

The landscape of archival employment: A study of professional archivist job advertisements, 2006-2014

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Abstract

The archival profession has long attempted to define what constitutes a professional archivist. These debates over education, training, and certification have lasted decades, however few studies have been completed on how the employment market for archivists has changed in response to these professional challenges. This study looks at almost a thousand professional archivist job advertisements between late 2006 and early 2014 to understand the current prevailing recruitment criteria. It is broader in scope and time period than other recent studies. Overall, the market was determined to be mostly stable during the study period.

Introduction

A reoccurring discussion within the American archival profession is what education, training, and credentials are needed to be considered a professional archivist. This question has not been decisively answered in the first century of the American archival profession. While several details have changed, this topic will likely be revisited by successive generations of archivists. These concerns often resurface in the context of employment for archivists. However, few studies have been carried out that systematically examine the educational and experience criteria listed in job advertisements for professional archivists.

While the questions modern archivists continue to ask are similar to those our professional predecessors struggled with, there has been significant progress in finding some commonly accepted criteria for professional status. Few today would argue the archival profession should abandon several of the hallmarks of professionalization, such as annual gatherings, a common body of knowledge, professional discourse, continuing education, and publications. The majority of early career American archivists now hold a master's degree.¹ Post-appointment training has been a long tradition in the American archival profession, and arguably occupies a larger place in archival education than graduate training has ever held.² What sets the current period of archival education and training apart from the past -- and what makes the archival enterprise similar to that of other professions -- is the growth of post-graduate credentials obtained via examination and training.

Since 1989, a significant number of archivists have sought out archival certification through the Academy of Certified Archivists.³ In 2011, SAA introduced the Digital Archives Specialist program, a series of workshops that culminates in a final exam, with the first cohort of DAS-holders passing the exam in 2013.⁴ In addition to these archivist-specific credentials, some archivists, particularly those with records management or information governance duties, may seek out additional credentials.

As new archivists enter the profession, they have significant anxieties over how they will fare on the job market and whether they will even be able to find an appropriate entry-level position.⁵ They may fear that these positions are a thing of the past. In addition, many mid-career archivists may feel similar anxiety over maintaining professional knowledge and skills in new areas of archival work. Some individuals may be concerned that the growth of post-graduate credentials may make it harder for new archivists to find a position. Instead, it may be that like other fields, archivists have turned to post-graduate credentials as a means of symbolically increasing their sense of professional security. If not required by the employment market, archivists may be pursuing credentials for a perceived edge in competition for scarce resources (i.e. jobs), because of the culture of their workplace (other colleagues have similar credentials), or in some cases, for general professional development/fulfillment.

Background

Although there continues to be significant discussion on the demographics of American archivists, there is little comprehensive and consistent information on the population. The profession has not systematically examined who we are on a formalized and regular basis, and lack of information leads to significant speculation on the state of the profession. Previous studies of archivists' salaries, educational attainment, and demographics have often been unsuccessful, partial, or underfunded.⁶ The data for A*CENSUS, a large study of American archivists, was collected in 2004.⁷ However, there has not been a survey replicating the breadth of A*CENSUS since that time.⁸

Although studying job ads does not tell us about who archivists are, analyses of these ads are easier to conduct than large surveys of archival professionals. Studies of job ads can shed light on whether the employment market is responding to a profession's decisions around what criteria is considered necessary for its members.

Impact of Job Ad Research

If there has been a real or perceived shift to greater professional requirements, this could have ramifications for the newest generation of archivists. Much of the informal dialogue around employment and professional requirements (i.e. on archivist blogs and social media) can be polarized — working towards credentials, degrees, or significant pre-professional experience is either a millstone placed around the necks of struggling archivists, or a requirement necessary to prove archivists are professionals.

It is fascinating how little the topic of certification has been treated since it was unveiled in the early 1990s. Entire articles continue to be written about assessing archivists' knowledge, developing post-graduate certificates,⁹ and post-graduate education. Occasionally archivists refer to their dim impressions of certification,¹⁰ but overall, individual archival certification is underrepresented in the professional literature, with few articles or studies on the topic since its inception.

In order to assess current expectations for entry to the archival profession, one must look at the current job market. What kinds of degrees are job ads asking for? How much experience is required from applicants? How often do job ads mention certifications? Do different archival sectors have different preferences? This research will look at a large survey of job ads for professional archivists posted over the last several years, in order to assess the prevalence of hiring trends that reflect a greater awareness of archival professionalism.

Literature Review

Studies on job ads

A growing number of articles analyzing job ads for library and information science (LIS) professionals have proliferated in the LIS literature.¹¹ Job ad analysis often shows changing educational requirements, growth areas of information work, new job titles, salaries, trends in required and preferred competencies, and growing or shrinking sectors of information work (e.g., private sector, government, higher education, etc). General LIS job advertisement studies rarely address the unique educational and competency needs of archivist job candidates.

Job ad studies that either include or explicitly focus on archivists/records professionals have examined degree requirements,¹² EAD competency,¹³ digitization and digital preservation,¹⁴ certification,¹⁵ previous experience,¹⁶ and records management duties.¹⁷ Most of these studies were conducted over a short period of time, or looked at a small subset of job ads (e.g., Radick's study of job ads for digital archivists). This paper fills a gap in the archivist job ads literature by looking at several different factors, from a large body of job ads over an almost 8 year period.

Education

There is a considerable body of archival literature, dating back to the early 20th century, on the subject of education, training, and professional requirements and credentials for American archivists.

Shortly after it formed, the Society of American Archivists (SAA) formed the Committee on Training to examine professional training for archivists. The committee report, issued in 1939, contained recommendations for training two tiers of archivists -- the "first class" would be those seeking PhDs and working in larger governmental archives, while the "second class" would be those who would seek out master's degrees and work in smaller government archives, and in non-governmental settings such as corporations.¹⁸ Many American archivists had examined the training and education of European archivists, and proposed adaptation of their practices.¹⁹

By the 1940s, training institutes had risen in popularity and were primarily utilized by employed archivists, particularly those working at the National Archives. The question of how and to what extent to align historical training and library science with archival work had begun. The two major allied organizations, the American Library Association and the American Historical Association, showed little consistent and sustained interest in the topic of archival education.²⁰ Archivists were thought to need a strong background in organizational and legal knowledge, with some understanding of library methods of cataloging and indexing. Some archivists, such as Solon Buck, went to great lengths to document the seemingly intractable differences between archival and library work.²¹ In 1948, anxieties over the low-status of archival work were prevalent, as were the potential inequities associated with training internships.²² In his 1957 Presidential address, Ernst Posner explored survey results of the educational and gender makeup of the archival profession, and noted that for those professionals who indicated they had an MA, these were "interpreted to include a degree from a major library school."²³

The debate over archival education's alignment with history or library science continued well into the 1960s.²⁴ Questions on the appropriate degree path remained unresolved. In the April 1968 issue of *American Archivist*, several authors addressed archival education, training, and professionalization. Some advocated for the placement of archival education within historical programs, while others noted the significant overlaps between library and archival work, and the advisability of training archivists within library schools.²⁵ In 1968, SAA performed a survey on the state of archival education programs. Chaired by Robert Warner, the survey found that a large number of students taking archival courses were not necessarily planning to become archivists, and that most available archival programs were situated within library schools.²⁶

By the 1970s, surveys showed that almost half of respondents held a master's degree, but fewer had received professional education or training in archival theory and methods.²⁷ SAA's Committee of the 1970s recommended against involving itself in accrediting academic programs, or advocating for a separate degree program.²⁸ However, SAA's Education and Professional Development Committee issued recommendations (adopted by Council) concerning the content of graduate archival coursework for a minor or certificate, beginning in 1977. The recommendations also included proposals for certification of archivists and accreditation of archival coursework.²⁹ Although this apparent compromise may have been intended to resolve the debate, it did not decisively end the question of how archival education at the graduate level should be provided. This debate was amplified when SAA dropped all further attempts to accredit archival courses.³⁰ Some felt that SAA's refusal to engage in graduate program creation or accreditation was an abdication of professional responsibility, and had the effect of stunting the field's development, particularly the development of American archival theory.³¹

The reliance on adjuncts (and/or often a single archivist to handle the entirety of archival education) to teach archival instruction was cited by

some as a major barrier to developing a full program of archival education at the graduate level and a basis for archival theory. However, others noted that adjuncts would continue to be a reality given the need for archivists with practical experience as educators and the relatively small need for a fully-staffed archival education program.³² Without a clear path forward to a separate archival graduate degree, archivists looked for ways to expand the status quo of archival education within the existing framework of history or librarianship. Archivists explored other options for expanded archival education, including dual MA/MLS programs and the expansion of archival education within library schools.³³ The influence of Canadian graduate archival education,³⁴ the wider embrace of archival theory,³⁵ and archivists' sense of professional identity came together to revive interest in a separate graduate degree program in the late 1980s/early 1990s.

As attention concentrated on the development of graduate education standards, archivists returned to determining the appropriate role of continuing (i.e., post-graduate) education.³⁶ There was significant discussion on how best to deliver continuing education, how to coordinate the disparate opportunities, what guidelines should be adhered to, and the relationship of continuing education to graduate education.³⁷ As the profession urgently needed to deal with the challenges presented by electronic records, many archivists argued that developing strong continuing education programs were essential in the face of continuous technological change and obsolescence. Archivists involved with education on electronic records noted that graduate education to instill the basic foundational concepts of archival theory was critical.³⁸

The lack of consistent prerequisite professional knowledge because of inconsistent graduate education was seen as a barrier to developing effective continuing education. One archival educator noted this challenge by stating,

“Without a context of shared concepts, terminology, and principles, it is impossible to teach archivists about electronic records, either to stress the continuity with more familiar types of records or to draw contrasts to them. In a continuing education setting, for example, it is difficult to teach someone who is unfamiliar with archival appraisal to appraise electronic records.³⁹”

Major efforts culminated in the 1993 report from the Committee on Automated Records and Techniques, outlining a proposed curriculum to educate archivists on automation and electronic records.⁴⁰ This professional call to arms for greater education on electronic records not only was necessary for the growing gap between traditional archival education and institutional needs, but asserted and strengthened archivists' role in appraising and managing digital information.⁴¹ By the early 1990s, archival education made some sharp departures from its association with history programs, particularly as issues like automation and electronic records led archivists to explore solutions posed by those within library and information science. By 1993, the number of archivists who had obtained an MLS had grown significantly, possibly due to employer hiring practices.⁴²

As the 1990s progressed, archivists observed difficulties in establishing archival education programs in universities undergoing serious cuts and re-orientation to corporate models of higher education.⁴³ Still, many criticized the extremely slow progress of developing robust archival education.⁴⁴ Archivists took SAA to task for not finding a way to enforce the graduate archival education guidelines it had revised numerous times since the 1970s.⁴⁵ SAA's failure to mandate guidelines was frequently contrasted with the Canadian archivists who formed a graduate archival program shortly after forming the Association of Canadian Archivists.⁴⁶ The deliberate decision in the 1970s not to pursue a separate graduate program, citing a lack of a “sufficient intellectual discipline to merit a separate graduate degree,”⁴⁷ was seen by some as a millstone that continued to hobble archival theory and the expansion of intellectually rigorous graduate education.⁴⁸

