served red scare organizations as researchers also assembled material from the vast quantity of misinformation distributed by the House Committee on Un-American Activities and by several red scare senators and congressmen. In Houston, the woman who served as the list compiler for the red scare coalition died in the early 1960s and her family destroyed the archive she had created. But the point is that a potentially invaluable source for documenting how these local witch-hunters operated is the papers of the local list-makers.

The red scare in Houston and in other communities was encouraged and supported by members of the local business and civic power elite. Through their newspapers, radio stations, financial contributions, and public rhetoric, the

local elite legitimated and conferred credibility on the activities of red scare fringe groups. The papers of individual community leaders are usually quite useful for the study of the local red scare, even when those leaders may not be personally identified with the red scare. In Houston, one such person was Jesse Jones, a former cabinet member in Franklin Roosevelt's presidential administration. Jones was the publisher of the *Houston Chronicle.* For his own very personal reasons, Jones coldly manipulated the red scare in Houston through the editorial policies of his newspapers. Jones himself never took a personal public position on the phenomenon, but his papers are rich in documentation illustrating how he worked with his editor in encouraging Houston's red scare.

Because the local press often played a key role in encouraging community red-baiting, its archives (especially its morgues) are another potential source. The unpublished manuscript of an investigative journalist's "exposé" of a local labor union attorney appeared in a file marked "Communists" in the morgue of a now defunct Houston newspaper. The newspaper refused to publish the article because its lawyer considered it libelous. Nevertheless, the manuscript proved to be a valuable source. It led me to individuals and other sources that I may have otherwise overlooked. There were other useful materials in the Communist file because reporters often used the morgue to file bits and pieces of information that might be helpful for future stories. Significantly, many of the items were notes and news clippings about liberal clergy, school educators, and civil rights and labor leaders—all filed under "Communists." Groups that were targets of the red scare, such as labor unions, often kept their own newspaper clippings files and these prove helpful because local newspapers are rarely indexed. For example, I found such a clippings file in the Texas AFL-CIO records housed at The University of Texas at Arlington.

Of even greater potential value, however, are the official records or archives of community organizations. Because the red scare was so pervasive and widespread, almost any community institution may have had its own problems with the phenomenon. The possibilities are many, but likely sources for red scare-related documents include any educational institution, especially the public schools and their parent-teacher associations; labor unions, especially those representing maritime, longshore, teacher, artistic, and municipal workers; social welfare agencies; public libraries and their friends groups; fine arts and other public museums; religious institutions, especially Methodist, Jewish, Catholic, and Episcopal; fraternal and mutual aid groups, particularly those associated with racial and ethnic justice causes; civic and business booster organizations, specifically the local Chamber of Commerce; professional organizations such as the local bar and medical associations, especially the latter due to the issue of "socialized" medicine (in Houston even the local barbers' association engaged in red-baiting); and local party organizations.

The records of local government agencies and businesses also have significant potential value for studying the red scare. Although privacy issues may have to be confronted, the records of government civil service and business personnel departments have value for this issue. Local governments and businesses occasionally used red scare tactics to combat the attempts of their employees to organize collective bargaining groups. David Caute documents the dismissal for security reasons of over 250 municipal workers in New York City during the red scare. Similar firings occurred in Los Angeles, Detroit, and

elsewhere.[4] Especially important are the personnel records of industries engaged in scientific or defense-related work. Many workers (the number remains unknown) were fired from these industries because of security clearance problems, often caused by rumors or even mistaken identities. A Cleveland engineer with an otherwise spotless record was dismissed from his job because it had been determined that he had maintained a "close and continuing relationship with his parents" whose names appeared on one of the hundreds of lists published by the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC).[5] An even more enlightening source would be the records of the local police department "red squads," which proliferated throughout the nation in the 1950s and 1960s. These police squads became notorious for their propensity to spy on law abiding citizens whose only crime was that they held anti-establishment political views or supported labor or civil rights causes. In Houston, the red squad engaged in illegal surveillance tactics and harassed and compiled dossiers on prominent citizens, including a popular mayor and his supporters. Unfortunately, the acquisition of local red squad files is unlikely due to official objections and because many of those records have been destroyed.

The files of elected state and federal officials are another valuable source. Hopefully, such files will reveal the extent of personal involvement in the red scare not only at the state and national levels, but also in local communities. Some of my most important archival sources were the constituency files of Texas congressmen. Many red scare "foot soldiers" in local communities were prolific letter writers and many of those letters were sent to their congressional representatives. I found enough of those letters, which expressed in great detail the specific fears of their authors, to piece together something like a collective world view or mind set for Houston's red scare participants. These constituent letters also provided clues about the writers' personal lives, their husbands' occupations (most were female), their religions, addresses, political party affiliations, and levels of education. In addition, I discovered that some congressmen were only too happy to serve constituent requests for the names of local residents who might appear on some obscure HUAC list. "Yes," Congressman "Know-Nothing" would cheerfully reply to his constituent, "John and Jane Doe are listed on HUAC files as possibly having attended a mass concert at the public auditorium in which folk singer Joe Bob Jumpback (believed by HUAC to belong to a subversive organization) briefly played his guitar." The congressman would then conclude with a helpful "if I may be of further service to you at anytime in the future, please let me know." Typically, local red scare participants would use the information provided by this "service" for public attacks on the unsuspecting Doe family. Although this is a fictional example, it is representative of many actual episodes, all documented in congressional constituent mail.[6] One may deduce correctly from the above that I am vigorously opposed to the mindless destruction of congressional files by well meaning archival records appraisers.

Another, more obvious source for documenting local red scares are the records of conservative pressure groups. These precursors to our contemporary Political Action Committees (PACs) proliferated during this period. In Houston, these included the Minute Women of the U.S.A., Inc., the most active red scare group; Doctors for Freedom, composed of physicians opposed to federally supported health insurance; the Committee for Sound American Education,

a right-wing organization involved in school board elections; the Committee for the Preservation of Methodism; and the Americanism Committee of the American Legion. The same or similar groups could be found in every community. Because some of these organizations were single-issue oriented, relatively short-lived, and without any formal office, their records may be difficult or impossible to locate. One may be able, however, to piece together a sample of a pressure group's archives by locating individual leaders and other members and acquiring whatever records may be privately held.

Finally, another way to document local red scares is through oral history, because the most virulent phase of the red scare occurred in a period now some thirty to forty years ago. Oral history, of course, is an old standby that can be at the same time both terribly flawed and excitingly informative. But in my work with the red scare, oral history proved to be the *only* way I could get to the heart of a number of important issues. One of the most frightening aspects of the red scare during the 1950s was the fear on the part of many otherwise outspoken people to speak out against anti-Communist demagoguery and to reveal their true feelings about politically and socially sensitive issues. After thirty-five years I found a few persons who remained too frightened to discuss the period. But I found many others who were eager to exorcise their guilt by talking for the first time. Several of the more than 100 persons I interviewed have now passed away. So time is a factor here.

In conclusion, I want to make a couple of brief philosophical comments about historical documentation and archival collecting strategies. Those of us with administrative responsibility in this endeavor have always had to make educated guesses in an attempt to anticipate future research needs. I feel strongly that interest in the red scare and in the political style we call McCarthyism, especially at the local level, will continue and may even increase due to the current political environment. So let's get to work. And finally, maybe I'm an unreconstructed child of the 1960s, but in my view, the need for a usable past did not end with that decade. I believe archivists can play a socially relevant role by getting out in the community and preserving the evidence of activities and beliefs (such as racism and political witch-hunting) that seem to haunt American society on a too frequent basis. The kind of documentation I have discussed today can be done only by archivists who are willing to leave their shops and actively collect. For those archivists who are reluctant to leave their archival *nests*, I will conclude with an anecdote about Winston Churchill. During the height of the German blitz on London, Churchill entered Parliament with the fly of his trousers embarrassingly wide open. When he rose to deliver a major speech, an opposition leader loudly brought Churchill's forgetfulness to the attention of the crowded House. The Prime Minister, without missing a beat, looked down at his colleague and said "Have no fear, sir, *a dead bird never leaves his nest.*"

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Don E. Carleton is Director of the Barker Texas History Center, University of Texas at Austin and author of *Red Scare!*

NOTES

1. David Caute, *The Great Fear: The Anti-Communist Purge Under Truman and Eisenhower* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978); Lillian Hellman, *Scoundrel Time* (Boston: Atlantic-Little, Brown, 1976); Dalton Trumbo, *The Time of the Toad: A Study of the Inquisition in America* (New York: Harper and Row, 1972).
2. For the definitive biographies of Joseph R. McCarthy see, Thomas C. Reeves, *The Life and Times of Joe McCarthy* (New York: Stein and Day, 1982) and David M. Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense: The World of Joe McCarthy* (New York: Free Press, 1983).
3. Don E. Carleton, *Red Scare! Right-wing Hysteria, Fifties Fanaticism and Their Legacy in Texas* (Austin: Texas Monthly Press, 1985). Documentation for the incidents mentioned in the following discussion can be found throughout *Red Scare!*
4. Caute, *The Great Fear*, 345.
5. Caute, *The Great Fear*, 461.
6. For an actual example of this congressional tie with a local red scare, see Carleton, *Red Scare!*, 147.

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DOCUMENTING AGRICULTURE AND RURAL LIFE

GOULD P. COLMAN

ABSTRACT: To conserve the resources available for historic documentation, archivists would do well to concentrate on what is most crucial in shaping events. The farm family has been crucial to shaping agriculture and rural life in the United States since chattel slavery was abolished. Methods which can be used to document the family-based occupation of farming, where production on the farm is integrated with reproduction in the family, are described. Limitations of these methods are noted. Problems involved with retrieval are considered.

Agriculture is "the science and art of farming," according to Webster. Although the image is rural, agriculture and rural America are far from coterminous. Not only are farm products refined and packaged for final consumption in urban areas, fuels, machinery, chemicals, and credit are transformed into farm resources in channels of commerce that lead from the city. Because the activities that constitute agriculture are intertwined with corporate conglomerates, as well as with the activities of national, state, and local governments, documenting agriculture becomes the equivalent of documenting every aspect of American life. Public interest in historical preservation may well be at an all time high, but archivists who would document agriculture are unlikely to obtain the resources needed to implement so inclusive a strategy. Narrowing the scope of inquiry is necessary.

If we grant that raspberries and hops, for example, are of less consequence to the nation's well being than, for example, corn and soybeans, we may devise a stategy for documenting agriculture that needs no apology for being less than comprehensive. Narrowing the scope of documentation is justified because the ends to which agriculture resources have been directed, the means used to achieve these ends, and the pace at which the means have been applied, all correspond to decisions made within farm families, such as to buy or not buy a tractor, expand or not expand the acreage, or encourage or not encourage a child to take up farming. In general, archivists will do well to concentrate their documentary efforts on what is most crucial in forming and ordering human activities, but, since every documentary activity is defined, in part, by the passage of time, the test of "what is most crucial?" must be applied throughout the period that is selected. When documenting agriculture the farm family meets the long-term test.

