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## Personality Types of Archivists

Charles R. Schultz

*The author collected data for this article using the Keirsey Temperament Sorter, which has been used by many colleges, universities, and corporations to promote better understanding among individuals and groups. Although it is modeled after the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, the KTS is a different document that has been validated by its wide use. The editors believe that the author is, as one reviewer noted, "enthusiastic and right about the utility of the study." He has captured an interesting set of data about a cross-section of the archival profession, and his presentation of that data will familiarize archivists with a tool for understanding themselves and those with whom they work. Archivists' employment of such tools can create opportunities for self-knowledge and self-development both for individuals and for the profession, and the editors offer these reflections as a way of opening a dialog that we believe will benefit both.*

*The Editors*

### Introduction

Carl Gustav Jung, the Swiss-born psychiatrist, developed the modern concept of psychological types, preferences with which individuals are born that form the foundation of their personalities.<sup>1</sup> Soon after Jung's work appeared in English translation, an American researcher, Katharine Briggs, began detailed studies of Jung's work. She, along with her daughter

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<sup>1</sup> Keirsey, David and Marilyn Bates, *Please Understand Me: Character and Temperament Types* (Del Mar, California: Prometheus Nemesis Book Company, 1984), 4.

Isabel Briggs Myers, devoted nearly two decades to developing ways to measure the preferences of individuals in order to determine their types and the strength of their preferences. Their collaboration resulted in the creation of a survey instrument, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), which has been given to millions of Americans under the guidance of professionals trained in the administration and interpretation of the instrument.<sup>2</sup> David Keirsey later developed a similar but less detailed lay instrument called the Keirsey Temperament Sorter which appeared in his 1984 book, *Please Understand Me*. That work had sold over one million copies by 1991, and the Sorter has been administered to additional millions.<sup>3</sup>

Using either of these instruments<sup>4</sup> reveals a four-letter personality type based on the four pairs of preferences identified by Jung: Extroverted or Introverted, Sensing or

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<sup>2</sup> Myers, Isabel Briggs with Peter B. Myers, *Gifts Differing: Understanding Personality Type* (Palo Alto California: Davies-Black Publishing, 1955). The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator instrument can be purchased and administered only by professionals who have been trained to administer and interpret the instrument.

<sup>3</sup> A copy of the Keirsey Temperament Sorter is included on pages 5–11 of Keirsey and Bates. Multiple copies can be purchased from the Prometheus Nemesis Book Company in Del Mar, California, or through the Keirsey Web Site: <<http://Keirsey.com/cig-bin/Keirsey/newkts.cgi>>.

<sup>4</sup> The regular Myers-Briggs Type Indicator consists of 126 questions in which the test taker is asked to select one response from either two or three choices. Other versions of the MBTI contain either more or fewer questions. The Keirsey Temperament Sorter consists of 70 questions in which the test taker is asked to select one of two choices. Tabulation of the choices made on either instrument results in one of the sixteen, four-letter types. The MBTI provides better information on the strength of preference the test taker shows, but the Sorter is a valid instrument for the purposes of this study.

intuitive, Thinking or Feeling, and Judging or Perceiving. The first pair of preferences (E or I) reflects how individuals receive stimulation and how they communicate, the second (S or N) how they gather data and what they communicate, the third (T or F) how they make decisions and receive communication, and the fourth (J or P) how they structure life and react to communication.<sup>5</sup> Everyone has some aspects of each of the eight possible characteristics, but individuals generally demonstrate a stronger preference for one of each pair.<sup>6</sup>

Psychiatrists and other professional counselors use type analysis to understand and assist their clients, and corporations from Ford to Boeing have used type inventories to train management, sales, and human resource employees. Most commonly, these tools are used by individuals and groups to investigate their own skills in order to work and grow within their type. The study which follows, an experiment in applying personality types to a cross-section of archivists, is intended to provide an avenue for the archival profession to

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<sup>5</sup> Kroeger, Otto and Janet M. Theusen, *Type Talk* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1988), 7-9 and 282-84; Myers with Myers, *Gifts Differing: Understanding Personality Type*, xi-xv and 207-11; and Keirsey and Bates, 3-4. Identifying one's type is really a matter of discovering many shades of gray rather than finding simple black and white answers, and not all people of any identified type always act in the same manner.