By the mid-2000s, some archivists asserted that there was an emerging core of common archival coursework in graduate education,⁴⁹ and that a demonstrable increase in tenure-stream archival faculty had been achieved.⁵⁰ While some independent archival studies programs were established,⁵¹ most archival coursework continued to be offered within MLIS/MSIS degree programs.⁵²

The debate about history versus library school seemed firmly in the past, as master's level degrees held by newer archivists overwhelmingly originated in schools of library and information science.⁵³ As archival education began to reach a new level of development, archivists grappled with how responsive archival education should be to the needs of employers.⁵⁴ The continued gap between the aspirational SAA graduate education standards and the reality of available education also remained a concern.⁵⁵ Educators resisted the idea of solely teaching new archivists skills to make them “ready for day one,” insisting that the more appropriate role for graduate archival education was an archival way of thinking, as opposed to simply teaching archival practice.⁵⁶

Certification

Archival certification was first suggested as a method to professionalize the field as early as the 1950s.⁵⁷ In the 1970s, records managers began the process of developing certification, and the archival community renewed its interest in this path.⁵⁸ Certification appeared to be an attractive option as the history department vs. library school debate showed no signs of being ultimately resolved, and there remained significant reluctance from the archival community for SAA to play an active role in the accreditation or development of graduate programs beyond issuing minimum standards.⁵⁹ Certification was seen as a way for archivists to establish their professional bona fides, and was positioned as a way to receive status recognition within the bureaucracies where many were employed.⁶⁰ Questions of certification were sometimes coupled with the accreditation of archives themselves,⁶¹ or with the accreditation of graduate education programs.⁶²

Many archivists continued to support certification well into the 1980s, arguing that if archivists truly wanted to be a profession, they had to establish a body of knowledge and competencies, and demonstrate their ability to police those who acquired and maintained training in these areas.⁶³ There was also a sense that archivists needed to be the ones who created these standards, for fear of historians, librarians, or information scientists defining the standards for them.⁶⁴ Parallel to the discussion of certification was the type of post-appointment training available to archivists and what degree of specialty it should reflect.⁶⁵ Arguments against certification included concerns over its marketplace value in improving the employment outlook for archivists, and whether individual certification would increase liability or anti-trust litigation.⁶⁶

The fact that credentialism arose within the archival profession was almost inevitable. The debate over the nature, depth, and location of archival education raged for so long within the profession that credentialism emerged as a compromise over the appropriate disciplinary home for archival education and the role of theory versus practice.⁶⁷

In the early years of archival certification, it was unclear what the effects would be on the marketplace for archival employment. One survey found that a majority of employers did not anticipate requiring job applicants to hold archival certification (37.4%), though many indicated they would consider certification, if not require it.⁶⁸ By 1991, nearly 10% of job ads mentioned archival certification.⁶⁹ Data on the early Certified Archivist exam takers was unclear — one's previous graduate education did not seem to have much bearing on test results.⁷⁰ A 2013 study on archival certification's influence on employee hiring showed that 67% of surveyed employers did not prefer or require certification when posting a recent position opening (30% preferred certification, 3% required it).⁷¹

Methodology

This study used simple descriptive statistics. It did not employ inferential statistics to test hypotheses about job positions/advertisements. All ads were viewed on the SAA Archives and Archivists listserv web forum. During periods of down time, an offline corpus of downloaded A&A messages was consulted.⁷² Data was entered and analyzed with Excel.

Finding ads

The first step determined the scope of this ad study by selecting the time period. The time period of October 1, 2006 to May 31, 2014 was chosen because previous multi-year studies looking at general archivist employment ended data collection in the mid-2000s.⁷³ Additionally, the study was intended to cover the first several months of DAS certification to see if the new program had an early effect on the hiring market. The studied period covered a time span of 7 years and 8 months, enough time to potentially detect any market changes due to the 2008 recession and increased concerns over employment prospects for new archivists.

The only source used for collecting job ads was the Society of American Archivists "Archives & Archivists" listserv (<http://www2.archivists.org/listservs>). Ads were collected by searching the A&A listserv web interface for subject line keywords of 'position,' 'vacancy,' and 'job.' Matching email subject lines were copied with URL links and timestamps into a large Excel spreadsheet. Non-relevant headings (e.g., 'disposition of the A&A archives') that came up in the search were removed, as well as dupes that appeared in two separate searches (for example, "Position: Vacancy at XYZ archives"). This constituted the initial pool of ads to review for further inclusion in the final study. The initial pool consisted of 2,093 keyword matched listserv postings.

Thinning out ads

Each listserv post from the initial pool was examined to determine whether it contained a full job ad that met the standards for inclusion in the remainder of the study. The most important consideration was the listserv posting contained several components of a typical job ad. These included an indication that the position was not primarily another job with a couple of archival duties, identification of the employer, location, and a reference to experience and/or education expectations. Internships or jobs that appeared to be paraprofessional positions were not included in this study.

A major challenge in identifying usable ads was that many postings with promising subject lines only included a URL linking out elsewhere to the complete job ad. These were deemed unusable, since the vast majority of these links are broken shortly after the search is concluded. Other postings were removed from further consideration because the position turned out to have few professional archivist duties (for example, museum registrar, librarian, or records manager positions with minimal to no archival functions). Several postings turned out to be discussions of the nature of job ads or the employment market. While these were of enormous topical interest, they were eliminated from the pool since they did not contain any complete position descriptions. Duplicate postings of the same ad from the same institution in a short time period were also removed. Since it is common for unsuccessful searches to be re-opened, if an ad for the same position was posted more than once in a 12-month period, duplicate ads within that 12-month period were removed. If a position's job description was revised in a second ad, then the original ad's data values were revised in the data collection spreadsheet to reflect the new requirements, but the original posting date was retained.

The thinning out process meant that in the end, 943 ads or, 45% of the initial postings pool, met the criteria for inclusion in the full study.

Process

Once a job ad was selected for further analysis, it was then examined for several pieces of criteria. Each data value was recorded on an Excel spreadsheet. Most of the fields were pre-populated with a list of values to ensure consistency in data recording. The only free text fields were the date, name of the institution, and job title. The free-text fields were anonymized in the final analysis, although the institution name field was removed entirely. The anonymized data sets will be made available in the author's institutional repository.

Year

Only ads between October 1, 2006 and May 31, 2014 were analyzed. In the working copies, the full date of the job ad posted to the listserv was recorded. This date was anonymized to only the year for the final spreadsheet used in the analysis phase of the study.

Name of institution

The name of the institution was used only for data collection purposes. Recording the name of the institution aided in determining whether an ad was a duplicate of a recently recorded ad, and in subsequent determinations of the type of institution. This field was removed in its entirety from the final data analysis spreadsheet.

Job title

Like the name of the institution, this was used primarily for data collection purposes, especially in determining whether an ad was a duplicate posting of the same position within the last 12 months. Any identifying text about the position name was redacted from the spreadsheet used for final data analysis (e.g., "The John Smith Papers archivist" was anonymized to "The [Redacted Name] archivist"). However, no further analysis was performed on the types of position titles.

Type of Institution

All job ads were assigned to one of several possible institution types. The following categories were used: Private College/University, Public College/University, K-12, Local (City/County) Government, State Government, Federal Government, Independent Historical Society, Museum, Public Library, Tribal Archives, Religious Archives, Corporation, LIS School (Educator), or a Library, Archives and Museum (LAM) services company. Ads could only be assigned to one institutional type at a time, which presented challenges when some institutions straddled the defined boundaries. A similar challenge was presented by contracting firms — at times it was clear that the employee might be placed at an agency but employed by a contractor. In these cases, the employer was listed as a LAM services company. At other times, it appeared that a contractor was being used for recruitment purposes but that the employee would ultimately be employed by the agency itself — in which case the appropriate institution type was selected.

Institution types were assigned based on the status at the time of the posting. For example, some independent archives were transferred to universities a couple years after a posted ad. In which case, the institutional type at the time the job ad was posted was the one recorded.

Private versus public higher education distinctions were verified by consulting the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education tables.⁷⁴ State archives were determined using a list from the Council of State Archivists.⁷⁵ Therefore, all state archives generally received the designation of "State - Government" even if their actual legal status is that of an independent historical society. The designation of "Corporation" was used very broadly - it could encompass both for-profit companies and non-profit organizations that maintain their own dedicated institutional records primarily for general administrative purposes (with only some recognizing outside researchers as a secondary use).

State

Only ads from the United States and its territories were considered. The spreadsheet was pre-populated with a list of 50 states and Washington DC, and the field was left blank for ads from territories.

Census Region

In addition to identifying the state for the posted position, one of the appropriate four US census regions was identified. These regions are the Northeast, Midwest, South and West.⁷⁶

Years of Experience and Years Preferred

Whenever possible, any years of experience required or preferred were recorded. Because these ranges are highly variable, the spreadsheet was pre-populated with the following values for both the "Years required" and "Years preferred" fields: None, 1 to 2, 3 to 5, and More than 5. The "None" field was generally used when no required and/or preferred years of experience were listed. In addition, while a significant number of job ads mentioned "Experience with...", "Experienced candidates", "Experience a plus," or other similar phrases, unless it included a specific number of years, these ads were still categorized as "None." This was intended to separate out ads requiring some level of previous professional employment experience from those that were truly entry-level.

Whenever ads specified a range of years not represented by the pre-populated values, the lower value was selected (e.g., an ad listing "2-4 years" would be entered as "1-2 years" in the spreadsheet). Very occasionally, an ad would specify less than 12 months of experience, which was listed as "1-2 years" to separate it from those jobs where there was truly no previous professional experience required. Occasionally ads would list more years' experience required than preferred. For example, an ad such as "3 years required, 2 preferred" -- usually the latter would refer to a very specific type of experience wanted (e.g., 3 years of general archives experience required, 2 years supervisory experience preferred). These were entered according to their respective required and preferred ranges.

ACA

This category was intended to assess whether an ad mentioned archival certification (i.e., the exam administered by the Academy of Certified Archivists, or ACA). The choices in this category were Required, Preferred, and Not Mentioned. Many ads mentioned certification, but implied

this in the context of a degree program minor or certification, not the form of archival certification exam managed by the ACA. These were excluded since the category was explicitly intended to determine the influence of the ACA certification.

DAS

The Digital Archives Specialist (DAS) program is a new set of workshops and examinations administered by the Society of American Archivists to prepare archivists to work with born-digital archives. Since the first DAS certification test was not administered until August 2013,⁷⁷ most of the analyzed ads were marked as “Pre-DAS.” After August 2013, the DAS category could be marked as Required, Preferred, or Not Mentioned.

Degree requirements

The highest degree mentioned in the ad was the one recorded. These options included Required Master's level, Preferred Master's level, Required PhD, Preferred PhD, Required Bachelor's level, Preferred Bachelor's level, Not Mentioned, Second Master's preferred or Second Master's required.

It can sometimes be difficult, particularly with government jobs, to differentiate between education and experience requirements. Many of these jobs allow for a sliding scale combination of education, experience, or education and experience. This makes it difficult to determine what is required versus what is preferred. The author's best judgment was used in these cases.

Term

Positions were assessed for the employment period. The three pre-populated options were Permanent, Temporary, or Unclear. Unless advertisements specifically stated a form of temporary or project-based position, jobs were assumed to be “permanent.” When wording about a position's term indicated some level of confusion, the status was marked as “unclear.”