In the 19th century, when Webster defined agriculture, the farm family constituted a larger portion of agriculture than it does today, but, as store-bought clothes have replaced homespun, and tractors farm-bred horse power, the farm family has retained its crucial position as agriculture's pace setter. Academic people, caught up in the changing aspects of agriculture to the point that their livelihood depends on their ability to maintain or increase the rate of change, have rather overlooked the fact that the most pressing challenge to the cruciality of family-based farming, chattel slavery, fell away over a century ago.

In testing for cruciality, archivists may encounter what amounts to disinformation in the guise of accepted knowledge: articles in the press, for instance, which dramatize the entry of corporations into farming while ignoring the fact that in over ninety per cent of these corporations the stockholders are members of the same family. Documenting agriculture should perhaps begin with skepticism about accepted knowledge.

In 1965 such skepticism about assumptions led four faculty members at Cornell University and this archivist to investigate how farm people make decisons about how and when to assemble, use, and dispose of farm resources.[1] Each questioned the view of farming that dominated the academic and popular literature amd continues to do so. That literature, as analyzed at the Library of Congress to provide subject entries for cataloging that literature, indicates that farms are operated by adult males who are married to women who are characterized by the term "farmers' wives." The assumption is that one person operates each farm and a woman operator is marked as unusual by the L.C. term "women farmers." The assumption which accounts for how families and farm units of production are connected is that capitalism has been extended into the countryside as entrepreneurship; in sum, the profit-seeking farmer, as he assembles and allocates resources, draws upon his family's labor to conduct an enterprise which supports his family.

If farming were actually organized this way, determining what information to collect, identifying appropriate sources for that information, and devising procedures to obtain records containing this information could focus on this member of the farm family, and analyses of farming based on this source alone could be well grounded. But as the documentation obtained in the Cornell Farm Family Decision Making Project indicates, farming is different from entrepreneurship.[2] Often the woman, who is wife for one generation and mother for the next, uses these positions, with or without the expressed concurrence of "the farmer," to coordinate her children's apprenticeship in farming with the withdrawal of her husband and herself from farm tasks and management so that one or more of the former apprentices can acquire enough control over farm resources to become a fully fledged farmer. By effecting a smooth transition between generations, that farm gains a competitive advantage over farms where resources are dispersed or effective management is disrupted in the generational sequence. To the extent that such transitions contribute to the survival of the occupation of farming, women are a crucial source of information, for a husband could not be expected to account for his wife's willingness to help in making that smooth transition or even be aware of what forms that contribution takes.

The farm family, therefore, is a regenerative organization in which the contribution made by both sexes change as its members advance from youth to old age. Transferring ownership of capital resources to the succeeding generation or generations, usually associated with estate settlement in mid-life, needs to be viewed as a continuous process that extends over the entire family cycle. The criteria used by parents and children when evaluating each other as potential business partners, and considerations which guide relationships between in-laws and the stem family are aspects of estate settlement. Children, consequently, are a crucial source of information about farming. Parents cannot know what each child understands or contemplates about his or her place in the farm operation, especially when the children have been taught that there are not enough resources to support everyone and, as when primogeniture prevailed, they have little hope for a future on the farm.

When growing older is a crucial aspect of the subject being documented, records which do not take aging into account will be insufficient. In the occupation of farming, jurisdictional conflicts between generations of the family are virtually inevitable as the upcoming generation, on reaching middle life, seeks control over farm resources that are controlled by the elder generation; and that latter generation, in a kinship-based business, cannot freeze the jurisdictional boundaries like industrial bosses can. The origin of these conflicts and their resolution, which is crucial to the survival of farming as a family-based occupation, would not be captured in documentation spanning only a few years. Although successive stages in the family cycle could presumably be documented quickly with the help of a panel of farm families containing members of every generation, in practice this is not an alternative to returning time and time again to the same families. Real people are unlikely to share with strangers, for the record, experiences about family conflicts and their resolution. Sufficient acquaintance with people who hold the desired information is a necessary requisite to obtaining the complete story.

Documentation derived from conversation is necessarily governed by how the conversation is guided. The association of oral history with the interview method, as in "oral history interview," suggests that oral history relies on questions to guide documentation. However, for the purposes of the Farm Family Decision Making Project, questioning was inadequate. The trail of how decisions evolved sometimes disappeared, only to reappear, perhaps years later, as if from nowhere. Although the investigators were not so innocent as to expect decisions involving real capital and labor to proceed from identifying a problem to choosing among alternative solutions, as they do in textbooks, they did expect to be able to trace the course of decisions between initiation and implementation. Once a reliance on questions gave way to give and take conversations with farm people about matters of common interest, the missing connections began to emerge. The question format, though, did serve as a transition to these more productive methods of documentation. Farm people expected investigators to ask questions.

Before the field phase of the project was completed in 1982, information which complemented individual recollections was recorded as the project's representatives talked with family members in a family group. Some of that conversation was guided by a Monopoly-like device called "The Game," which

the family played. The purpose of this was to explore whether certain ways of making decisions are characteristic of the occupation of farming by placing each individual in situations which were hypothetical but probable.[3] A tape recording of a contrived family conversation designed to elicit the reactions of participating families was another device used.

A decided advantage of a longitudinal project is the opportunity it affords the researcher to enlist additional investigators and to revise documentation procedures. A mismatch between attempting to document the occupation of farming and an exclusively male panel of investigators was corrected with the addition of Sarah Elbert, associate professor of history and women's studies, SUNY, Binghamton. Many of the ideas about methods for documenting the reproduction of the family unit originated with her.

Another benefit of a long-term documentation project is an opportunity to undertake research which may serve to refine the documentation guidelines or procedures. Between 1975 and 1979 seven case studies of families in the Farm Family Project were published in the bulletin series maintained by the departments of Agricultural Economics and of Rural Sociology at Cornell.[4] These studies are naive in that they did not consider the possibility that decisions were being made in ways which are characteristic of the occupation of farming, for example, wives being involved in farm management in ways that are invisible to their husbands.

The next step after completing the documentary record and placing it in a repository secure against the forces of time and alienated people, is to inform potential users that the record exists. The Archival and Manuscripts Control format (AMC) of the Research Libraries Information Network (RLIN) is adapted to doing that; indeed, its availability and use may well enable archivists to move into the mainstream of scholarly inquiry and to help to secure for rural life the place in American studies that has been preempted over the last eight decades by urban affairs.

Yet words which acquired their meaning in the industrial-urban sector of our culture may actually mislead when used to inform potential users about documentation concerning agriculture and rural life. When my colleague Tamberly Gobert and I turned to *Library of Congress Subject Headings*, which is RLIN's primary source of indexing terms, we came up with the items numbered 1 to 84, in the following description.

Farm Family Decision Making Project
Oral histories, 1966-1982.
327 tape recordings. 594 transcripts (21,362 pp.)

Summary: Biannual conversations with adults and children eight and older, individually and in family groups, in a panel of thirty-three New York and Iowa farm families concerning how the occupation of farming is organized and conducted. Topics include activities of family members and employees, daily and weekly, by season; aspirations, expectations, and responsibilities attributed to the self, other family members, and employees; obtaining and evaluating information; extent of involvement in decisions attributed to self, other family members, and employees; conflict between generations in the family and its resolution; reproducing the stem family; establishing and maintaining boundaries between in-laws and stem family, between family and outsiders, and between rural and urban culture; conflict between rural and urban

culture; connections and barriers between production and family within occupation; means for evaluation in production and family sectors; mate selection; determining priorities; meaning of work, labor, tasks, chores, and recreation; task differentiation by gender; using and compensating hired and family labor; reserve labor; forms of emotional and financial support; capital formation; credit; sources of income; marketing farm commodities; land use and conservation; record keeping; adoption and use of production and household technology; apprenticeship education; and values attached to consumption.

Other topics discussed are the form, timing, and quantity of rewards to family members and employees; distinction between ownership and control of farm resources; religious participation; farm maintenance; soil conservation; formal and informal training; dairy farming; poultry farming; apple production; 4-H clubs; farm organizations; U.S. agricultural colleges; the United States Department of Agriculture; Cooperative Extension; and related topics.
Access restricted.
Use restricted.
Cite as: Farm Family Decision Making Project. Oral Histories, #13/6/1230. Department of Manuscripts and University Archives, Cornell University Libraries.

1. United States. Dept. of Agriculture. 2. Agricultural colleges. 3. Agricultural conservation. 4. Agricultural credit. 5. Agricultural education. 6. Agricultural extension work. 7. Agricultural laborers. 8. Agricultural laws and legislation. 9. Agricultural machinery — Maintenance and repair. 10. Agricultural resources. 11. Agriculture — Accidents. 12. Agriculture — Costs. 13. Agriculture — Documentation. 14. Agriculture — Finance. 15. Agriculture — Information services. 16. Agriculture — Labor productivity. 17. Agriculture — Social aspects. 18. Agriculture — Taxation — Law and legislation. 19. Agriculture — Iowa. 20. Agriculture — New York (State). 21. Apprentices. 22. Communication in agriculture. 23. Conflict of generations. 24. Crop rotation. 25. Culture conflict. 26. Dairying. 27. Decision making. 28. Domestic relations. 29. Drainage. 30. Employee selection. 31. Employees, Training of. 32. Family — Longitudinal studies. 33. Family corporations. 34. Family farms. 35. Family recreation. 36. Farm buildings. 37. Farm corporations. 38. Farm equipment. 39. Farm income. 40. Farm life. 41. Farm management. 42. Farm management — Decision making. 43. Farm management — Records and correspondence. 44. Farm partnership. 45. Farm risk. 46. Farm supplies. 47. Farmers. 48. Farmers — Family relationships. 49. Farmers — Nutrition. 50. Farmers — Supplementary employment. 51. Farmers' wives. 52. Farmhouses. 53. Farms — Accounting. 54. Farms — Taxation. 55. Farms, Size of. 56. Father-son operating agreements. 57. Hill farming. 58. Home economics extension work. 59. Inheritance tax. 60. Intergenerational relations. 61. Interpersonal conflict. 62. Job satisfaction. 63. Land use, Rural. 64. Landlord and tenant. 65. Mate selection. 66. Milking machines. 67. Non-formal education. 68. Part-time farming. 69. Quality of work life. 70. Rural women. 71. Rural families. 72. Saving and investment. 73. Self-evaluation. 74. Sex role. 75. Silage machinery. 76. Soil conservation. 77. Soils. 78. Success. 79. Tillage. 80. Women in agriculture. 81. Work. 82. Work and family. 83. Work measurement. 84. 4-H clubs. 85. Oral histories. 86. Chores — Meaning. 87. Evaluation and farm operation. 88. Individual and family attitudes. 89. Recreation — Meaning. 90. Reserve labor. 91. Rewards used in farming. 92. Rural-urban cultural relationships.

RGPN 13/06/1230
ID: NYCV85-A591 CC: 9554 DCF: a PROC: b

Would potential users understand, though, that "farmers — nutrition," (no. 49), indicates information about what farm families eat? Is the term, "quality of work life," (no. 69), an appropriate indicator when the documentation shows that farm people have little sense of work life apart from life's other aspects unless they are employed part of the time off the farm?