<sup>6</sup> Kroeger, Otto and Janet M. Thuesen, 215-18, and Keirsey and Bates, 189-92. The degree of their preferences may also alter over time or in certain situations. For example, in a recent discussion a professional counselor in College Station, who is licensed to administer the MBTI, confided that her husband, during a period of turmoil in his department at Texas A&M University shortly before he retired, changed preferences from a T to a F, but very soon after he retired he reverted to his usual preference for T.

look at itself in order to capitalize on or, if need be, to counterbalance its predominant personality types and thereby to improve the work of the profession.

### Methodology

In early June 1995, four hundred regular members and one hundred student members of the Society of American Archivists (SAA) received survey packets which included a cover letter explaining the project, a copy of the Keirsey Temperament Sorter,<sup>7</sup> and a personal data sheet on which to indicate gender, age within defined brackets, and both type of repository and type of work<sup>8</sup> in which they were currently employed or hoped to be employed after they completed their degree program. Regular members also indicated years of experience within defined brackets.

These individuals were targeted by choosing each seventh regular member (14.8 percent of the total) and each fourth student member (25.3 percent of the total) from zip code order mailing labels for each category purchased from SAA. This method of selection from a readily identifiable group of archivist provided geographical balance but could not guarantee ethnic or gender balance.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> The Keirsey Temperament Sorter was chosen as a survey instrument because it is readily available to anyone whereas the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator is available only to professionals who have been specifically trained and licensed to administer it.

<sup>8</sup> These categories were based on SAA sections.

<sup>9</sup> However, the percentage of surveys returned (males, 34 percent; females, 66 percent) parallels the approximately 40 percent male and 60 percent female membership of SAA and the 37 percent male/ 63 percent female ratio of those who responded to the survey recently conducted by the SAA Task Force on the Future of *The American Archivist*.

By the end of 1995, 37 student (9.4 percent of all student members) and 184 (6.8 percent) regular members of SAA had returned the survey instrument. Analysis of the information on the data sheets was completed in all categories of personal data except type of work performed, which was omitted because a large percentage of respondents indicated that they performed all types of work. Because of the small number of responses from student members, two separate analysis based upon membership type would have been meaningless. Therefore student members were included with regular members in Table 1, comparison of type distribution among archivists and the general population, and Table 2, similarities and differences in gender patterns of type distribution between the general population and archivists.<sup>10</sup>

### **A Brief Definition of Types**

A detailed description of each of the sixteen types derived from the sixteen combinations of the four pairs of preferences is beyond the scope of this article, but a brief discussion of four pairs is required. It should be noted first, however, that the degree of preference that an individual has for any of the characteristics may vary from very strong to very weak and

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<sup>10</sup> A separate analysis of the student members did indicate that student members are somewhat different from regular members in most preferences. A higher percentage of students scored equal numbers in the E-I preference than did the total respondents, and students were far below the general population in preferring S over N. In T-F preference students were closer to the profile of the general population (males preferred T 55.6 percent and F 22.2 percent whereas females preferred F over T by 57.1 percent to 28.6 percent) than regular members. Overall, the students preferred J over P slightly less than did the total respondents.

may even be neutral (which is indicated by an X in the accompanying tables) and that each set of preferences has an effect upon the other three. For example, an ENTP (extroverted, intuitive, thinking, perceiving) will act and do things somewhat differently from an INTP (introverted, intuitive, thinking, perceiving) and a great deal differently from the exact opposite, ISFJ (introverted, sensing, feeling, judging). The more variations there are between the preferences of two individuals, the more differences there will probably be between them, but no two individuals will think or act in exactly the same way.