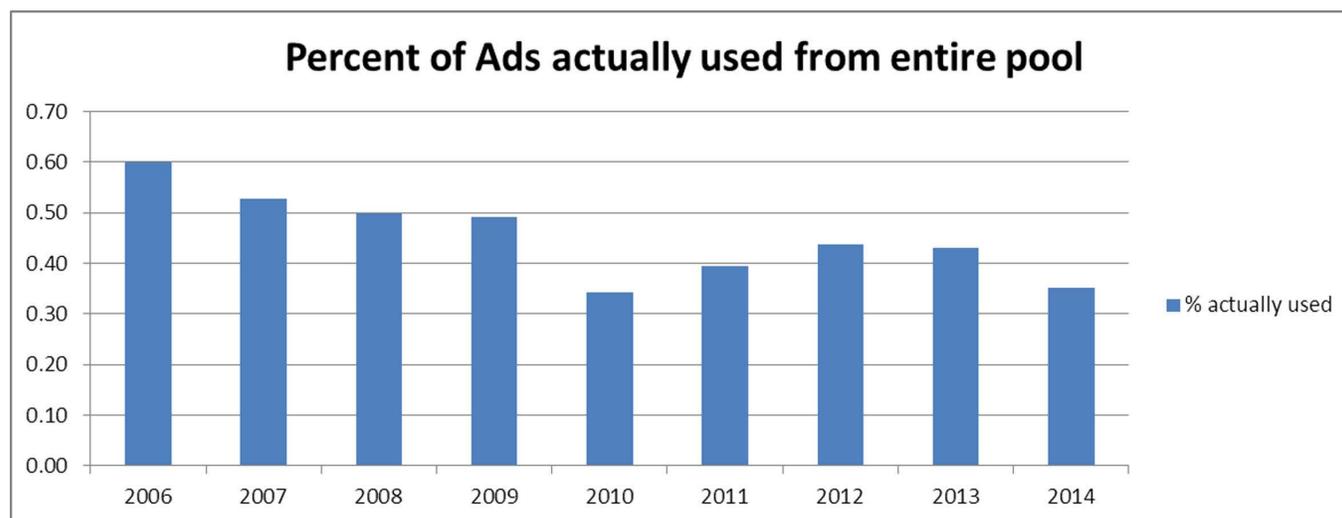
Findings

In general, few of the factors showed clear, major chronological trends over the several year study period. While no hypothetical relationship tests were performed, there appeared to be several consistent findings within many of the categories.

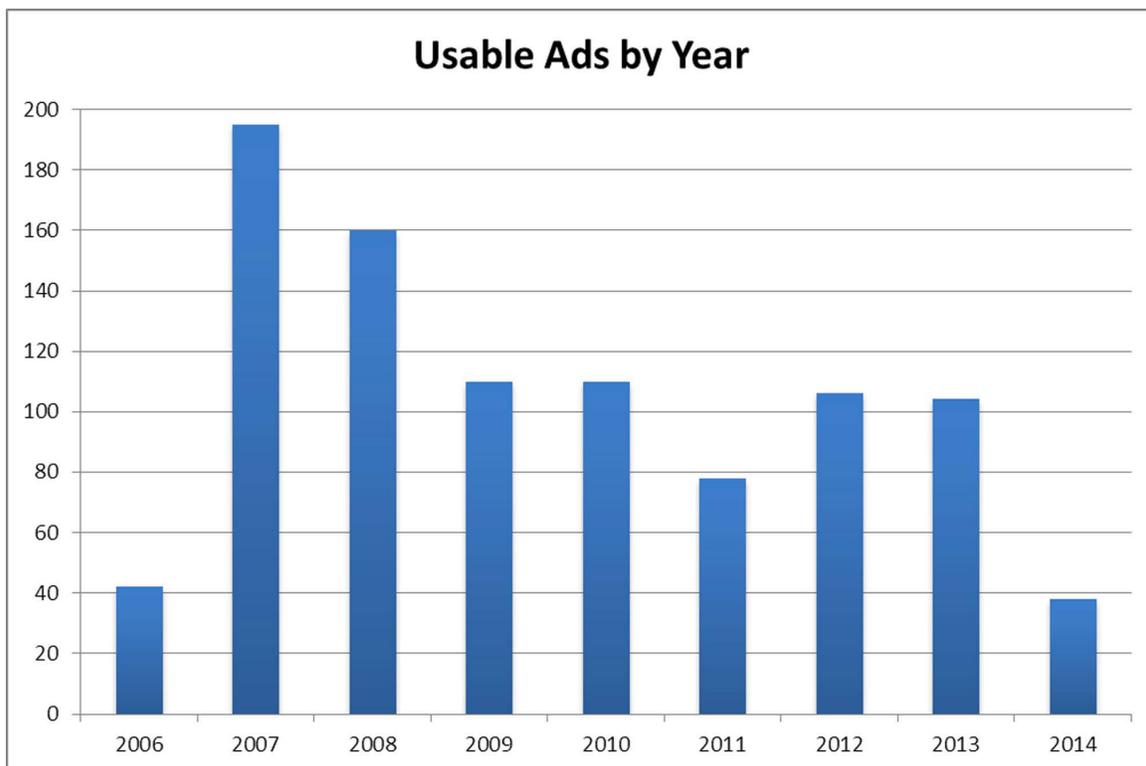
The limitations of this study

One of the most difficult aspects of conducting a long-term archivist job advertisement study is there is not a single source for all relevant job ads. In addition to the A&A listserv, there are many resources that post or link to job ads. However, doing a retrospective study with these sources is difficult since they often post only a link, or take down ads after a short period of time. The number of full job ads posted to the Archives and Archivists listserv makes it a useful resource for retrospective position surveys. However, even with the number of full job ads posted, a significant number of advertised positions only contained a link to an external webpage (usually long dead), or only a partial ad. Furthermore, it is not clear whether all archival employment sectors use the A&A listserv equally – it may be used more by archivists in higher education than government or corporate archivists. This might explain why job ads for university-based positions dominate this study.

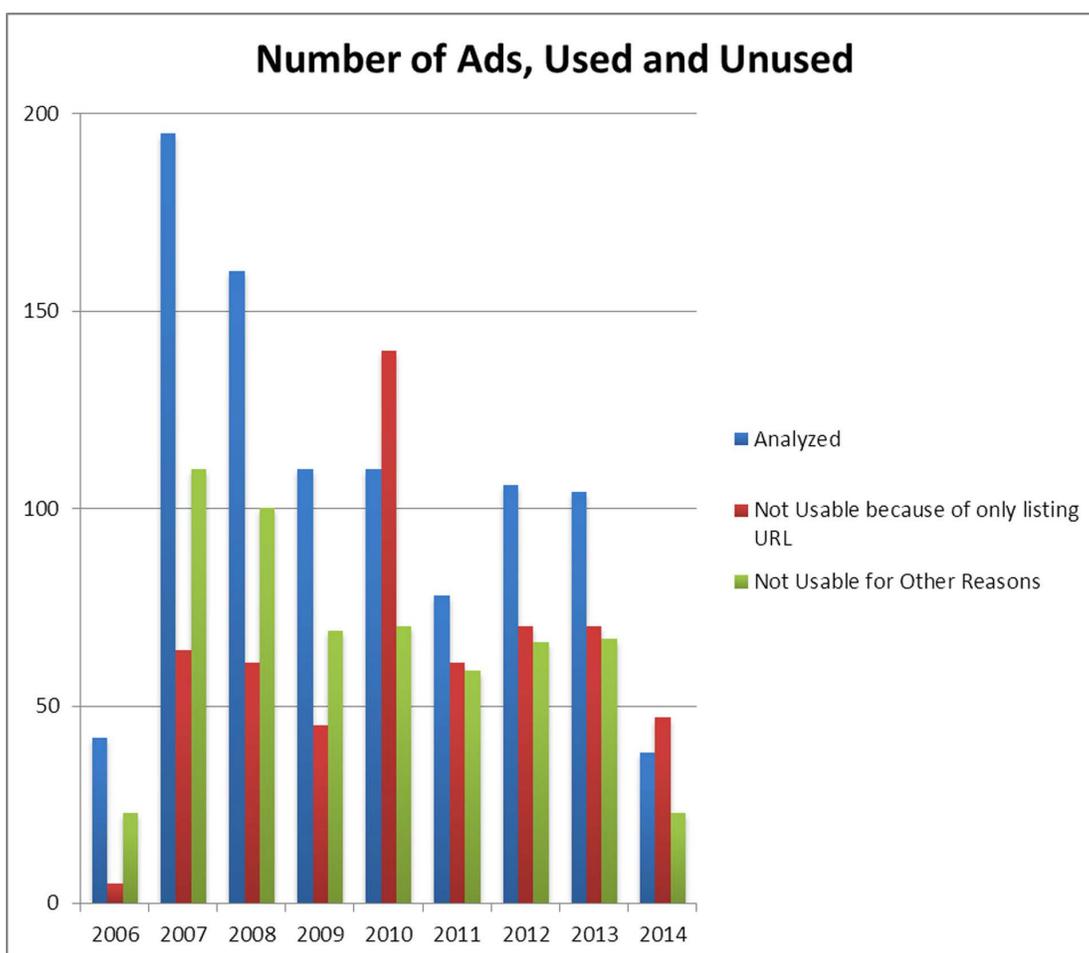
As stated previously, 943 ads were analyzed for content out of an initial pool of 2,093 keyword matched listserv postings. 563 postings were not used because they only listed a URL instead of a full job ad (or, about 27% of the initial pool). Other keyword matched postings were not used due to duplication, not actually being a job ad, etc. Overall, only 45% of the initial keyword matched listserv postings were actually used in this study. The chart below illustrates the usable ads from each year's keyword matched listserv postings.



Readers should note that although ads from 2006 and 2014 were included, only a few months from these years were captured (from October 2006, and through May 2014). More usable job ads were available in 2007 and 2008 than any other years.



However, this does not necessarily mean more archivists positions were available overall in 2007-2008 — listserv postings found to be unusable due to only using a URL or for other reasons were prevalent in subsequent years.



As noted in the Process section, some of the decisions made while analyzing job ads were rather subjective. There is no standardized way to write or distribute professional archivist job ads, and significant differences arise among job advertisement wording between different sectors of archival employment. This makes analyzing certain criteria for ads challenging. In addition, the high level of variability often leaves out

information that is critical to job seekers, such as salary range or the hiring timeline.