There remains the problem of how to alert potential users to the availability of information which is not encompassed by terms on the L.C. list. RLIN has anticipated the problem of a mismatch between those terms and the content of documentation by allowing each repository to use what are called local terms. Numbers 86-92 are local terms. Number 87, "evaluation and farm operation," is intended to lead the potential user to that part of the collection description that reads "aspirations, expectations, and responsibilities attributed to the self, other family members, and employees," but how effective is that signal? Numbers 86 and 89 are words which have a different meaning in rural than in urban culture; "work", "job", and "task" might also be listed here. "Reserve labor," (no. 90), refers to an aspect of farming without an industrial counterpart, where women and other relatives, who are willing and able to perform tasks in which they may rarely engage, help to determine the pace, scale, and content of farm operations by their availability. "Rural-urban cultural relationships," (no. 92), refers to the sense by farm people, that is unmistakable in the documentation, that they constitute a distinctive culture, a thought not to be found on the L.C. list. Because descriptive terms derived from publication may not fit a documentary record, especially about agriculture, archivists interested in documenting agriculture and rural life would do well to consider banding together to develop a thesaurus of local terms.

Alas, though, when documenting human behavior, means and ends are likely to conflict. As in farm families, contradictions can be met head on by a studied compromise between the interests involved or by apparent solutions which avoid identifying the contradictions. Students of rural art and architecture will probably be disappointed with the documentation of agriculture in the Farm Family Decision Making Project because the record consists of words and freehand sketches. Although the purposes of the project would have been well served by photography, rightly or wrongly, the camera's eye was deemed incompatible with the privacy of the project's participants. And cruciality, of course, is a subjective measure which depends on the eye of the beholder. Perhaps the best an archivist can do is to record the initial objectives and documentation strategy, keep a running account of adjustments between means and ends, and make this record available to those who use the documentation.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: After directing the Cornell Program in Oral History from 1965-1972, Gould P. Colman became University Archivist at Cornell. A study which he co-authored with Jerry D. Stockdale, *Area Development through Agricultural Innovation: New York's Sugar Beet Fiasco* (Rural Sociological Society Monograph No. 4, West Virginia University, Morgantown 1977) is based on systematic agricultural documentation.

NOTES

1. The original investigators were Professors Howard Conklin and C. Arthur Bratton in Agricultural Economics and Harold Capener and Jerry Stockdale in Rural Sociology. The author was director of the Cornell Program in Oral History at the time.
2. The description of this documentation which has been entered in RLIN appears later in this paper. The following understanding, signed by one or more members of each family, governs the use of these records.

   > This manuscript, which is the result of a tape-recorded interview, and the oral record from which it is derived are hereby made available for research and teaching purposes with permission of the Department of Manuscripts and University Archives at Cornell University and with the understanding that the speakers will not be identified by name or location. All literary rights are granted to Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.
   >
   > The foregoing restrictions also apply to the farm business records attached as appendices, and to group interviews with family members.

3. The farm and family events and methods for making decisions used in "The Game" were selected because they had been mentioned frequently in the recorded conversations. Allen Bjergo made the selections. See Bjergo's "A Study of Decision-Making in Twenty-One New York Farm Families" (Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell University, 1970): 112-18.
4. Case studies published under the title *How Farm Families Make Decisions* are: Gould P. Colman and Jean Lowe, "The Brauns," *Rural Sociology Bulletin* 79 (October 1975); *Agricultural Economics Research Bulletin* 75-30 (October 1975); Sarah Elbert and Gould P. Colman, "The Roots," *Rural Sociology Bulletin* 79 (December 1975); *Agricultural Economics Research Bulletin* 75-34 (December 1975); Sarah Elbert, Joyce H. Finch, and Gould P. Colman, "The Nierikers," *Rural Sociology Bulletin* 79 (June 1976); *Agricultural Economics Research Bulletin* 76-11 (June 1976); Gould P. Colman and Leslie Puryear, "The Sawyers," *Rural Sociology Bulletin* 79 (January 1978); *Agricultural Economics Research Bulletin* 78-3 (January 1978); Gould P. Colman, Laurie Konigsberg, and Leslie Puryear, "The Nordahls," *Rural Sociology Bulletin* 79 (May 1978); *Agricultural Economics Research Bulletin* 78-5 (May 1978); Gould P. Colman, Laurie Konigsberg, and Leslie Puryear, "The Crockers," *Rural Sociology Bulletin* 79 (March 1979); *Agricultural Economics Research Bulletin* 79-7 (March 1979); and Gould P. Colman, Laurie Konigsberg, and Mary Arluck, "The Jarsons," *Rural Sociology Bulletin* 79 (August 1979); *Agricultural Economics Research Bulletin* 79-8 (August 1979). See also: Alan D. Berkowitz, "Marital Stress and Congruence in Farm Families" (M.A. thesis, Cornell University, 1977); Alan D. Berkowitz, "Role Conflict in Farm Women" (Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell University, 1981); Allen C. Bjergo, "A Study of Decision-Making in Twenty-One New York Families" (Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell University, 1970); and Helen L. Taylor, "The Farm Wife Influence in the Intergenerational Transfer of the Farm" (M.P.S. project report, Cornell University, 1979).

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ARCHIVAL ADVENTURE ALONG THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION TRAIL: WHAT ARCHIVAL RECORDS REVEAL ABOUT THE FBI AND THE UNIVERSITIES IN THE McCARTHY PERIOD

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ABSTRACT: Two events that occurred toward the end of 1986 serve to remind us that a fully informed citizenry is one of the most important antidotes to tyranny. The first was the publication of Ellen Schrecker's book *No Ivory Tower: McCarthyism and the Universities* which casts considerable doubt on the view that American universities were bastions of free inquiry. The second was, of course, the revelations associated with the "Contragate" scandal. In each instance the public was made aware of the abuse of governmental authority by the illuminating power of the written documentary record.

This article discusses several specific instances of abuses of public power that involved a questionable relationship between the Federal Bureau of Investigation and various universities during the McCarthy period. It is a slightly modified version of a paper presented at a session entitled "The Archives of the Second American Red Scare: Sources, Issues, and Reflections" at the Forty-ninth Annual Meeting of the Society of American Archivists in Austin, Texas, on November 1, 1985.

The research that this article is based upon was made possible by obtaining, through recourse to the Freedom of Information Act, copies of pertinent records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The necessary documentation was obtained with considerable difficulty.

The cases examined in this article should help to underscore the notion that archivists have an ethical and civic obligation to support the right of citizens to as free access as possible to public records and an equally important responsibility to discourage the imposition of unduly restrictive conditions of access on records held by private organizations.

Archivists might find it interesting to see something of the problems — substantive, ethical, professional — generated by an attempt to conduct research

on a problem whose intractability arises not so much because of conceptual difficulties as archival. The research has to do with the relations between the chief domestic investigating agency of the United States government — the Federal Bureau of Investigation — on the one hand, and many of the country's leading universities, on the other, during the McCarthy period and the Cold War. Those relations were a matter of dispute as events of history, and they remain a matter of dispute as the subject of historiography. It is not unreasonable to suppose that to some extent the contentiousness with which the subject is invested might be reduced by examining documentary evidence which would have the salutary effect of telling us what we do not know now about those events of the McCarthy period. It was with that thought in mind that this research began — with an attempt to exploit documentary materials that had only recently become available and that promised to shed light on dark corners of our recent history.

On May 16, 1977, I wrote my first letter to the FBI requesting, under the Freedom of Information Act, certain documents relating to these matters. The calendar of correspondence between the FBI and me has now reached 1,700 letters. That figure does not include the number of documents that I have received, the number of letters exchanged with other agencies of government (such as the State Department, the CIA, and the United States Information Agency), or with private organizations, such as universities, whose archival holdings, suggested by clues contained in the FBI documents, turned out to be indispensable, nor the very large number of letters that had to be written in connection with bringing a suit against the FBI in the federal courts in an effort to force it to make more documents available and to make them available in a less expurgated form. The progress of the research has been painfully slow, and there is no doubt but that, especially in the last three years, government authorities have made the use of the Freedom of Information Act as a tool of historical research even more difficult.

How to respond to government attempts to continue the secrecy with which it acted during the McCarthy period by keeping the documentary record of its activities secret from researchers presents serious professional, civic, and ethical problems. What should be the response of the professional organizations of librarians, archivists, historians, and social scientists to the U.S. government's refusal to release records, or to release them in expurgated form, or, even worse, to prevent their release by shredding them? Standing above these professional interests are even more important ethical-political issues. What are we to make of the view that holds that the records of the government of the United States are not the property of its citizens? Or the view that contends that in balancing the right to know with the protection of sources of information, the scales should always be tipped in favor of maintaining secrecy, especially when this position conceals the government's own illegal acts as well as those of private persons and organizations in activities that the public did not then know occurred and still does not know? Or the view that, in effect, government officials are not accountable for their behavior because those to whom they should be accountable have no right to see the records from which an account of their activities can be reconstructed?

In short, efforts to use the Freedom of Information Act have created difficult problems that are both time-consuming and costly to solve. But the efforts have also resulted in many discoveries.

Consider, for example, what government records have revealed about the effect of FBI activities on academic freedom. Even a few examples will suggest how widespread FBI activities were, how much they depended upon the use of secrecy and informers, how close was the cooperation between university authorities and the FBI, and how selective leaking of information from its files by the FBI made it the most important agency in the establishment and operation of the McCarthy-period blacklist.

On March 26, 1953, in a memorandum to twenty-three FBI field offices, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover instructed the Special Agents in Charge (SAC) of those offices to conduct an immediate survey of the "subversive information available concerning persons connected with fifty-four enumerated colleges and universities." These included: Bennington, Cornell, Syracuse, Johns Hopkins, Maryland, Boston University, Dartmouth, Harvard, Mount Holyoke, MIT, Smith, Wellesley, New Hampshire, Buffalo, Rochester, Duke, North Carolina, Northwestern, Chicago, the University of Illinois at Chicago, Antioch, Ohio State, Colorado, Michigan, Wayne State, Cal Tech, San Jose State, Stanford, UCLA, Southern California, Fisk, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Princeton, Rutgers, Upsala, Yale, Tulane, Brooklyn, CCNY, Columbia, Hunter, Long Island, NYU, Sarah Lawrence, Carnegie Tech, Penn State, Temple, Pennsylvania, Reed, Contra Costa Junior College, Berkeley, Washington, the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, and Howard. The names of those to be investigated were taken from the Security Index, a list of those to be arrested and imprisoned in the event of an emergency; pending security case files; and "any confidential informants and established sources which might be expected to have such information concerning persons connected with these institutions . . . ."

Hoover insisted that individuals were being investigated, not institutions. How one could investigate university employees without investigating universities or "all suspected Communist subversives" without inquiring into "the extent of Communist infiltration" was not explained, but SACs were specifically "cautioned not to make any contacts which might give the impression that the Bureau is conducting any such investigation of institutions of higher learning."[1] Not even Bureau informants should receive the impression that "institutions of higher learning" were being investigated.

