

Archival Certification – Necessity or Nicety?

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Abstract: The Academy of Certified Archivists (ACA) was established in 1989, and participates in the definition and advancement of international professional archival goals, ethics, and standards. Since 1989, more than 1,000 archivists have been certified by meeting standards of experience and education, and bypassing the certification exam. This research project investigated the correlation between archival certification and employment. Anecdotal evidence suggests that certification is not being required or even considered necessary. To answer the problem statement—does having archival certification help candidates obtain employment—the author sought hard evidence from hiring personnel. The author developed an online survey which was disseminated between February 26 and April 26, 2013 on the Archives and Archivists listserv. The survey sought to determine if twenty-four years after inception, archival certification is a factor in evaluating the professional credentials of candidates hired for archival positions. This presentation addresses the results of the survey including comments from the anonymous respondents, and the implications for the archival certification program.

About the author:

Susan Hamburger is the Manuscripts Cataloging Librarian at The Pennsylvania State University, University Park. She received her M.A. and Ph.D. in American History from Florida State University, and B.A. in English and M.L.S. from Rutgers University. Dr. Hamburger has published articles in *American Archivist* and *Journal of Archival Organization*, and numerous book reviews, essays in encyclopedias, and book chapters on literary authors, the Civil War, and horse racing. Her broad-ranging archival research interests include grant writing, literary manuscripts, rejected manuscripts in publishers' archives, how researchers search for primary sources, and archival certification. Outside the archives, her scholarly research encompasses African American jockeys, and Bruce Springsteen. She is active in SAA as the incoming chair of the Waldo Gifford Leland Award subcommittee, is in her second three-year term with the Pennsylvania State Historical Records Advisory Board, and served the Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference as Program Committee Co-Chair (three times), on the Local Arrangements Committee, and as Publications Committee Chair and Webmaster.