Year

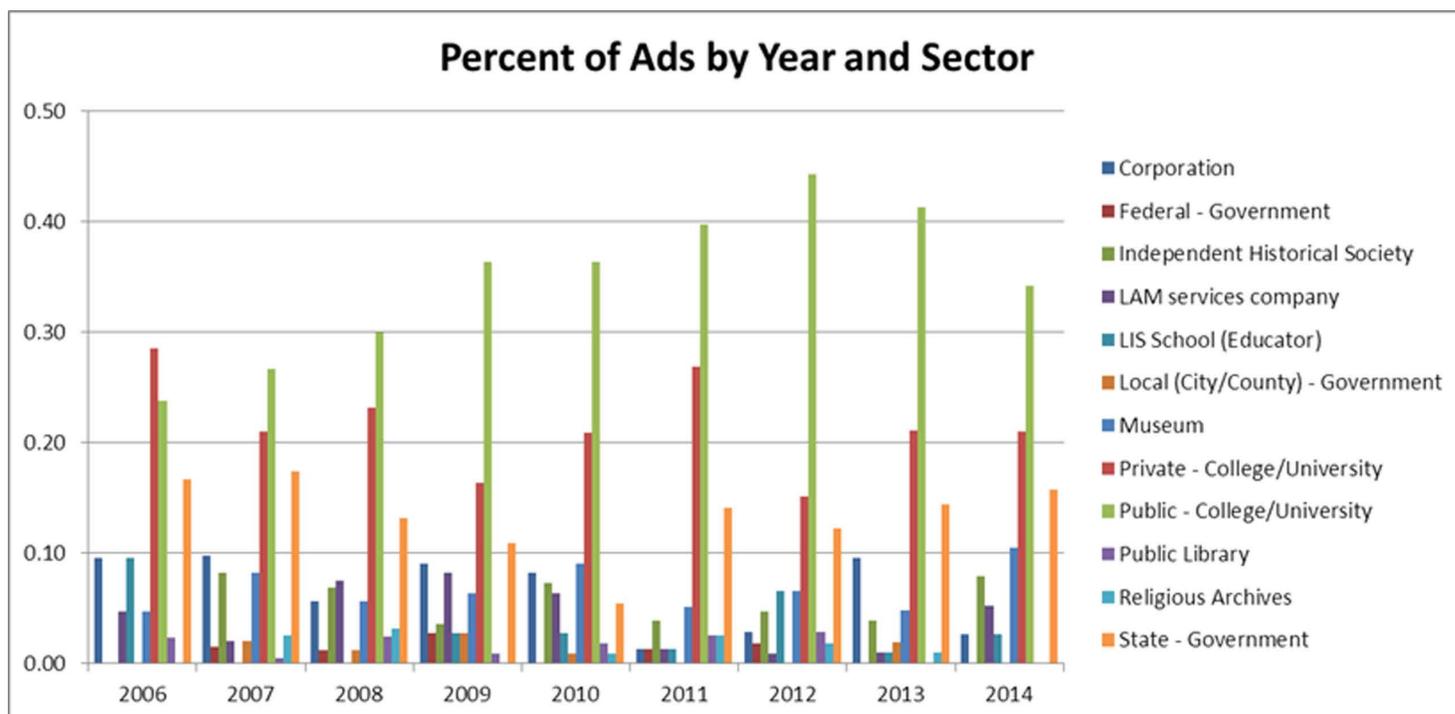
It was difficult to deduce any trends regarding the effect of the recession on the number of jobs advertised due to posting variances and the proliferation of simply linking to URLs. Further discussion regarding the long-term growth or contraction of the archivist labor market is beyond the scope of this article.

Type of institution

No ads from Tribal Archives or K-12 schools were in the final pool of job ads analyzed. By far, the largest number of ads originated from Public Universities and Colleges, followed by Private Universities and Colleges, and then from State Government. The small number of ads from other sectors may be due to the tendency for those employers to advertise through platforms other than the A&A listserv.

Type of Institution	Job Ads
Public - College/University	324
Private - College/University	198
State - Government	125
Corporation	66
Museum	64
Independent Historical Society	54
LAM services company	39
LIS School (Educator)	20
Religious Archives	16
Public Library	14
Local (City/County) - Government	12
Federal - Government	11

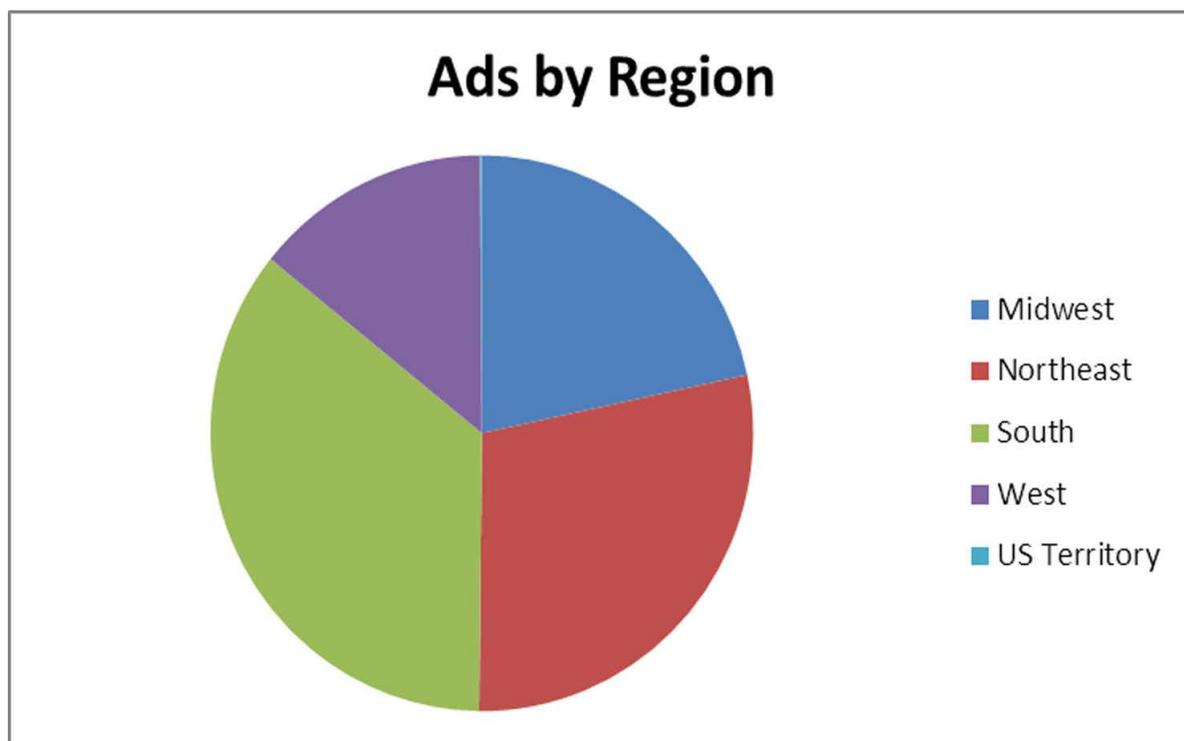
From the group of ads studied, it appears there was a small increase in the number of ads from public universities/colleges.



Location

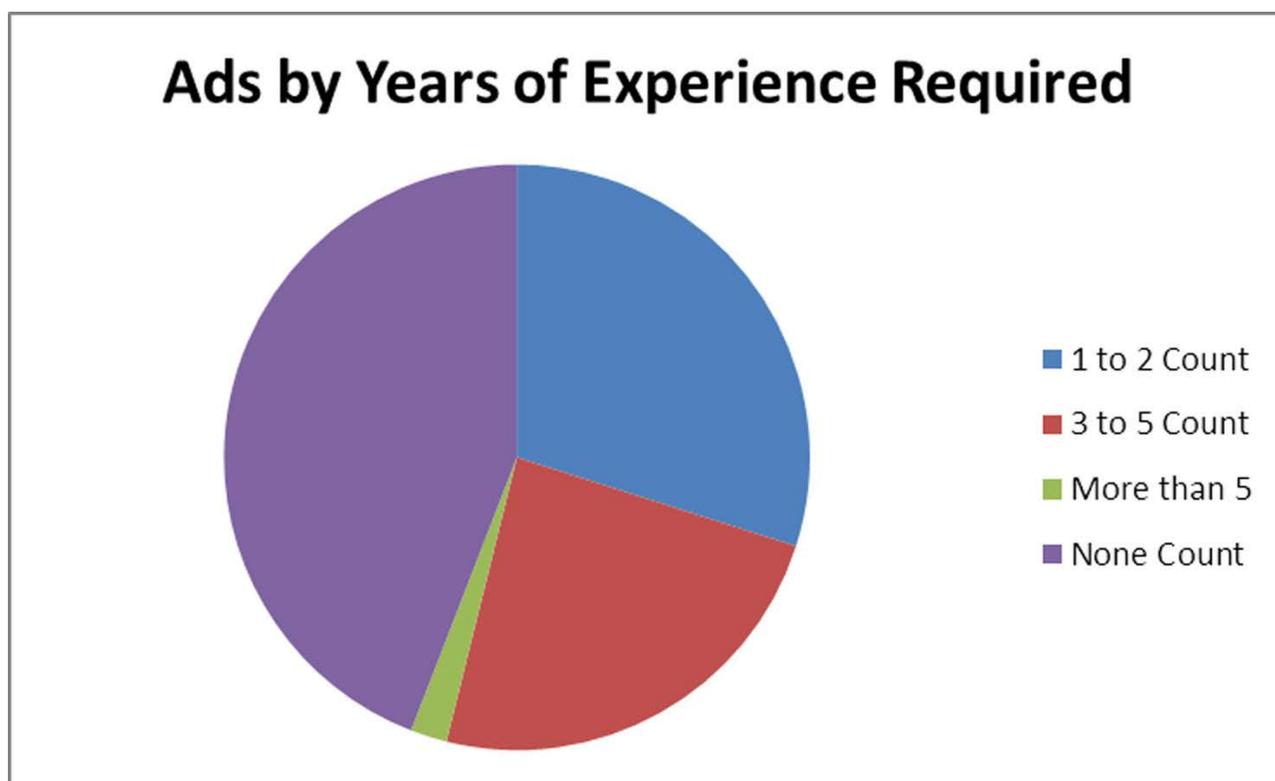
The South had the largest overall share of ads (36%). This was followed by the Northeast (29%), the Midwest (22%) and the West (14%). Only

one US Territory job advertisement was eligible for the study.



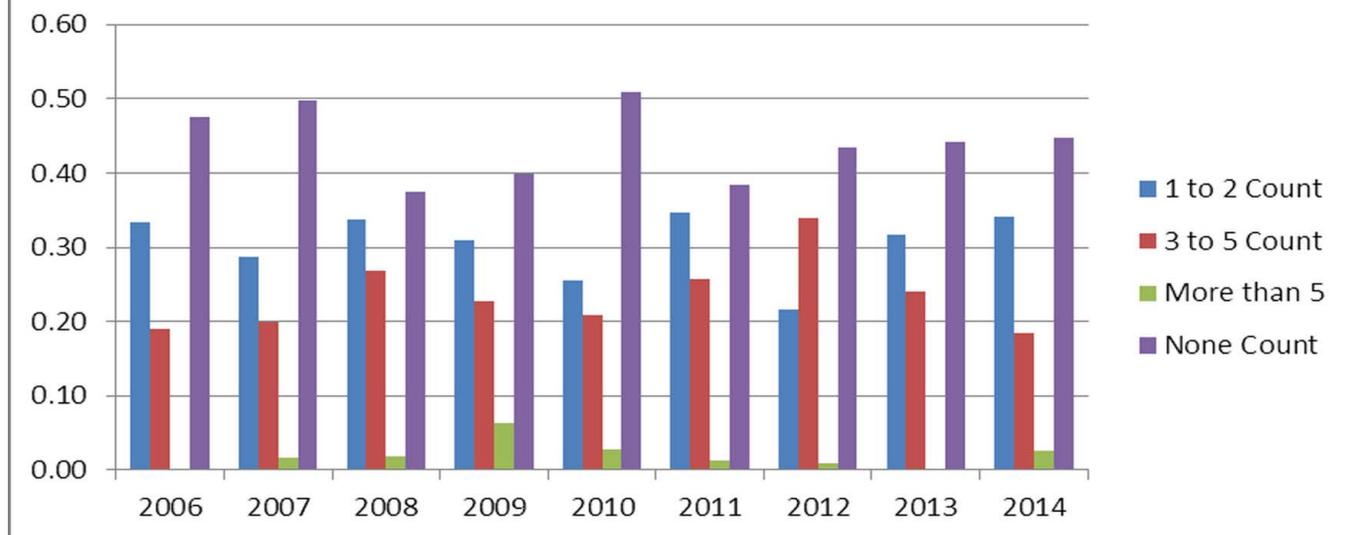
Experience

The majority of analyzed job ads did not specify any required years of experience. They may have mentioned "experience required," but because no number of years were listed, these ads were categorized as "None" for required years of experience. Presumably, this means the majority of jobs in this category constitute early career or entry-level positions. Out of the included 943 ads, those that did not require a specific number of years of previous experience made up 44% of postings. Those that required 1-2 years were 30% of the ads, 3-5 years were 24%, and more than 5 years were only 2% of postings.