Let us look at what happened at one of these universities, the University of Colorado.[2]

On July 19, 1954, U.S. Attorney General Herbert Brownell, Jr. wrote to Hoover:

> I am attaching a letter from the Commissioner of Education of Colorado to the U.S. Commissioner of Education [Samuel Brownell, Herbert Brownell's brother], which you and I discussed briefly this morning. If you conclude that a modification of the policy of giving certain information to the Governors of the various states, as a service to them, is called for at least as to educational officials, will you please advise.

The details of the investigation of the University of Colorado throw light on the contrast between the secret FBI practice of releasing information from its files and its publicly proclaimed policy that it never did so except under explicit orders from the President or the Attorney-General. Hoover reminded Brownell that he had informed him of the existence of "our Responsibilites [sic] Program" on December 2, 1953, and recommended that no changes be made

in the program despite the representations of the Colorado Commissioner of Education. "You will recall," Hoover wrote Brownell, "that the program was initiated at a meeting I had on February 12, 1951, with a committee of the National Governors Conference headed by Governor Frank Lausche of Ohio," a meeting called at the behest of the governors. An agreement had been worked out in view of the governors' request that "responsible officials of state governments should have knowledge of dangerous Communists and other subversives employed in state and municipally operated institutions. . . . "

About whom and to whom was such information to be provided? It was to be provided about persons "considered dangerous to the internal security of the country," who were listed on the Security Index, and who were employed by any state, municipal or local government, public school system, or public utility. The information was to be "volunteered orally to the Governor" or, "if circumstances require, to some other high level state official."

Hoover indignantly refused to consider any alteration in the practice as it affected teachers:

> I have thoroughly considered the question of modifying our Responsibilities Program to the extent that no information would be disseminated regarding dangerous Communists who are employed in the public school systems of the various states. In my opinion, Communist infiltration of the public school systems would present a most serious threat to the internal security of this Nation. Teachers who are Communists are in an excellent position to slant the attitudes of many of their students toward at least a tolerance of Communist ideals.

He ended with a characteristic slap at the Colorado Commissioner: " . . . it would appear that he is more concerned with the rights of certain teachers with alleged Communist sympathies than he is with protecting the children of the State of Colorado from the influence of Communist instructors . . . . Unless advised to the contrary, there will be no change in our present policy." On the same day he wrote to Brownell he had received a lengthy memorandum from L.V. Boardman, a high FBI executive, that throws light on the background of the FBI's Responsibilities Program and Dissemination Policy, on why the Colorado issue had arisen in the first place and caused the intervention of the brothers Brownell, and on how the FBI responded to what it felt was a challenge to its authority by impugning the loyalty of its challengers. First to concern Boardman was the Colorado commissioner; he had been "critical of alleged Bureau procedures in furnishing information to governors . . . " and he was, therefore, fair game to be investigated himself. He was investigated, but all that turned up in the FBI files was that he was a Mormon and formerly resided in Salt Lake City. As for the Attorney-General's "apparent inclination toward modifying the Program," Boardman reported that the Executives' Conference of the FBI had voted to retain the present policy "because it furnished a weapon of harassment of the Communist Party and aided in stopping infiltration of public and semipublic organizations by Communists. Communist infiltration and control of educational systems would present a serious problem with regard to the internal security of this country." Boardman strongly recommended that FBI policy not be modified "in regard to educational officials or in any other manner."

But what was it precisely that the Colorado commissioner wanted to know? He had written to the U.S. Commissioner of Education, Samuel Brownell, that Colorado Governor Dan Thornton had passed on information to the State Board of Education about the loyalty of certain teachers. Thornton had said only that he had received the information from one of the "official investigating agencies of our government," but it was widely believed to be the FBI. Moreover, the Colorado commissioner had learned from school officials in other states that a pattern had emerged: ". . . FBI data goes to the Governor, the Governor transmits the information to the local school systems." If this were true, "there is something ominous about this procedure." But was it true? And so he asked: 1) Does the FBI "pass on unevaluated information (or any other information for that matter) to governors or other official agencies of government?"; 2) Does government policy "permit any investigative agency to give this information to any but the President or the Department of Justice?"; 3) Does the FBI investigate a "school system or other governmental agency" without notifying the executive officers of that agency?

He wanted to cooperate with the FBI, but "not at the expense of intimidating and frightening teachers or trampling over individual rights," and he commented, according to Boardman, "that many people are beginning to wonder if the FBI is getting into the role of a gestapo." He was especially disturbed by the fact that many of the statements passed on to the governors "merely contained unverified, derogatory information and that no one will come forth to authenticate the statements."

The Colorado commissioner was a stubborn man. He wrote on September 16, 1954 to Hoover himself. His persistence may have been fed by a series of articles and editorials in the Denver *Post* on the systematic leaking of information from FBI files to the governors of a number of states. The editorial of September 23, 1954 declared:

> Now we believe that what appears to be a trend toward secrecy in evidence of guilt, or imputation of wrong-doing . . . is dangerous . . . . We think the deadly and anonymous reports that have fallen so mysteriously upon the desks of governors, attorney generals and school administrators come perilously close to what Justice Black described as "pseudo bills of attainder . . . . " What has happened to teachers in Colorado, Utah, New York, Illinois, California and perhaps other states challenges our historical Anglo-American concepts of due process and just treatment.

Would the FBI be forced to reveal that it had two policies — a public policy and a contrary private policy? Revelation of the discrepancy would have been damaging to the agency. Fortunately, it had friends who would help keep its secrets.

On October 11, 1954, Assistant FBI Director Louis Nichols wrote a memorandum to Hoover concerning the tension building in the National Education Association. An official of the NEA, Glenn E. Snow, Assistant Secretary for Lay Relations, had called him to say that "he had some information in his possession he didn't know what to do with." Nichols had run a check on Snow and had determined that he had been in touch with Hoover in early 1953 to pose "several problems concerning subversive tendencies of members of the teaching field which confronted the National Education

Association and requested assistance from the Bureau." How could the NEA help the FBI in tracking down subversives? Hoover told him "to check with numerous congressional studies, the Chamber of Commerce, and American Legion." He had been satisfied with the advice he had received then, but now he had a new problem — the restiveness of members of the NEA upon learning that FBI information was being leaked about teachers; specifically, that the Colorado chapter had been given information "concerning the Communistic affiliation of school teachers through the Colorado Attorney General's Office," which had obtained it from the governor who, in turn, had obtained it from the FBI:

> A representative of the Colorado Attorney-General's Office, in passing this information on, reportedly stated that the information had come from the FBI, but that if he were ever confronted or accused of divulging this fact he would deny it. Five of the eleven Western states reportedly obtained information in a similar manner . . . .

He made an appointment to see Assistant Director Nichols at 3:00 p.m. on November 4, 1954; that morning, Nichols wrote Hoover concerning what he would tell Snow about FBI policy:

> I do not think that we should advise him of the Responsibilities Program . . . . I will take the position that . . . we simply do not disclose the contents of our files to other than authorized persons . . . . We are checking our files on Snow, but I do not see how we could possibly admit to him the background of the Responsibilities Program . . . .

Nichols's memorandum bears the following notations: "I agree," by Clyde Tolson, Hoover's chief assistant; "I concur," by Hoover himself.

Following his interview with Snow, Nichols wrote to Hoover on October 11, 1954 about what he had actually told Snow. He had admitted that the FBI knew the names of the suspect Colorado teachers, and "I could tell him in confidence that there was considerable substance, enough to make inquiry." But the information in the files was confidential. When he was asked if the FBI "did not ever give information" to state and local authorities, including the governor, he had assured Snow that this was done only in "problems of mutual interest . . . not within our jurisdiction, such as a crime being committed . . . . " Nichols hoped the situation would "never be pressed to the point where to defend" itself from unfair charges of leaking information, the FBI would feel "required to make a full statement of what is in the file which would, of course, cause considerable grief because the public simply was not prepared to take some of the shocking things that come to our attention." Snow agreed: it had been a mistake for the Colorado teachers to allow the press to get wind of the situation, and he would certainly so advise them.

The public image of the FBI depended upon such evasion and deceit. How masterful Nichols's presentation was in that respect may be seen from a telegram sent by the Denver field office to FBI headquarters on November 8, 1954, in response to a request from Washington as to exactly what information the Denver SAC had given Governor Thornton about the Colorado teachers. The Denver SAC had given Thornton information about eight cases: one woman had already left her employment at the University of Colorado and one

employee (not a teacher) had left because of a reduction in force, so there was no need to give the Governor more information concerning them. Four persons had had their contracts cancelled by local boards of education and were no longer teaching in the Colorado system. Then came the chilling conclusion:

> All information furnished by Denver office this matter to Governor of Colorado was subsequently referred by Governor to Attorney General Duke Dunbar who in turn furnished it directly to School Superintendents and President University of Colorado. No hearing were [sic] held by the Governor or Attorney General . . . . AG Dunbar was asked by School Board to act as counsel for Board in event of hearings and he affirmed willingness to do so, however, was never called upon since no hearings held.

The tactics used by the FBI in the Colorado case — to leak information in its files to authorities who then fired the alleged subversives — was one component of the method by which it recruited informers and established the blacklist of teachers and others. That method is graphically illustrated in a letter to J. Edgar Hoover from the Baltimore SAC, February 5, 1953:

> . . . information concerning [name deleted] was furnished to [name deleted] on 12/2/52. Subsequently, [name deleted] Office advised that they are going to attempt to develop [name deleted] as an informant by pointing out to her that if she did not cooperate with them, she would undoubtedly lose her employment [few words deleted] . . . . On February 2, 1953, [name deleted] advised SA [Special Agent — name deleted] orally that his investigators had in fact attempted to develop [name deleted] as an informant, but that she had absolutely refused to talk with them . . .

The FBI's practice was to interview a suspected subversive prior to leaking information to a governor. The results of the interview determined what happened later. The paradigmatic example is represented in an inter-office memorandum from one high-ranking FBI official to another:

> The San Francisco Office on January 2, 1953, requested authority to furnish information concerning the subject to [name and title deleted] . . . .
>
> San Francisco advised that the subject stated that he had no additional information to furnish with regard to his past activity and that another interview would serve no purpose. San Francisco recommended that the subject's name be retained in the Security Index. Also. . . it is recommended that we authorize the SAC at San Francisco to orally furnish certain information concerning the subject to [name deleted] . . . .

Alleged "subversives," in short, were offered the choice between losing their jobs if they refused to cooperate, or becoming informers.

When a San Francisco "subject" proved unwilling to "talk to the agents" during his interview, information concerning him was given to an officer of an organization "in view of the fact that the subject may seek employment" there.

Of crucial importance in the development of the blacklist and the purge of alleged "subversives" was the relation of the FBI to congressional committees. On February 11, 1953, Assistant FBI Director Nichols sent a memo to Clyde Tolson, Hoover's chief aide:

> Robert Morris [chief counsel to the Jenner Committee] stated the Senators were very happy over their hearing yesterday with reference to the teachers. Morris would like to have another hearing some time week after next and would like to get hold of a good case at Bennington College, Sarah Lawrence College and Harvard. He wondered if we could give him any leads. I told him we would give some thought to this.
>
> I asked Morris whether he had given any thought to Professor [name deleted] Cornell University. He thought this was an excellent idea and would do so. I further asked him whether he had given any thought to [name deleted] whose maiden name was [name deleted] and who, as I recalled, joined the Party at Sarah Lawrence College. He thought this was an excellent idea and would give it consideration.
>
> I told Morris we ought to really concentrate on Professor [name deleted]. He stated he thought this was worth-while and would do it.
>
> I think if we could get a good Communist Party professor at Harvard, Sarah Lawrence and Bennington, this would be a worth-while venture.

At the bottom of the memo, J. Edgar Hoover wrote: "Yes. Help if we can. H."

Instructions were sent to three appropriate field offices to provide the help the Jenner Committee wanted. Disappointingly, Bennington College had no professors on the Security Index. Harvard had six, but only two were felt to provide the "good case" the Committee wanted. Even then, "Investigation [has] not developed actual proof of [their] Communist Party membership although it has indicated that [they had] identified [themselves] and lent [their] names in support of Communist Party sponsored programs and front organizations . . . ." A few days later, at Morris's request, Nichols provided additional information on still other faculty members.

It is clear that the FBI leaked information from its files to congressional committees and that Hoover was aware that it did so. Hoover, however, suggested otherwise in a memorandum he sent to his aides Clyde Tolson and Louis Nichols on April 16, 1954:

> On April 15, 1954, I saw Mr. Ralph McGill, Editor of the "Atlanta Journal" who was in town attending the annual meeting of the American Society of Newspaper Editors. He called to pay his respects.
>
> During his visit I outlined to him some of the problems faced by the FBI in the handling of security matters and stressed the fact that the FBI did not evaluate information which it procured and forwarded to other Government agencies, and I also took the occasion to point out to him the confidential character of the FBI files and the fact that access to them was not had by members of Congress or Committees of Congress, notwithstanding some of the public statements which had been made by certain members of Congress.

Collaboration Between the FBI and Academic Institutions

Analysis of these records makes us aware of another problem, largely ignored by historians of the McCarthy period and of higher education — the existence of a set of institutional connections between government and universities that casts a dark shadow over the view that the risk to academic freedom came solely from an insidious FBI that pried secrets from an embattled and reluctant academic community. If academic freedom was jeopardized — and it was —

it was in large part because the leaders of the academic community gave up their autonomy, not because it was taken from them. Moreover, the Universities' sacrifice of their autonomy was carried out with as much secrecy as the FBI's attempt to compromise it. In short, universities were not always the unwilling victims of FBI misbehavior; they were often accomplices.

On December 16, 1953, for example, Dr. Buell Gallagher, president of the City College of New York, was interviewed by an FBI agent in his office at his own request. A memorandum to Hoover of December 22 reported the results of that interview. Gallagher wanted help from the FBI in rooting out subversive faculty members who were responsible for the "adverse publicity" CCNY had been receiving ever since secret hearings had been held by Congressional investigating committees. Four CCNY professors had been forced to resign, but as Gallagher told his FBI interviewer, "he still believes there are other professors at the College who might be suspect and that he had been approaching every avenue of information in an effort to determine whether or not those people he suspected should be asked to resign." By January 15, 1954, he was required to submit an affidavit to the New York Board of Higher Education to the effect that he knew no CCNY professor to be a member of or affiliated with the Communist Party. He said he had "cooperated closely with the Jenner, McCarthy, and Velde Committees," that he had had their cooperation in the hunt for subversives, and that he "had spent considerable time looking into the background and reading articles, papers, and books" by suspect professors. But he had not been able to turn up conclusive evidence of their Communist connections. Would the FBI "come to his assistance and supply him, possibly on a confidential basis," with information concerning suspected professors? He wanted the FBI to know that he would treat such information with complete confidentiality.

Thus ended the interview, but not the relationship or the flow of information. The New York SAC called Hoover's attention to a letter of April 24, 1953, listing the names of professors in New York City who were or should be on the Security Index, including a number at CCNY. " . . . The Bureau may desire, under its Responsibilities Program," he said, "to make this information known to Governor Dewey who may in turn make this information available to Dr. Gallagher or some other administrator of City College of New York." Hoover was responsive to the suggestion; On January 8, 1954, he replied that the names of all CCNY employees on the Security Index should be "disseminated under the Responsibilities Program." On January 19, the New York SAC notified Hoover that "all Security Index subjects who were formerly employed at CCNY, are no longer employed there in any capacity." New York Board of Education officials, in turn, passed information to the FBI, including, for example, the transcript of testimony and the documentary evidence presented before the Board's Trial Committee at the hearings of suspected Communist teachers. The information was used to supplement what was contained in the FBI's own files and was compared with the testimony of the same persons before the Senate Internal Security Committee in the hope that discrepancies could be found to sustain a charge of perjury.

Consider still another case: The Special Agent in Charge of the Boston office wrote Hoover on June 19, 1950 that " . . . arrangements have been completed for a most cooperative and understanding association between the

Bureau and Harvard University." Hoover in turn wrote the Boston office on July 31, 1950 that "It is noted from your letter . . . that arrangements have been perfected whereby information of interest will be made available to the Bureau on a confidential basis . . . . This arrangement will be effective in connection with Harvard College and the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences." Whatever the substance of the material was that passed between Harvard and the FBI, the relationship between them was cozy. As the head of the Boston office told Hoover on October 26, 1950: "The Bureau is assured that every precaution will be exercised in connection with this matter . . . . [Name and title deleted] was assured that any contact for the purpose of obtaining such confidential information from Harvard University files, would be on a selective basis and this policy has been closely adhered to."

University Archives as a Potential Source of Information

That the universities themselves colluded with the FBI is supported by records in the universities' own archives. In a report to FBI headquarters dated July 28, 1954, the Boston SAC wrote: "From information provided the Boston Division by other individuals having Harvard Corporation appointments, it appears that Dean Bundy is insisting that former Communist Party members, who now have Harvard Corporation appointments, shall provide the Federal Bureau of Investigation a full and complete record of their activities in the Communist Party and shall at the same time identify all individuals known to them as participating in activities of the Communist Party and its related front organizations."

In the archives of both Columbia and Yale Universities, there is a memorandum of a meeting held in Washington, D.C., on December 8, 1954, of "The Listening Post," a committee of university officers. Harvard was represented by Arts and Sciences Dean McGeorge Bundy. Whether or not this memorandum exists in the Harvard archives cannot now be determined. The minutes of the meeting, prepared by an attorney who was present, confirm the FBI memorandum attesting to Harvard-FBI cooperation in the purging of "suspect" faculty members. The representatives of the seven universities at the meeting met with the staff of the Joint Committee on Internal Revenue Taxation to discuss how they were handling questions of loyalty and subversion. They agreed that 1) no present member of the Communist Party or anyone subject to Communist discipline would knowingly be retained as a faculty member or given scholarships or fellowships; 2) while not in itself a cause for dismissal, use of the Fifth Amendment would precipitate a thorough investigation and review of the fitness to teach of those who used it; 3) "any derogatory information received by the university [was] a basis for an investigation of some sort"; 4) while none of the universities had a regular investigating staff, they "obtained such information as they can from Governmental investigating agencies but [found] this of limited usefulness because of the refusal of such agencies to disclose sources"; 5) a faculty member under Communist discipline or who refused to be "completely frank" with the university investigating board would not be protected by academic tenure. As a result of their investigations, some universities had refused to renew contracts of non-tenured faculty members, some had dropped faculty members with tenure, and some were in the process

of making investigations. In response to the suggestion that the universities' task might be made easier if a non-Communist oath were required — a requirement that "would bring the FBI and the Department of Justice into operations which the universities now have to undertake,"—the representatives of the universities disagreed because the FBI and the Department of Justice "are not today following up and prosecuting cases which the universities have already handed over to them under existing law."[3]

The FBI records clearly suggested the necessity to examine the holdings of various university archives. Such research led to many discoveries.

The records of the Academic Freedom Project at Columbia University (the MacIver Commission), for example, document the existence of an agreement between the presidents of a large number of colleges and universities in California and the California Senate Committee on Un-American Activities. Under this agreement, reached in the early summer of 1952, the presidents promised to appoint "a contact man" at each university to watch out for "subversion" and report to the Committee. In the words of President Lynn White of Mills College: " . . . the matter of preventing Communist infiltration was obviously so important that no less [a] person than the president himself should serve as liaison between the institution and the [Burns] Committee, and I appointed myself in this capacity." According to President Robert G. Sproul of the University of California, "communications" between the universities and the Committee needed to be improved "for the purpose of making information in the Un-American Activities Committee files available to the educational institutions . . . . " To that end, liaison officers to the Committee were appointed on each campus; they were "in each case the chief administrative officer of those universities . . . . "

In the papers of President A. Whitney Griswold at Yale, there is a letter dated March 23, 1953, from Yale attorney F.H. Wiggin, reporting the testimony before the Jenner Committee of Richard E. Combs, counsel to the California committee. Approximately "100 teachers have been dismissed" in California, he said, "and more than 100 teachers have been prevented from gaining tenure . . . . There was emphasis," Wiggin concluded, "on the advantages of prior screening as contrasted with the rooting out of Communists after some damage had been done."[4]

In fact, Yale had been engaged in such practices for a long time. In 1927, Yale had hired Harry B. Fisher, a Methodist clergyman who had been an undercover operative for Emory Buckner, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, to help enforce parietal rules concerning .drinking, drugs, and sexual behavior among Yale students and faculty. The operation was secret; only the president and a few high administrative officials were aware of Fisher's existence and his activities were concealed under the scholarly rubric, "The Committee on Social Research." By the late 1930s, Fisher was no longer concerned with parietal rules; the hunt for aliens and subversives now occupied his attention, so much so that in his annual report for 1943-44 he wrote: "I sincerely hope that when World War III comes along all such alien personnel will be placed in uniform and maintained under strict Army and Navy regulations." In his report to the president of Yale for 1944-45, he recommended that "we . . . organize a greater degree of 'investigative know-how' among the Alumni sponsoring and checking applicants for admission to the University

. . . . In quite a number of instances I have discovered both the applicants and their families associated with Communist or Communist Front organizations." Fisher was intimately involved in drawing up the forms Yale University used to provide information to government investigating agencies; he was the university's liaison officer with the FBI in New Haven; and he himself approved or disapproved applications for employment. Despite the sensitivity and the importance of the work Fisher did, despite the fact that he was on the Yale staff from 1927 to 1952, his name will not be found in any printed document relating to Yale University, nor will references to him be found in any history of Yale, including the magisterial work of Professor George W. Pierson, former chairman of the Yale History Department. The story of Fisher's activities must be constructed from the records in the Yale archives.[5]

At least Yale will grant permission to use its archives. That is more than can be said of Harvard. Harvard University, whose motto is "Veritas," is the most restrictive I know of in respect to the use of its official records. Official records of the university are sealed for a period of fifty years, a policy more stringent than that followed by the FBI or the Official Secrets Acts of many governments. Despite pleas by many scholars, Harvard reaffirmed its policy a few years ago on the very day that certain papers of Harvard President Abbott Lawrence Lowell, relating to the Sacco-Vanzetti case, were officially opened — fifty years after the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti.