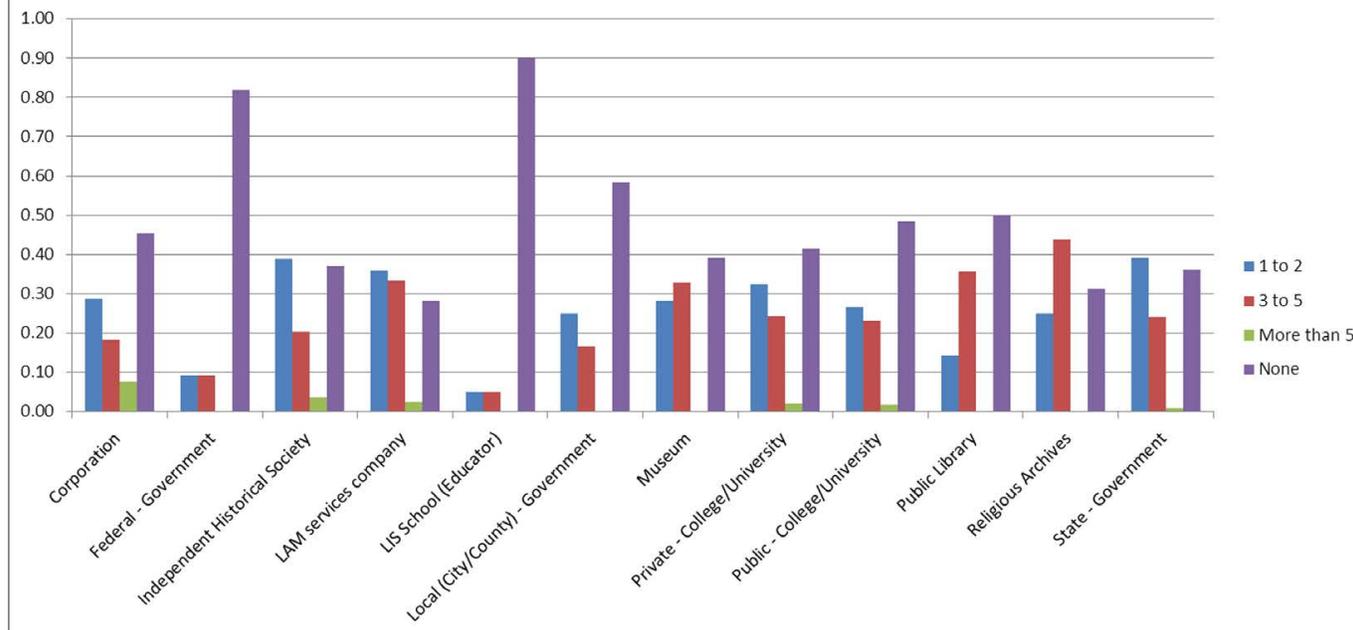
Furthermore, despite anecdotal thoughts that the current employment market has been one of the harshest in recent memory, there was no clear trend detecting a decrease of entry-level jobs. The chart below shows the percentage of job ads per year for required experience:

Percent of Ads by Year and Years of Experience Required



Entry-level positions are available in every sector of archival employment according to this study:

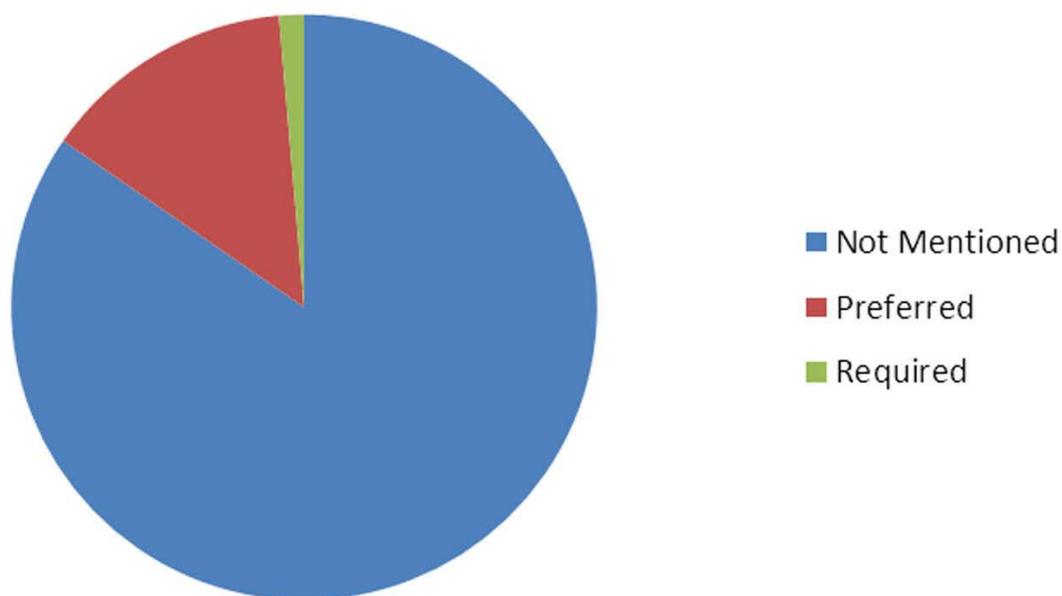
Percent of Ads by Sector and Years of Experience Required



Certification

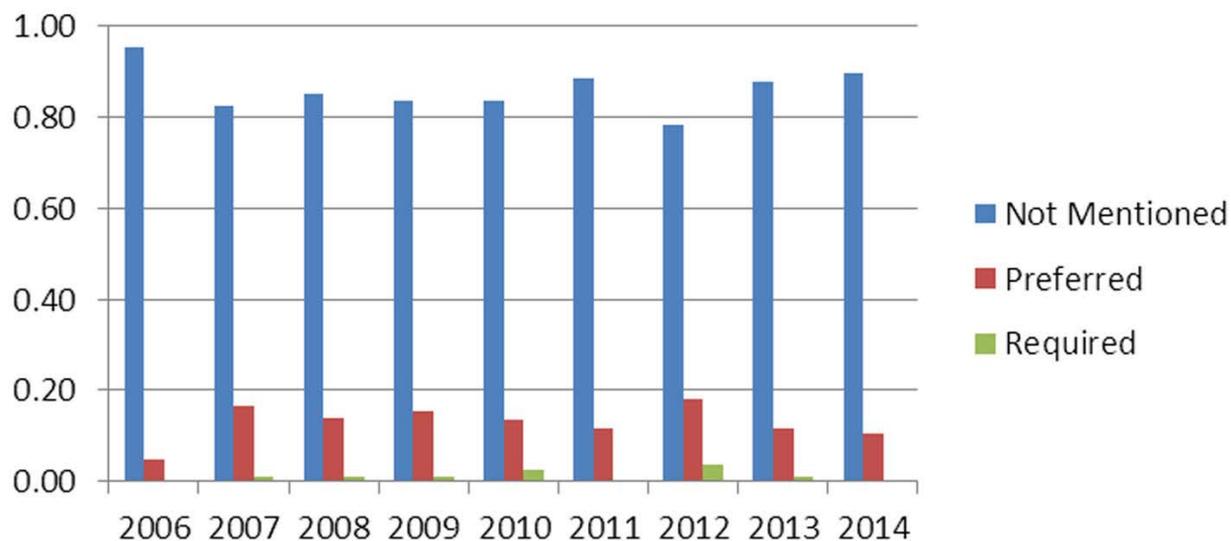
Overall, few ads mention archival certification (through the Academy of Certified Archivists exam). 85% of job ads did not mention certification, 14% mentioned ACA certification as a hiring preference, and only 1% of ads required it.

Presence of ACA certification in Ads

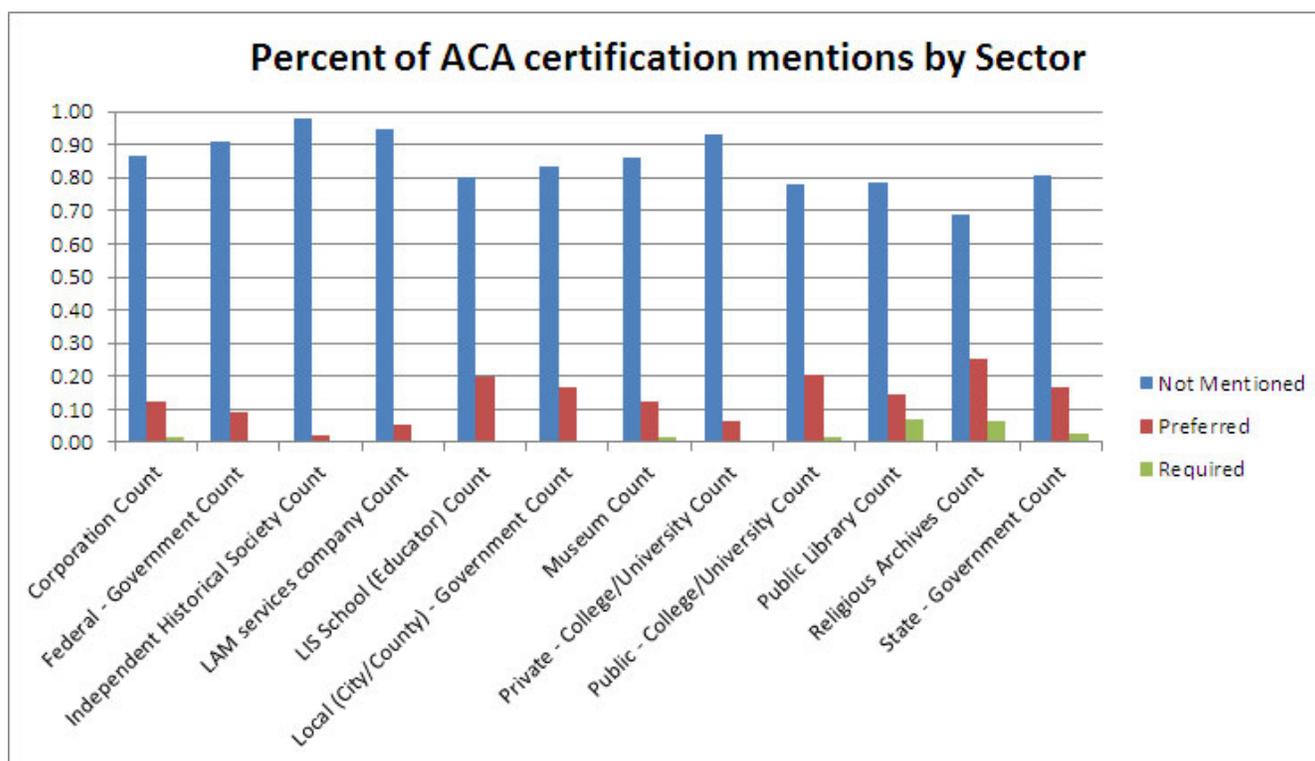


There was no clear trend over the study period indicating an increased or decreased employer demand for archival certification:

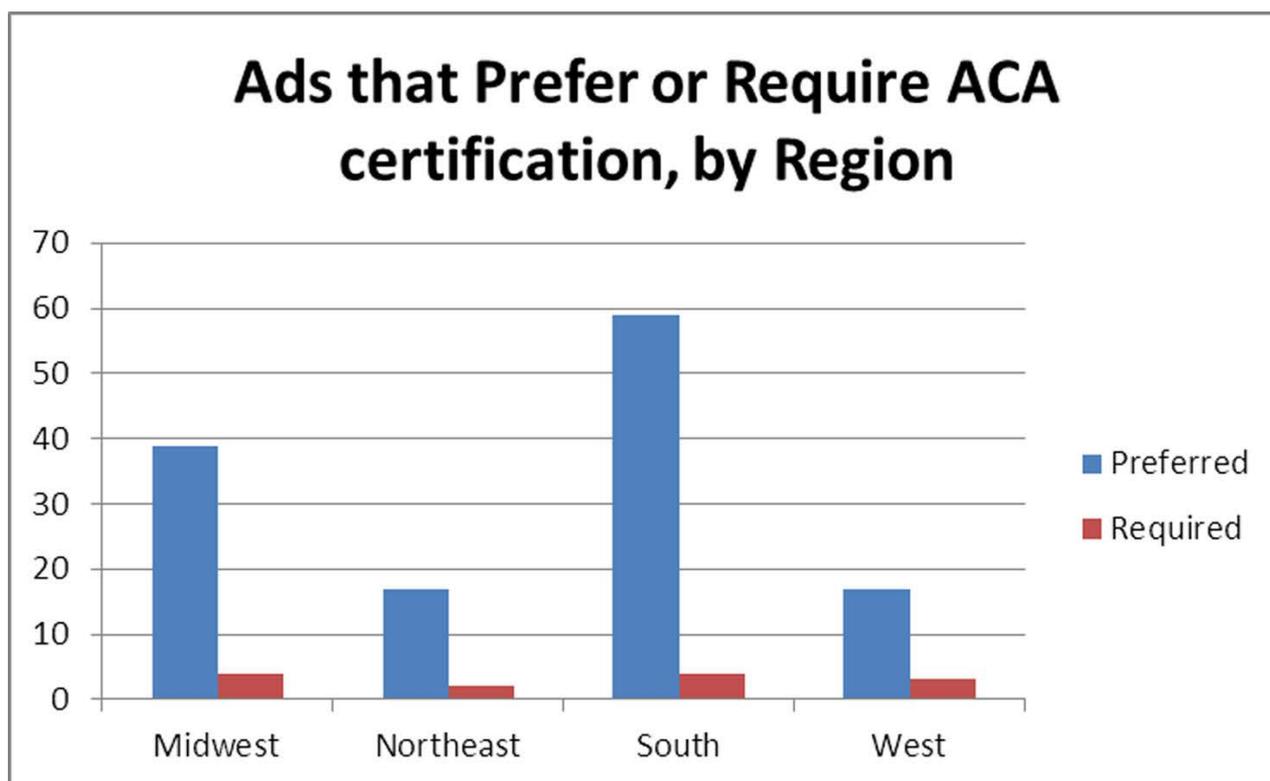
Percent of ACA certification mentions by Year



The strongest institutional sectors that mention ACA certification in job ads (i.e. as a requirement or preference) are religious archives (31%), public colleges and universities (22%), public libraries (21%), and LIS school educators (20%).



However, the strongest certification finding is the presence of certification based on region. Looking only at ads indicating either preferred or required certification, the majority are in the South, followed by the Midwest. The indication of a strong ACA presence in the South is consistent with previous studies of regional certification popularity.⁷⁸

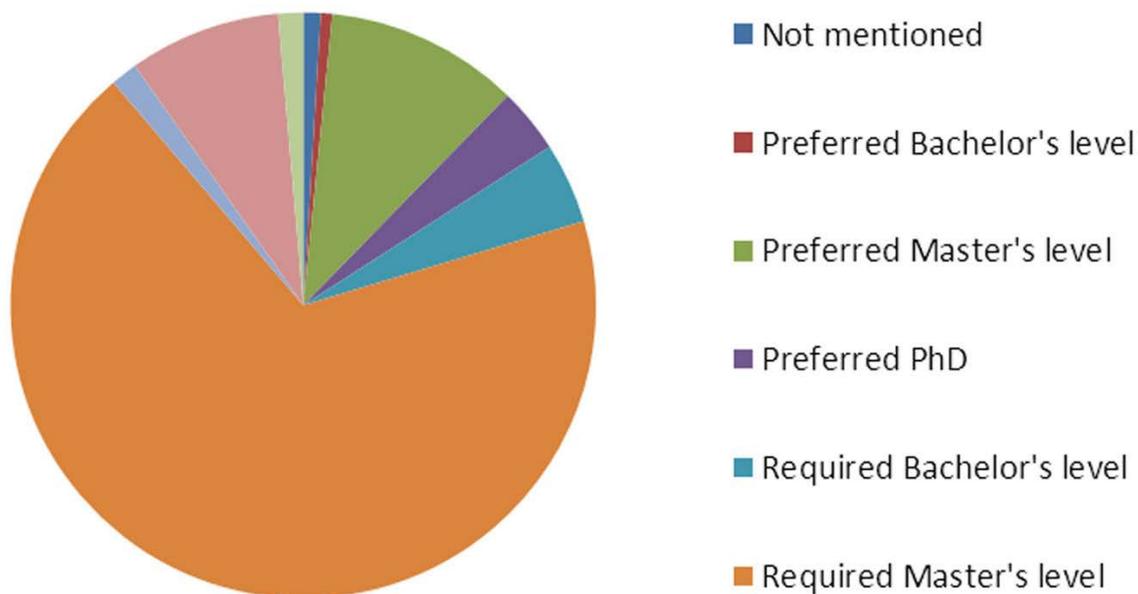


Only 1 ad in the study had any mention of the Digital Archives Specialist (DAS) certification in the hiring criteria. Therefore, further analysis of the influence of DAS was not investigated.

Education

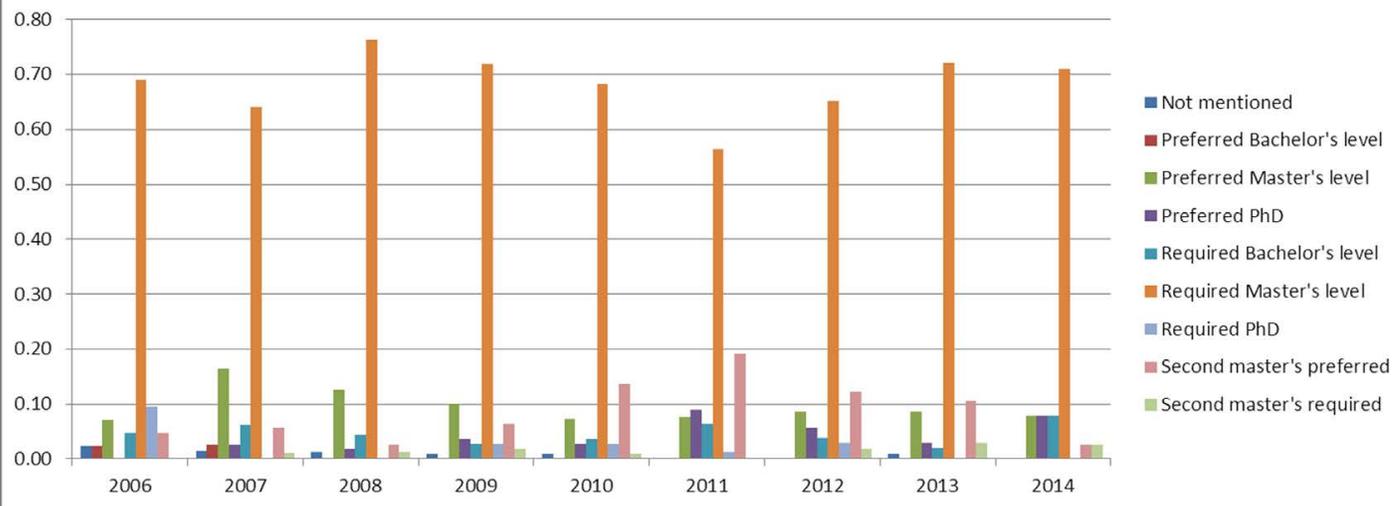
The vast majority of analyzed ads required an education at the master's level (68%). The next largest category was preferred master's level (11%).