I first requested permission to use the Harvard archives in 1977 and was told, as were a number of other scholars, that the rule closing Corporation records for fifty years would not be set aside. But I wanted to get to the bottom of what the FBI called the "most cooperative and understanding association between the Bureau and Harvard University," and on a number of occasions I wrote to Harvard President Derek Bok asking him to modify the university's position on access to its archives. He refused, and when I asked for permission to quote from his letters of refusal, that, too, was refused.

In the secrecy of Harvard University, the institution which so many thought was a great bulwark of intellectual freedom, we see some powerful reasons for the dangers which overcame us in the 1950s, and still threaten us.

Harvard University, as a private institution, of course has the right to restrict access to its records. I should think, however, that archivists, as a professional collegium, have a responsibility to discourage the imposition of unreasonable restrictions on access to records held by private institutions, and I would contend that Harvard's fifty-year closure policy is a prime example of just such an unreasonable restriction.

Conclusion

I have examined here in some detail several representative cases of serious abuses of public power that occurred during the McCarthy period. These abuses only came to light after I was able, with much difficulty, to obtain copies of pertinent archival records that documented the abuses. I offer these cases as compelling evidence that the current debate about what "freedom of information" means and about the right of U.S. citizens to have free access to the archival records of their own government is not a debate over mere abstract principles. Rather, it is a debate over the very specific question of whether

citizens have the right to know that public officials, paid with public monies and acting in a public capacity, have engaged in illegal activities that violated the rights of citizens and were harmful to them in still other ways. It seems to me that archivists, as custodians of the records of our times, have an ethical obligation to support the freest possible public access to public records.

To be sure, there are legitimate questions that concern the use of records in archives. For the most part, these involve the identity of persons named in the records. The purpose of historical research is not to pronounce doom on people by embarrassing them or punishing them, but, by reconstructing the record of the past, to help us learn something about ourselves by seeing what we once were capable of doing and what we did not do that we should have done. The issue of privacy can easily be solved. What cannot be solved is how to write the history of institutional behavior and policy when access to the pertinent records is denied. We do not expect to encounter George Orwell's "memory hole" in organizations whose ultimate justification is that they stand for freedom of inquiry and make it possible.

Twenty years ago Professor Otto Kirchheimer wrote: "One might nearly be tempted to define a revolution by the willingness of the regime to open the archives of its predecessor's political police. Measured by this yardstick, few revolutions have taken place in modern history."[7]

It should be enlightening, even inspiring, for archivists to know that their responsibility extends far beyond the custody and maintenance of records. It is no exaggeration to say that they are charged with the custody of the republic itself.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Sigmund Diamond is Giddings Professor of Sociology and Professor of History Emeritus at Columbia University, where he has taught since 1955. Prior to then he taught at Sarah Lawrence College, served as an International Representative of the United Automobile Workers-CIO, and was in the service of the U.S. Government. He received his A.B. from Johns Hopkins in 1940 and his Ph.D. in history from Harvard in 1953. He has written numerous articles and books.

NOTES

1. The FBI records referred to here were obtained as a result of requests filed under the Freedom of Information Act and a suit in the Southern District of New York of the U.S. District Court to compel the FBI to provide uncensored copies of the documents I had requested. To conserve space, the documents will not be referred to by their FBI serial numbers, but all will be identified in the text by author, recipient, date, or some other distinguishing characteristic. This document is described more fully in Sigmund Diamond, "The Arrangement: The FBI and Harvard University in the McCarthy Period," in *Beyond the Hiss Case: The FBI, Congress and the Cold War*, ed. Athan G. Theoharis (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1982), 341-71. Most of the documents cited are to be found in the Main Files at FBI Headquarters, Washington, D.C. under the following subject headings: Communist Infiltration into Education — Internal Security; Communist Infiltration into Education — Harvard University; Ibid. — University of Colorado; Dissemination Policy; Responsibilities Program.
2. A more detailed discussion of this episode may be found in my essay on the FBI's "dissemination policy" — its term for its policy of leaking documents from its own files — in Maurice

M. Goldsmith and Thomas A. Horne, eds., *The Politics of Fallen Man; Essays Presented to Herbert A. Deane* (Exeter, England: Imprint Academie, History of Political Thoughts, 1986).

3. Memorandum to the Members of The Listening Post, Report of December 8, 1954, Meeting with Staff of Joint Committee on Internal Revenue Taxation, 1-6. Records of the University, Columbia University Files, Low Library, New York, New York. The same document may be found in the A. Whitney Griswold Papers, Box 1: Sturgis Warren to F.H. Wiggin, Dec. 16, 1954, Yale University Archives, Sterling Library, New Haven, Conn. I am greatly indebted to the Columbia and Yale University authorities for access to this and other documents.
4. Sigmund Diamond, "McCarthyism on Campus," *The Nation*, 19 Sept. 1981, 238-41.
5. Sigmund Diamond, "Surveillance in the Academy: Harry B. Fisher and Yale University, 1927-1952," *American Quarterly*, XXXVI (1984): 7-43.
6. Otto Kirchheimer, *Political Justice: The Use of Legal Procedure for Political Ends* (Princeton, N.J.; Princeton University Press, 1961), 204.

BOOK REVIEWS

Guide to the Microfilm Edition of the Jane Addams Papers. Edited by Mary Lynn McCree Bryan. Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms International, 1985. viii, 132 pp. Paper. $35.00

Jane Addams was a formidable figure of international fame who is of interest to a wide spectrum of people stemming from the historian, sociologist, and feminist to young children. She was a woman of many facets: social settlement founder (Hull House, Chicago, 1889, with Ellen Gates Starr), suffragist, symbol of woman's achievement, peace activist (Nobel Peace Prize, 1931), social reformer, author, matriarch to family members, and confidante to many. Her ideas and actions significantly affected the development of social welfare policy in the United States and influenced the attitudes of peoples throughout the world. Jane Addams is the subject of numerous books, articles, and dissertations, yet her correspondence, diaries, speeches, and personal documents, scattered in a number of repositories and in private hands, remained unpublished. That she became the subject of the first women's microfilm project funded by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) attests to her stature. The editor, Mary Lynn McCree Bryan, is to be commended for undertaking the mammoth task of bringing together the 120,000 documents that appear on the 82 reels of microfilm so that comprehensive studies of Jane Addams and her influence on the era in which she lived can be made.

The Jane Addams Papers cover the entire period of her life, 1860-1935. Memorials to her and centennial celebrations of 1960 are also included. Bryan's detailed note on the preparation of the microfilm edition provides the reader with useful information about the search strategy and the selection process that determined the arrangement of the collected materials into five major sections. They are: 1) Correspondence, 2) Documents, 3) Writings, 4) Hull House Association Records, and 5) Clippings File. The editor then discusses the production of the microfilm edition, providing the rationale for the Addendum reels and their relationship to the main body of work. Of particular value to the reader is the citation note that explains the "how to" and copyright ownership. There is the usual listing of the symbols and abbreviations used in the guide and on the film, and a chronology of Jane Addams' life from childhood to death. To further correlate the latter to the microfilm, the chronology should have included events to 1960.

This guide fulfills its intent "to assist the reader in gaining access to the contents of the work." It does this through the Table of Contents and Reel Notes. The Correspondence and Writings reel notes are narrative in description, whereas the other sections mainly list the pertinent access points after an explanatory note. The reels in the Clippings File section are identified as

standard-sized and oversized clippings, which is irrelevant to the reader who lusts for subject and/or name information. Errata found at the end of each reel indicates that the editor painstakingly reviewed each frame of the microfilm. To conclude the guide, there is a Brief Reel List that repeats previous information, except for the Correspondence section. For the first time, the twenty-seven correspondence reels (1-26; Addendum 1-A) are broken down by year(s) for the convenience of the reader. A subject/name index that would have made this guide an independent reference resource is not present. Finally, let the reader beware: guide pages separate from the spine as it is read.

We have here an excellent piece of work that sets standards for others to follow. Bryan and the editorial staff are to be congratulated for this work as it preserves, in another format, Jane Addams' ideas and activities. The subject of the Jane Addams Papers "exemplify the old statement that, though all else may be transitory in human affairs, the excellent must become the permanent."

This effort was funded by grants from NHPRC, NEH and other private foundations. Swathmore College provided the core of materials on which the project is based, while the University Library of the University of Illinois was the host institution for the project. From 1975 to 1983 the project headquarters was located in the restored Jane Addams' Hull House, located on the UIC campus. Bryan and the editorial staff worked immersed in the ambiance of the former settlement house surrounded by Jane Addams' manuscripts and memorabilia. All in all, monies expended on the project were put to good use. We wish Bryan and Associate Editor Nancy Slote continued success as they work on the annotated edition of selected documents.

Mary Ann Bamberger
University of Illinois at Chicago

A Guide to the Oral History Collection of the Charles Babbage Institute. Edited by William Aspray and Bruce Bruemmer, with the assistance of Hassan Melehy and Thomas Traub. Minneapolis: Charles Babbage Institute, Center for the History of Information Processing, University of Minnesota, 1986. 110 pp. Index. Paper.

Receipt of a guide to an archival collection has always been a pleasant event. Few are published, and very few of those are at all up to date. New archives, in particular, tend to procrastinate in publishing a guide, perhaps overwhelmed by the work involved, or feeling that the newly-formed collection is not yet deserving of a full-fledged guide.

Publication of a guide is not only a major undertaking, but also instantly subjects the collection to critical evaluation. Programs may issue flashy brochures promoting their holdings, mission, or facilities, but these do not subject a collection to the rigorous review that a guide does.

Any guide is inevitably laced with idiosyncracies. Despite reference to "accepted format" by those who would like to believe one exists, there is none in any specific sense. One expects to find certain information, and with as little

difficulty as possible, but format is largely in the hands of the compilers. They, of course, have at hand a bewildering array of previous attempts for guidance. Published guides run the gamut from the excellent to the irritating; everything from layout to typeface and indexing stimulates something in that range of reaction from the guide user.

The guide to the oral history collections of the Charles Babbage Institute is a fine first effort for a new and exciting program. It is easily readable and attractively packaged, while retaining the very definite idiosyncracies of the institution and the collection it covers.

The CBI was founded in 1978 to document the "evolution of the digital computer and modern electronic communication technology." Located on the campus of the University of Minnesota, it collects papers, records, oral history and related data on the computing industry and its leaders. It is refreshing to see that the CBI collection has included oral history from its inception, and that the goals of the oral history program, to supplement and indeed fill gaps in the written record, is clear in statement and in practice. The CBI oral history guide contains information on more than 140 interviews, with an index to names and subjects, and extensive introductory material.

The introduction itself states the parameters of the collection quite clearly, with major narrator qualifications evident. A second introductory section, entitled "Oral Histories Produced by CBI" is a brief apologia for oral history, which includes a series of five "interrelated elements" that the authors believe are controversial. Since they deal very straightforwardly with research value, effective use of oral history, the need for informed interviewers and interview focus, and the goal of making tapes readily available for research use, one cannot be sure where the controversy lies. Any major oral history program would subscribe to these aims. They are well stated and certainly appropriate guidelines for an oral history collection.

The guide itself is relatively easy to use. Interviews are listed alphabetically by name of narrator, and the index refers one to each interview by that name. The use of underlined names to signify interviews with more than one narrator is a bit unnecessary, and the notations on interview or tape length are unclear since the tape times and transcript page notations do not always appear to have much in common.

The narrators in this relatively new project already represent a fascinating cross section of those involved in the development of computers and communications technology. Generally they fall into one of five areas of inquiry developed by the CBI staff: 1) technical development and management within the U.S. computer industry, 2) computing in academic institutions, 3) the role of the U.S. government in computer development, 4) the international computing field, and 5) the relationship between mathematics and computing. The interview summaries are helpful, with enough detail to provide potential researchers with plenty of information on each tape.

In general this volume is a useful addition to the small collection of major oral history guides. It details the growth of a young and impressive program documenting the leading edge of technology. It is encouraging to see oral history used carefully, consistently, and in concert with an archival program. The CBI guide gives important evidence of the necessity and the value of such a union of function. CBI's leaders deserve credit for this foresight, and encouragement

to follow this guide within five years by a second that will cover the total collection to that time.

James E. Fogerty
Minnesota Historical Society

Preservation of Historical Records. Committee on Preservation of Historical Records, National Research Council. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 1986. 112 pp. Clothbound. $17.95.

This useful book addresses the preservation needs of the non-intrinsically valuable documents of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), which has over three billion items in its charge. The immensity of such a task led NARA to seek the advice of the Committee on Preservation of Historical Records, composed of authorities from diverse technical and academic fields. The members most familiar to those involved in archival preservation are Norbert S. Baer, Alan R. Calmes, Peter G. Waters, and George B. Kelly, Jr.

Though intended as a response to the problems of a specific repository, the information contained here is of value to anyone concerned with archival or library preservation. Topics covered are environmental standards, paper composition, photographic film, magnetic recording media, and optical disks. The initial chapter presents the general recommendations of the committee, including proposals for mass treatment and archival copying; subsequent chapters support and enlarge on these statements. The concluding pages contain a model decision tree guiding the reader through varying options for treatment as determined by condition and expected usage. There are also an index and a glossary.

A major strength of this book is its willingness to make specific recommendations. Though in some cases the suggestions could derive from common sense, they are given considerably more weight because they are, in fact, based on sound research and analysis. On occasion this leads to rather daunting technical references (e.g., on p. 66, " . . . in magnetic disks, a 200-Å-thick layer of Co-Ni may be used, compared with magneto-optical disks that have a 150-Å-thick layer of Co-Fe-Tb . . . "). This is unusual, however, the majority of the report is clear and readable.

The chapter on the environment contains, to a large extent, information with which many people will already be familiar, though the documentation and detail exceed what is normally found. Not only are sources and effects of pollutants discussed, but also options for purification systems and monitoring. The recommended standards contain no surprises, but there is a fresh observation on the beneficial environmental effects derived from boxing.

The chapters dealing with the nature of paper and photographic film as archival media lead into what is one of the more interesting conclusions drawn from the work of the Committee: "The materials and technical problems inherent in the use of magnetic and optical storage media and the lack of suitable standards for archival quality make their use as preservation media

for archival storage inappropriate at the present time." Even considering the capability for re-copying of information, according to the Committee, the lack of suitable standards, coupled with current expectations for hardware obsolescence, support, for the time being, a continued reliance on paper and microfilm. Chapters on magnetic media and optical disks reinforce this contention, as well as the assertion that the disk's advantages of rapid access and data manipulation are not strongly relevant to archival needs. The Committee does emphasize, however, that NARA should monitor the progress of alternative information-storage systems, and promote the development of standards for them.

Another notable recommendation of the Committee concerns the viability of mass treatments. The Archives is advised to concentrate on environmental controls and protective enclosures. Since its holdings represent a composite of many different types of documents which would require an enormous amount of time to separate and test, "NARA should not undertake a mass deacidification program at this time but should monitor the development of deacidification processes." (p. 84) A logical alternative, as suggested in this book, is that the federal government require the use of permanent/durable papers for its records of permanent value.

Judith Fortson-Jones
Hoover Institution

A Guide to the Modern Literary Manuscript Collection in the Special Collections of the Washington University Libraries. St. Louis: Washington University Libraries, 1985. 115 pp. Appendixes. Paper. Available free from Curator of Manuscripts, Special Collections, Campus Box 1061, Washington University Libraries, St. Louis, MO 63130.

The collection of modern literary manuscripts at Washington University grew out of the mind and heart of William Matheson in 1964. Matheson envisioned a well-defined, carefully developed collection of twentieth century literary publications and manuscripts which would complement and support the instructional and research efforts of the university. After a careful review of existing collections of twentieth century literature, Matheson and his advisers created a list of 46 authors whom they considered to be "(1) . . . to some degree neglected or underestimated, and/or (2) on the threshold of greater recognition, and (3) not . . . already extensively committed to another library" (page 6). Following that same set of criteria, the list has since been expanded to include 115 names.

While the collection grew through gifts and donations in the 1960s, material received on deposit during the 1970s began to cause administrative concerns in the 1980s. In an effort to convert some of the deposits to gifts, Washington University applied for and received funding from the Title II-C (Strengthening Research Library Resources) program of the United States Department of Education. With funds from that grant, the manuscripts staff of the library

converted a number of deposits to gifts, processed those materials and others, and developed the *Guide* which is the subject of this review.

Seventy-six individual collections of literary manuscripts are described in the *Guide* as are three additional groups of material from the Washington University Archives and Research Collection. The entries are arranged alphabetically in the *Guide* and include birth and death dates for the principal person in the collection, a general identifier (author, collector, editor, etc.), inclusive dates for material in the collection, the number of items in the collection, a note on access to the material, and a narrative description of the contents. A bibliographic note is included so researchers can conduct preliminary research prior to using the manuscript collection. Most importantly, the amount of material for the significant literary figures represented in each collection is identified. The number of items related to a specific individual is noted in the guide entry as is a coded description of the type of material (letters to, letters from, manuscripts by, audiotapes of, proof matter by, and journals or notebooks by the person listed). The individual entries are, then, complete and comprehensive. Several guide entries run three pages or more; most run about one-half to three-fourths of a page.

The inclusion of detailed information on the type of documents available for individual literary figures makes this guide a most useful research tool. The cumulative index which permits a researcher to determine which collections contain material on a specific individual is especially useful.

This *Guide* represents something of an ideal in the preparation of summary finding aids. It includes detailed information on the contents of individual collections in a manner that is meaningful and useful to those interested in working the collection. It does not, and cannot, provide detailed subject access to the collections, but a researcher is able to determine the amount and the nature of the material at Washington University for specific individuals. Access to the works of individual authors is possible through the index and the selective listing of material within specific collections. The staff of the Modern Literary Manuscript Collection is to be commended for a job well-done.

Gordon O. Hendrickson
Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Kansas City

The WPA Guide to Minnesota. Compiled and written by the Federal Writer's Project of the Works Progress Administration, with a new introduction by Frederick Manfred. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1985. 539 pp. Indexes. Paper. $9.95.

The WPA Guide to Minnesota, like thermal underwear, jumper cables, and mosquito repellent, should be mandatory equipment for survival in Minnesota. Originally compiled by the Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration in 1938, the guide packs an astonishing range of information in one volume. Without reproducing the entire table of contents, it would be impossible to indicate the full scope of the work, but some of the topics covered are climate, geology, the Indians, history, government, immigration, industrial

development, labor relations, education, religion and the arts. And that is only Part I! Part II consists of brief descriptions, marvels of compression, complete with street maps of the major cities and towns of Minnesota. The distinctive character and history of each city is drawn in sharp and vivid prose that reads like a nonfictional *Lake Wobegon Days*. Readers will discover, for example, why streets in St. Paul zigzag at unreasonable angles while those in Minneapolis follow a more rational grid pattern. They can also find where to play polo in St. Paul, what taxi and bus fares are, what radio stations are available, and where to go for the State Gallery Rifle Matches — all as of 1938. The tours laid out at the end of each description are still useful, offering a splendid way to get a feel for the historical development of the city. The last section of the book consists of tours covering major portions of the state using the same technique to describe smaller towns, natural features and points of interest. While still useable, the reader is well advised to follow the advice of the editors of the new edition and take along a modern road map. Despite its age, though, the *Guide* makes delightfully informative reading for anyone with an interest in the state.

Such is its broad appeal, but the *Guide to Minnesota* has a specific value to archivists. The fact that it is fifty years out of date, while perhaps troubling for the general reader, is a great boon to those with a professional concern for the state's past. Over a hundred writers labored for nearly three years with the aid of the Minnesota Historical Society, the department heads of the University of Minnesota, and the State Department of Education to distill this one volume from what the director of the project called "an avalanche of facts, actual and near." In doing so, they produced a richly textured self portrait of the state, a snapshot of Minnesota as they saw it at a specific point in time. Despite minor errors of fact brought on by the rapid pace and scale of the project, the *Guide* emerges as an important historical document in its own right. While not intended as a scholarly reference work, it nevertheless stands as an invaluable tool for providing a context for the countless diaries, letters, government and business records, and other documents that have survived from the past.

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of this work is that it does not stand alone. WPA guides were prepared for all 48 states. As Frederick Manfred points out in his graceful introduction to the present edition, some of these are regarded as first-rate pieces of literature. Taken as a whole the entire series, good, bad, and indifferent, stands as a monument of American self awareness. It may be unnecessary to point out that it is also a monument to government intervention in preserving our historical and literary heritage, but it is certainly that. In an age where we all eat at McDonald's, shop in identical shopping malls, and listen to our news read in accentless Network English, it is a salutary reminder that each state is unique and has its own story to tell. Some of these state guides have already been reprinted. One can hope that all eventually will be. The Minnesota Historical Society chose well in bringing out a new edition of the Minnesota guide with an updated bibliography as part of their Borealis reprint series.

Scott Jessee
Control Data Corporation

The Black Women in the Middle West Project: A Comprehensive Resource Guide, Illinois and Indiana. By Darlene Clark Hine, Patrick Kay Bidelman, et.al. West Lafayette, Ind.: Purdue Research Foundation, 1986. 238 pp. Appendixes, indexes, and bibliography. $5.00, available from the Indiana Historical Bureau.

"If you want the history of a white man, you go to the library. If you want the history of black women, you go to the attics, the closets, and the basements." This quote by Alta Jett sums up the rationale behind the Black Women in the Middle West Project. NEH funded the eighteen-month project to address the historical neglect of black women in Indiana and Illinois by collecting, cataloging, and preserving their photographs and documents. Alta Jett, and hundreds of other volunteers like her, donated their time to promote the project, contact donors, process collections, and deliver material to the five cooperating repositories: Chicago Historical Society, Illinois State Historical Library, Calumet Regional Archives, Northern Indiana Historical Society, and the Indiana Historical Society. They were joined by a small project staff, located at Purdue University.