Ads by Educational Experience

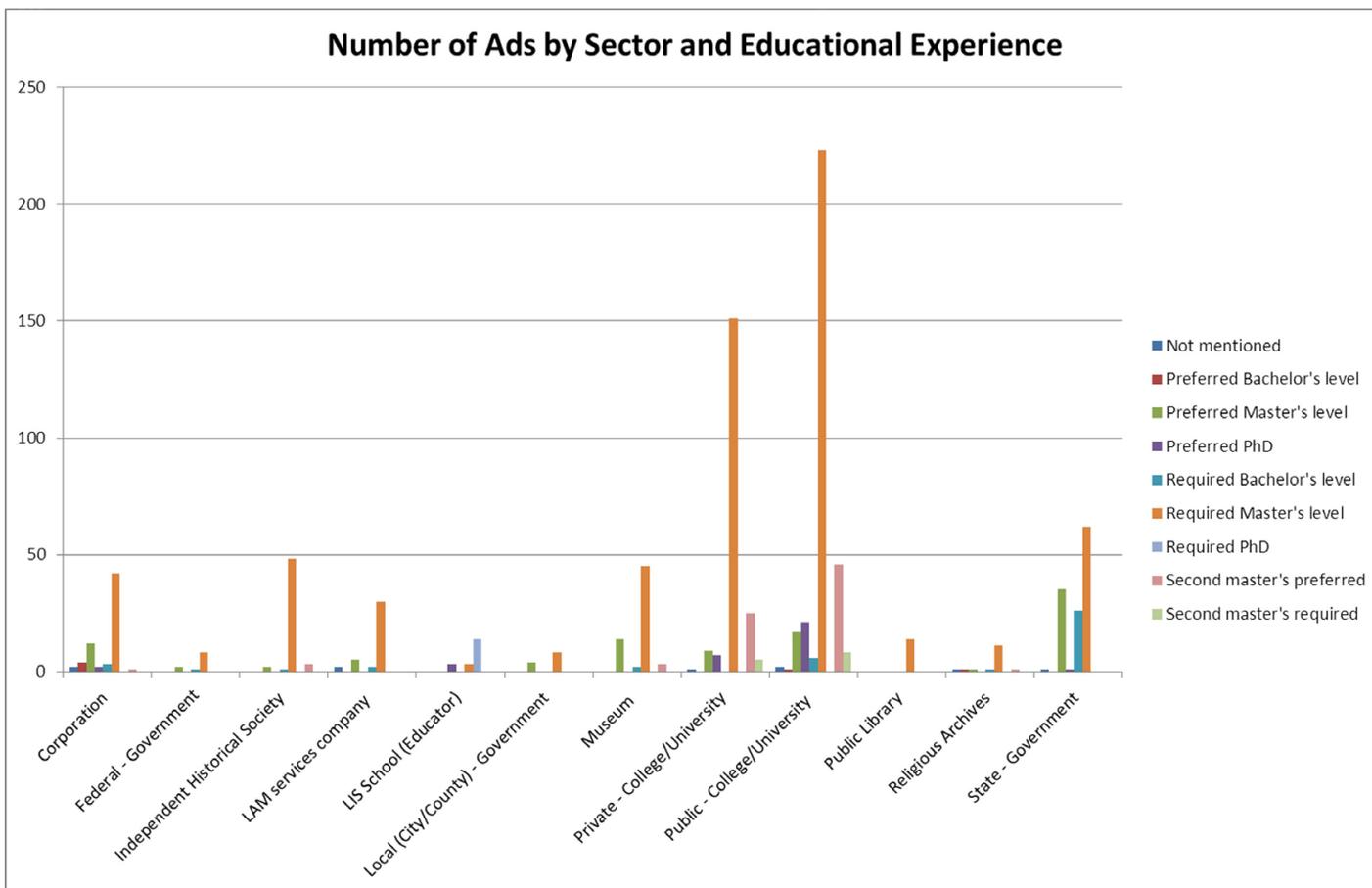


The requirements for a master's level education is somewhat consistent across all years studied, though it does show year to year variability.

Percent of Ads by Year and Educational Experience

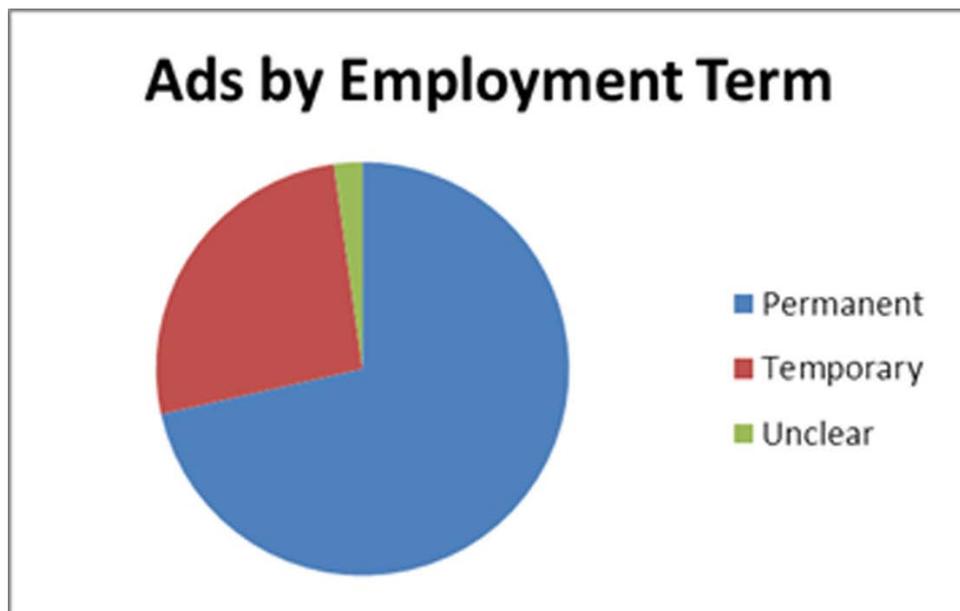


Among institutions, only colleges and universities (public and private) tended to mention a second master's. State governments tended to have a wider range of educational levels, possibly due to civil service classification rules.



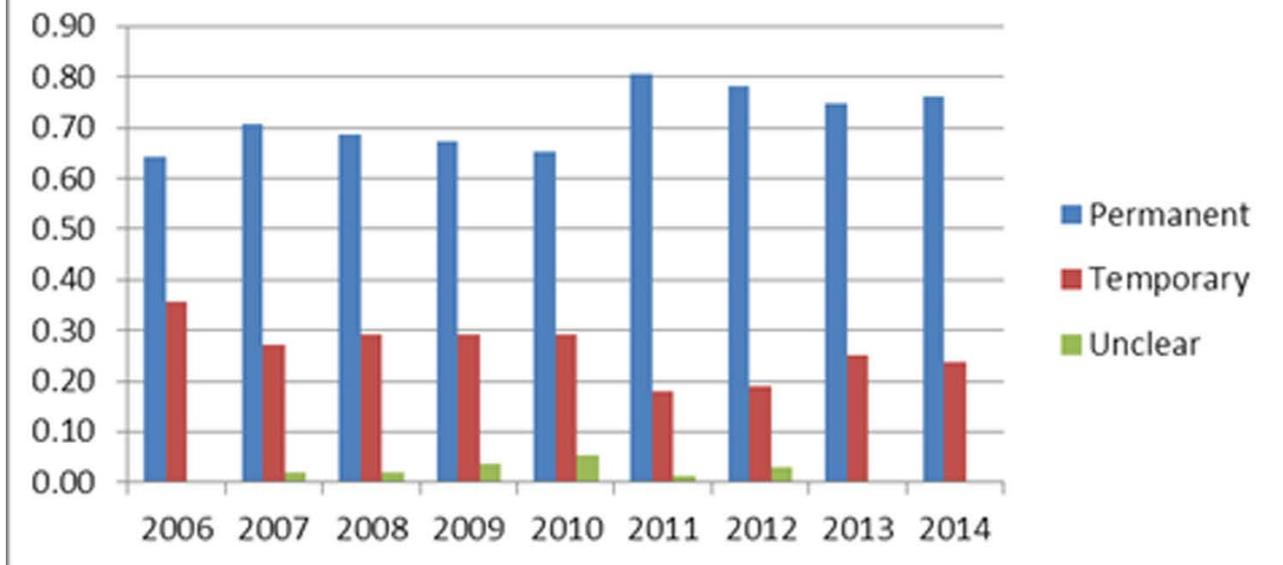
Permanent vs Temporary

The vast majority of analyzed ads were for permanent positions (71%). Only 26% of advertisements were for temporary positions, and 2% had an unclear status.



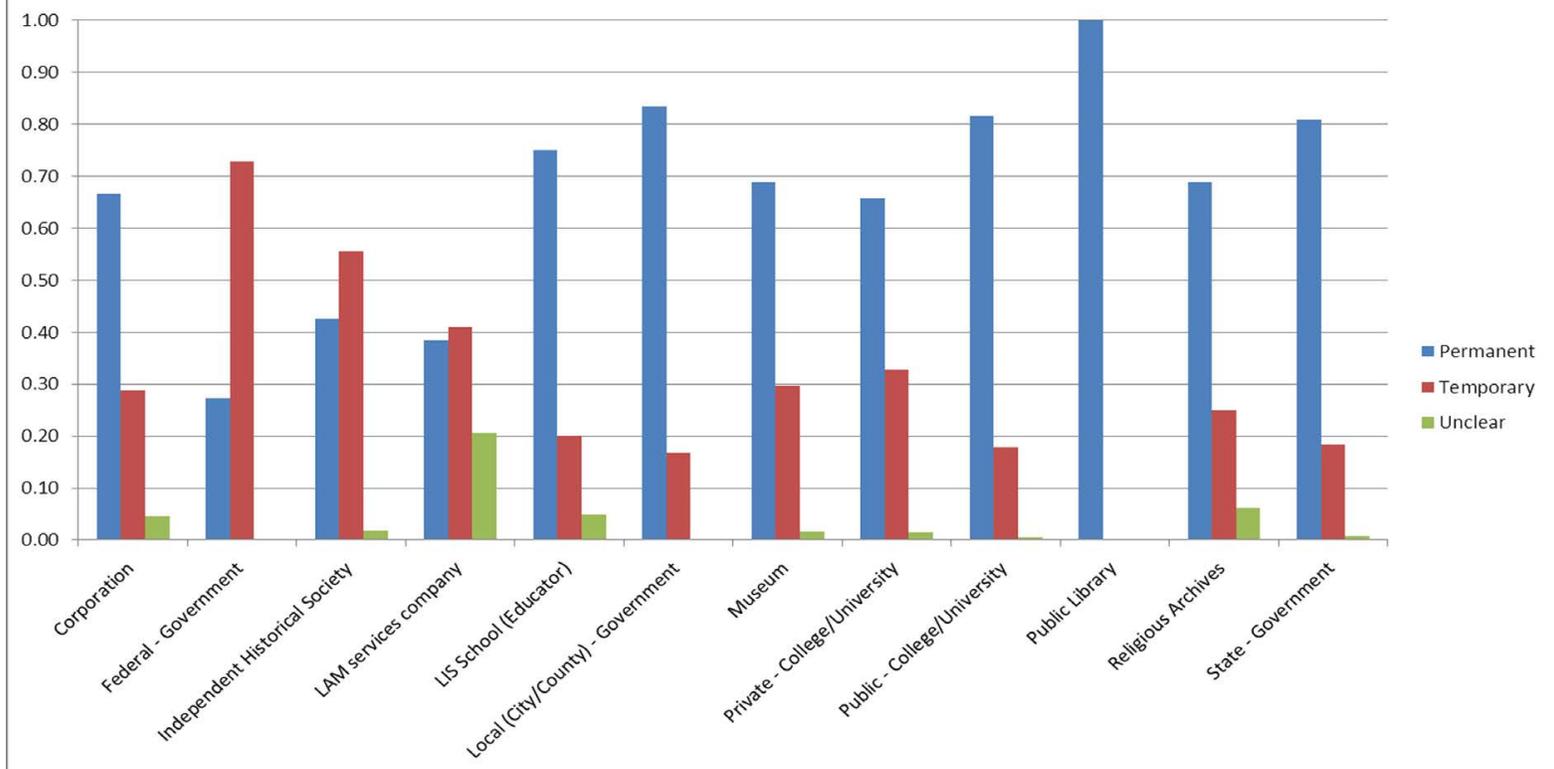
Remarkably, there appeared to be a very slight increase in permanent position job ads after 2010:

Percent of Ads by Year and Employment Term



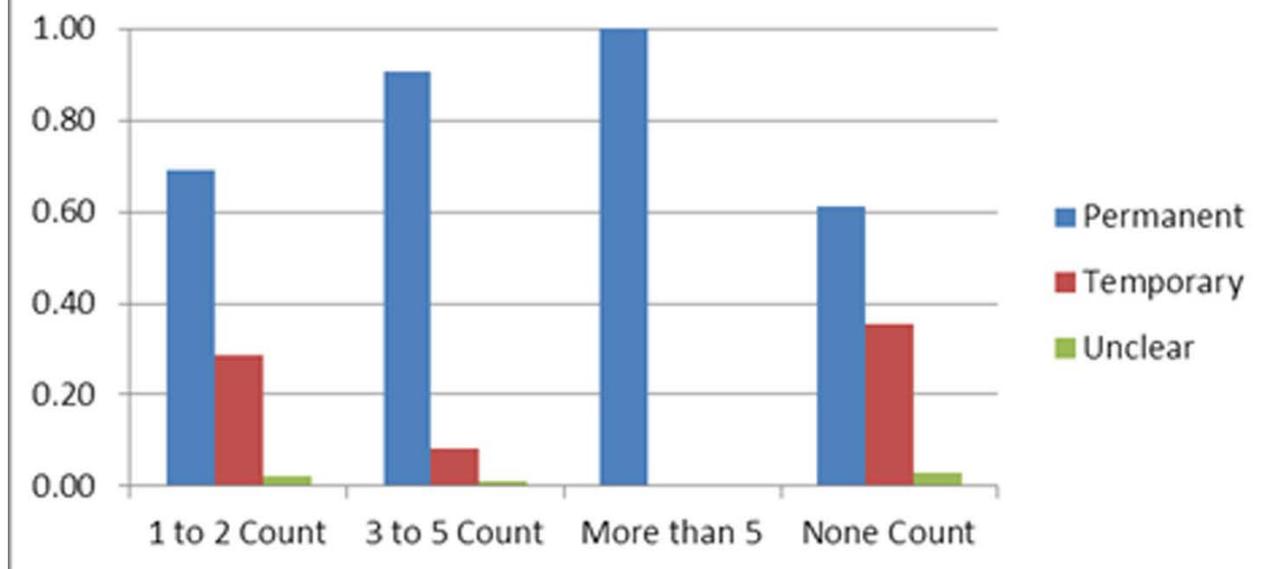
Temporary positions were more common in certain sectors, including the federal government, independent historical societies, and LAM services companies.

Percent of Ads by Sector and Employment Term



In general, temporary positions were much more likely to be associated with positions not requiring any years of experience, or just 1-2 years of experience:

Percent of Ads by Required Years of Experience and Employment Term



Conclusion

There is far too little research about who archivists are and how their employment market is changing. This study contributes to the limited pool of studies on job ads, and includes a far greater number of job ads than have been analyzed in previous studies. However, there are limitations to this type of study due to the multiple sources of job ads, the varying styles in which advertisements are written, and the ephemeral nature of ads. Many archivist job ads only link to a complete posting hosted elsewhere, and institutions routinely remove ads as the hiring process comes to an end.

The findings of this study show that the job market was mostly consistent during the study period of late 2006-early 2014. To track any perceptible changes in the job market would likely require a study that spans a much longer time period or additional ad sources. In general, most opportunities in the archivist job market seem to originate within higher education. The South and the Northeast have the strongest employment market. Entry-level positions remain strong, as do permanent jobs. Temporary jobs are most strongly associated with entry-level positions, and are more commonly associated with the federal government, independent historical societies, and LAM services companies. Few jobs indicate a hiring preference for ACA archival certification, however those that do tend to be in the South and Midwest. The DAS certificate appears to be too new to have had any influence yet.

Future studies of archivist job advertisements, as well as larger studies of archivists (such as A*CENSUS), would lead to a increased understanding of the profession. This information would also aid archivists themselves, by providing benchmarks to advocate for themselves and their institutions.

Notes

1. Irons Walch et al., "A*CENSUS (Archival Census and Education Needs Survey in the United States)," 351, 354 Yakel and Bastian.
2. Duranti, "The Archival Body of Knowledge."
3. Linn, "ACA History."
4. Society of American Archivists, "SAA Council Adopts 'Core Values of Archivists' and FY 2012 Budget, Approves New 'Digital Archives Specialist' Program"; Society of American Archivists, "14 Earn Digital Archives Specialist Certificates from SAA."
5. Bell, "The Jobs Thing..."; Cushing, "Career Satisfaction of Young Archivists"; Goldman and Lausch, "Job Search Experiences and Career Satisfaction among Recent Archives Program Graduates"; "You Ought to Be Ashamed."
6. Irons Walch et al., "A*CENSUS (Archival Census and Education Needs Survey in the United States)," 304–305, 438–440.
7. Ibid., 300.
8. Roe, "Data about Archives and Archivists?"

9. Tibbo, "So Much to Learn, so Little Time to Learn It."
10. Cox, "The Society of American Archivists and Graduate Education," 376–377; O'Toole, "The Archival Curriculum," 111.
11. Harper, "The Collection and Analysis of Job Advertisements."
12. Ericson, "Abolish the Recent," 27–28; Cox, "Employing Records Professionals in the Information Age"; Riggs, "The Correlation of Archival Education and Job Requirements Since the Advent of Encoded Archival Description"; Willever-Farr and Force, "Archival Science Job Announcements Project: An Overview and Analysis."
13. Riggs, "The Correlation of Archival Education and Job Requirements Since the Advent of Encoded Archival Description"; Reeves and Hahn, "Job Advertisements for Recent Graduates," 114.
14. Reeves and Hahn, "Job Advertisements for Recent Graduates," 113–114; Radick, "Ambiguity and the Digital Archivist."
15. Ericson, "Abolish the Recent," 28; Cox, "Employing Records Professionals in the Information Age"; Riggs, "The Correlation of Archival Education and Job Requirements Since the Advent of Encoded Archival Description."
16. Reeves and Hahn, "Job Advertisements for Recent Graduates."
17. Cox, "Employing Records Professionals in the Information Age."
18. Bemis, "The Training of Archivists in the United States."
19. Posner, "European Experiences in Training Archivists."
20. Berner, "Archival Education and Training in the United States, 1937 to Present."
21. Buck, "The Training of American Archivists."
22. Trever, "The Organization and Status of Archival Training in the United States," 160–161.
23. Posner, "What, Then, Is the American Archivist, This New Man?," 5.
24. Breck, "New Dimensions in the Education of American Archivists."
25. Jones, "Archival Training in American Universities, 1938–68"; Kaye Lamb, "The Modern Archivist"; Colson, "On the Education of Archivists and Librarians"; Schellenberg, "Archival Training in Library Schools."
26. Warner, "Archival Training in the United States and Canada," 353–354, 356.
27. Evans and Warner, "American Archivists and Their Society."
28. Evans, "Postappointment Archival Training," 66.
29. Society of American Archivists, "Guidelines for a Graduate Minor or Concentration in Archival Education," 105–106.
30. Miller, "The SAA as Sisyphus," 235.
31. Cox, "Professionalism and Archivists in the United States," 244; Eastwood, "Nurturing Archival Education in the University," 233–237.
32. McCrank, "Prospects for Integrating Historical and Information Studies in Archival Education," 448–449; Helmuth, "Education for American Archivists," 297, 301; Conway, "Archival Education and the Need for Full-Time Faculty"; Ericson, "Abolish the Recent," 34.
33. McCrank, "Prospects for Integrating Historical and Information Studies in Archival Education"; Peace and Chudacoff, "Archivists and Librarians."
34. Eastwood, "Nurturing Archival Education in the University."
35. Duranti, "The Archival Body of Knowledge."
36. Davis, "Continuing Education for Archivists."
37. Conway, "Effective Continuing Education for Training the Archivist," 41; Stielow, "The Impact of Information Technology on Archival Theory," 63.
38. Cox, "The Roles of Graduate and Continuing Education Programs in Preparing Archivists in North America for the Information Age," 454; Eastwood, "Educating Archivists About Information Technology."
39. Hedstrom, "Teaching Archivists About Electronic Records and Automated Techniques," 428.

40. Walch, "Automated Records and Techniques Curriculum Development Project."
41. Kesner, "Teaching Archivists About Information Technology Concepts."
42. Ham et al., "Is the Past Still Prologue?," 719; Murrah, "Employer Expectations for Archivists," 172.
43. Tibbo, "A Vision of Archival Education at the Millennium"; Cox, "Are There Really New Directions and Innovations in Archival Education?," 254.
44. O'Toole, "The Archival Curriculum"; Martin, "The Development of Professional Education for Librarians and Archivists in the United States," 556–557; Schaeffer, "From Craft to Profession."
45. Martin, "The Development of Professional Education for Librarians and Archivists in the United States"; Miller, "The SAA as Sisyphus"; Duranti, "The Society of American Archivists and Graduate Archival Education"; Cox, "The Society of American Archivists and Graduate Education."
46. Eastwood, "Nurturing Archival Education in the University"; Duranti, "The Society of American Archivists and Graduate Archival Education."
47. Mason, Evans, and Taylor, "The Society of American Archivists in the Seventies Report of the Committee for the 1970's," 206–210 Evans and Taylor.
48. Schaeffer, "From Craft to Profession"; Duranti, "The Society of American Archivists and Graduate Archival Education."
49. Bastian and Yakel, "Are We There Yet?"; Bastian and Yakel, "Towards the Development of an Archival Core Curriculum."
50. Cox et al., "Archival Education in North American Library and Information Science Schools."
51. Long, "Developing and Implementing a Master of Archival Studies Program"; Turrini, "From History to Library and Information Science," 380.
52. Tibbo, "So Much to Learn, so Little Time to Learn It."
53. Yakel, "The Future of the Past."
54. Eastwood, "Building Archival Knowledge and Skills in the Digital Age," 164.
55. Cox et al., "Archival Education in North American Library and Information Science Schools," 187; Cox, "Are There Really New Directions and Innovations in Archival Education?"
56. Cook, "The Imperative of Challenging Absolutes' in Graduate Archival Education Programs," 382–384.
57. Goggin, "That We Shall Truly Deserve the Title Of 'Profession,'" 251–252.
58. Evans, "Postappointment Archival Training."
59. Mason, Evans, and Taylor, "The Society of American Archivists in the Seventies Report of the Committee for the 1970's," 206–210; Evans, "Postappointment Archival Training," 71–74; Peterson, Quinn, and Taylor, "Professional Archival Training"; Mason, "Archives in the Seventies," 204.
60. Peterson, Quinn, and Taylor, "Professional Archival Training," 315.
61. Cox, "Professionalism and Archivists in the United States," 244–245.
62. Murrah, "Employer Expectations for Archivists."
63. Cox, "Professionalism and Archivists in the United States."
64. *Ibid.*, 244; Joyce, "Archival Education," 18–19.
65. Ericson, "Professional Associations and Archival Education."
66. Maher, "Contexts for Understanding Professional Certification."
67. *Ibid.*, 424.
68. Gabehart, "Qualifications Desired by Employers for Entry-Level Archivists in the United States," 433–434, 436.
69. Ericson, "Abolish the Recent," 28.
70. *Ibid.*, 29.

71. Hamburger, "Archival Certification - Necessity or Nicety?," 6.

72. Duryee, "A&A Collection."

73. Riggs, "The Correlation of Archival Education and Job Requirements Since the Advent of Encoded Archival Description"; Irons Walch et al., "A*CENSUS (Archival Census and Education Needs Survey in the United States)."

74. "Carnegie Classifications | Downloads."

75. Council of State Archivists, "Directory of State and Territorial Archives and Records Programs."

76. U.S. Census Bureau, "Census Bureau Regions and Divisions with State FIPS Codes."

77. Society of American Archivists, "14 Earn Digital Archives Specialist Certificates from SAA."

78. Linn, "ACA History."

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