The happy marriage of volunteers, academics, and other professionals represents the greatest success of this project. Together they promoted an impressive level of public awareness of black women's history. The numbers speak for themselves. Over 1,000 people participated in some aspect of the project. Regular mailings were sent to 5,000 individuals and institutions (the project spent $5,000 on postage alone). Two hundred stories appeared in over 100 different publications including major features in *History News*, the *OAH Newsletter*, and *Essence Magazine*. The project also produced a prodigious paper record of its own, in the form of press releases, progress reports, brochures, a publicity kit, a collector's manual, a poster, even "business" cards for use by the volunteer project representives. And, of course, the *Comprehensive Resource Guide*.

The *Guide* is divided into five chapters, an epilogue, three appendixes, and three indexes. The first two chapters present papers on "The Significance of Black Women's History," and transcripts of addresses by three of the black women who shared their experiences with attendees at the eight conference/workshops in the summer of 1984. Chapters three and four provide entries to the material collected. Chapter five offers biographical sketches of project participants. The epilogue provides a pictoral review of the project, mixing shots of participants with selections of historical photographs and documents acquired by the project. Unfortunately, the poor photoreproduction process used in the *Guide* diminishes the impact of these images. The appendixes include a copy of the *Collector's Manual*, the "Project Participant Biographical Information Form," and a list of project participants. The indexes provide basic access to the collections and biographical entries.

The Black Women in the Middle West Project succeeded in its objective to collect and preserve historical materials. Volunteers acquired "hundreds of cubic feet of new collections." In addition, they secured biographical information on the donors, including statements on life, attitudes, and philosophy, which will help future researchers place this material in a personal context. The range of donors, and the materials they chose to preserve, provide a

wonderful cross-section of black women's experiences. They confirm the continuing existence — and struggle against — racism. They reflect the contributions black women have made in many areas. And they offer ample evidence of the centrality of religion, family, community, and sharing in many black women's lives.

These patterns are revealed in the types of materials donated. Instead of the letters, diaries, journals, and records associated with white men's collections, material acquired by the project consists of newspaper clippings, photographs, church and convention programs, club bulletins and yearbooks, letters of appreciation, certificates and awards, anniversary programs, birth and marriage certificates, and obituaries. Not only will these collections offer archivists and researchers primary source materials previously unavailable, but they should also provide them with a greater appreciation for the variation in patterns of paper documentation.

As an archivist, I do have one criticism of this guide. Because collections did not pass through the project office, the staff had to rely on information provided by the volunteers or cooperating institutions to compile entries. Unfortunately this resulted in descriptions that, in the words of the staff, were "timely rather than definitive." Collection entries emphasize biographical data rather than the contents of the material itself. More attention should have been paid to consistent reporting of basic collection descriptions. Certainly this lack is in part understandable because the materials await arrangement and description by the receiving institutions. In part, the reliance on volunteers to sort and inventory the material proved to be the weakest link in the process. A review of the *Collector's Manual* seems to confirm this. The "Collection Recording Form," "Inventory Systems Sheet," and the accompanying instructions are complicated and out of step with the rest of this excellent training manual.

This volume is less a "Comprehensive Resource Guide" and more a written record of the Black Women in the Middle West Project's philosophy, methodology, and very real accomplishments. It should serve as a model to guide future collecting initiatives which involve a heavy volunteer component.

Anne R. Kenney
Cornell University

A Guide to the Records of Minnesota's Public Lands. By Gregory Kinney and Lydia Lucas. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1985. 121 pp. Bibliography. Paper. $8.00

This guide describes Minnesota records which document the acquisition, sale, and management of its trust fund, railroad grant and related lands, in addition to the state's federal land survey and the initial transfer of federal public land title to the state or to private parties. In all, the guide characterizes transactions pertaining to nearly 9,000,000 acres of land which are documented in approximately 800 cubic feet of records primarily created by four agencies. It is improbable that a precise acreage count will be accomplished, because

not only do state and federal figures differ, but there is dispute over what constitutes land under some of the definitions.

Minnesota's land records are dispersed among several state and federal agencies, and this guide does an excellent job of consolidating this data for the researcher. Within state government, land records are held by the State Land Office, State Auditor, Conservation Department, Natural Resources Department, and the Secretary of State. Many other state agencies created records which document land activities and which may interest the researcher: Attorney General, Drainage Commission, Forestry Board, Immigration Board, Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board, and the Timber Commissioners Board. Federal records pertaining to Minnesota territorial and state lands were created by the U.S. Surveyor General and the U.S. General Land Office. The earliest survey of Minnesota land was directed by the U.S. Surveyor General of Iowa and Wisconsin. Congress moved the surveyor general's office to St. Paul in 1857, and it inherited the territorial survey work completed from 1848 through May 1857.

This guide is divided into four sections by the agencies which created the majority of the records: the State Land Office, the State Auditor's Land Department, the U.S. General Land Office, and the U.S. Surveyor General. Following an introductory discussion of the types of public land found in Minnesota and the laws which governed them, each section is introduced by a historical/administrative sketch of the major state and federal offices which generated the land records. Series lists, alphabetized by key word in the title, precede the more detailed sketch of the records themselves. The series entry also delineates span dates, volume, containers, related records, finding aids, and subseries listing when such information is available. The guide also contains summaries of records relating to land records which are located in other state agencies.

There is not any index to the guide but undoubtedly researchers using Minnesota land records will welcome this compilation. All of the records described in this guide are located at the Minnesota Historical Society. Current records of administrative value, however, remain housed in the Department of Natural Resources; these records are transferred to the State Archives when they are no longer needed on a daily basis by the agency.

William G. Myers
Ohio Historical Society

Guide to the Records of American Crystal Sugar Company. By David Carmichael, Lydia Lucas, and Marion E. Matters. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1985. Illustrations, index. 100 pp. Paper.

This volume contains all of the elements that should be included in every good finding aid, as well as some elements which one does not normally see in them. Any archivist would expect to see a scope and contents note, a historical introduction, and a description and listing of the records, and that archivist would not be disappointed. A researcher, however, might well be equally interested in the detailed table of contents in which each of these thirty-eight

series is identified by name; in the detailed index for the finding aid in which people, places, subjects, types of materials, and numerous other details are listed; and in the selection of pictures chosen from the voluminous number of photographs included in the records. Thus, this extraordinary finding aid will be very useful to both researchers and archivists at the Minnesota Historical Society. Both new and experienced archivists would benefit from examining the finding aid and using it as a model to follow in preparing similar documents for large collections of corporate records.

The records of American Crystal Sugar Company are eighty percent of the whole collection. Logically, then, their description takes up the major portion of this finding aid. For each series there is a good description. The descriptions always include types of records, amount of material, and dates. In some instances, certain types of unusual materials are described or defined so that uninitiated users can understand what is included. Particularly significant events or activities recorded in the series are also highlighted. These descriptions are followed by folder and volume listings.

Like many twentieth century American corporations, the American Crystal Sugar Company was created by the merger with, and acquisition of, several other companies over a period of years. This is reflected in the arrangement and description of the papers. Series twenty through thirty-two are records of thirteen of these acquired companies. In each case, the relationship between American Crystal Sugar Company and the other firm is detailed in a brief note, then the records are described and listed.

The final six series are various records grouped according to type, such as annual reports of other sugar companies, contracts, photographs, newspaper clippings, and miscellaneous.

Benjamin Franklin noted that wise men learn from the mistakes of others while fools hardly ever learn, even from their own errors. It seems to me that wise archivists can also learn from the successes of others. Thus, many archivists could probably learn something about how a good finding aid should be created by examining this one, even if few archivists or archives would need a copy in their own reference collections.

Charles R. Schultz
Texas A&M University

Company Archives: The Survey of the Records of 1000 of the First Registered Companies in England and Wales. By Lesley Richmond and Bridget Stockford. Brookfield, Vt.: Gower Publishing Company, 1986. 593 pp. Name, place, and subject indexes. Hardcover, $94.50.

Company Archives is the result of a four-year survey project made possible by a grant from the Economic and Social Research Council to the Business Archives Council of the U.K. In undertaking this mammoth project, the Business Archives Council had three major objectives: first, to compile a general register of business archives held by the oldest existing firms; second, to help

ensure the preservation of records which might otherwise be destroyed; and third to encourage research in those archives.

The companies surveyed were identified from a list resulting from the Companies Acts of 1856 and 1862, which required public or joint stock companies to register with the Board of Trade. All companies surveyed were registered between 1856 and 1889. The range of business activities covered by the original companies was extensive but predictable, while the contemporary firms vary remarkably in size and activity from small independent companies to global holding companies. The companies surveyed were selected because they are the oldest surviving companies — and therefore had a greater likelihood that records would have survived — and because these companies were unlikely to have been covered by other national surveys. While the original list included 1200 companies, the survey was completed for 674 of the "core" companies, those responding to the survey. Approximately 1000 additional institutions associated with or subsidiary to the core companies were identified and surveyed as well.

Entries in the book represent summaries of the actual records surveys, which were often quite extensive. Included in each entry for a core company are: the company name, registration date and number; its current business address; principal activity; brief history of the firm; location of the records; summary lists of records of the core company and its subsidiaries; and a reference section giving citations to relevant publications. While the entries vary greatly in detail and length, this is reflective of the size and variety of the records holdings of the companies. Great care has been taken to try to standardize entries so that record types are listed similarly in all entries.

Core companies are listed in chronological order of registration dates. For purposes of the guide, each company was given an entry number as well. A guide like this must be well indexed, and this one is exceptional. The name index includes names of all companies, individuals, and records locations. The place index includes towns and counties in the British Isles and countries worldwide, from Aberdeen to Zimbabwe. And the subject index includes business activities, commodities traded, and other subjects mentioned in the history sections. There is a two page guide to index conventions which must be read, but once mastered the guide book is extremely easy to use.

The Business Archives Council should be proud of accomplishing their objectives. This register of archives of the oldest firms in England and Wales covers the spectrum of business activity, and will undoubtedly prove quite valuable to a wide variety of researchers worldwide including business, social, and economic historians, local historians, biographers, and geneologists. Though this survey was never intended to be a definitive guide to all U.K. companies (it excludes defunct companies and younger firms), it can be used as an indicator of the types of records that should be available. It can also be used as a guide to a more conscious effort to identify and save those records most representative of current business activity.

An underlying assumption of the project staff was that the mere knowledge of the existence of archives in private hands will lead to their continued survival. The Business Archives Council has made a major contribution in publicizing the existence of a vast quantity of records previously inaccessible because their existence was unknown. The Council has also assumed additional responsibility

for maintaining the guide and subsequent changes of locations of records collections. We must certainly applaud our British colleagues for their ability to carry out this project. We can also be grateful for the information now available, and we should certainly encourage emulation of this model project.

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