The E-I preference determines the source of stimulation and the way of communicating for individuals. Extroverts are stimulated by others, are quite sociable, work best in a group, and have a tendency to speak before they think. Introverts are stimulated from within, have a tremendous capacity for concentration, work with intensity, and are inclined to think long and hard before speaking. In the general population, Es outnumber Is three to one.

The S-N preference delineates how people gather data and what they communicate. Sensors feel most comfortable with what can be sensed—seen, felt, smelled, tasted, and heard. They prefer specific facts and practical solutions arrived at in a sequential manner. Intuitives feel most comfortable dealing with concepts, theory, generalities, and the future. In the general population Ss outnumber Ns about three to one.

The T-F preference indicates how people receive communication and how they prefer to make decisions. Thinkers tend to be objective, just, and detached whereas

feelers are likely to be subjective, fair, and involved. This is the only set of preferences which is gender-linked; in the general population, approximately two-thirds of males are Ts, and the same proportion of females are Fs.

The J-P preference influences how people react to communication and order their lives. Judgers are fixed, scheduled, and structured, and they like closure and meeting deadlines. Perceivers are flexible, adaptable, open-ended and spontaneous and have an aversion for closure and deadlines. These two preferences are the easiest to detect in individuals and the least likely to fall in extremes.<sup>11</sup>

### **Comparison of Archivists with the General Population**

Table 1 (see p. 22) shows a comparison of the distribution of the sixteen personality types among archivists who responded to this survey with the distribution of these types within the general population profiled through the use of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and the Keirsey Temperament Sorter.<sup>12</sup> In the table the types are listed in descending order of the number and percentage of respondents among archivists who are of that type. Even a cursory glance at this table reveals some substantial differences between archivists and the general population.

The first noticeable difference between archivists and the general population is that every one of the top eight types of archivists ends with a J, and in every J combination except ESFJ, there is a higher percentage of archivists than there is

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<sup>11</sup> General descriptions of each of the sixteen types are provided in Kroeger and Thuesen, 114-80; Keirsey and Bates, 167-207; and Myers with Myers, 83-112.

<sup>12</sup> In 1994 over two and a half million people took the MBTI. Myers with Myers, xiv.



**Table 1**  
**Comparison of Respondents with the General Population<sup>13</sup>**

Type	Number of Archivists	Percentage of Archivists	Percentage of General Population
ISTJ	36	21.5	6
ESTJ	32	19.1	13
ENFJ	18	10.7	5
INTJ	17	10.2	1
ISFJ	14	8.4	6
ENTJ	13	7.8	5
ESFJ	13	7.8	13
INFJ	9	5.4	1
ENFP	4	2.4	5
ENTP	4	2.4	5
INTP	4	2.4	1
INFP	3	1.8	1
ESFP	0	0.0	13
ESTP	0	0.0	13
ISFP	0	0.0	5
ISTP	0	0.0	7
Totals	167	100%	100%

in the general population. More than 87 percent of archivists prefer judging to perceiving although the general population is divided about equally between J and P. As can be seen in

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<sup>13</sup> Some explanation of the numbers are necessary because of the discrepancy between the number of archivists used here and the total of 221 responses which were received. In 54 of the responses, the individuals had at least one pair of preferences in which they had equal scores and their four letter type therefore includes an X. It seemed best to use only those instruments in which the individuals had clear preferences in each of the four pairs of choices. These 167 useable responses include both regular and student members of SAA. The percentages for the general population are taken from Keirse and Bates.

Table 2 (see p. 27), female archivists exhibit this preference slightly more strongly than do male archivists.

In other words, archivists appear to be disproportionately judges, people who are scheduled and structured and like closure and meeting deadlines, rather than perceivers. Such a preference serves archivists well in arriving at the frequent decisions they are called on to make in their work. Perhaps it is making decisions—which records subseries, series, or groups to retain permanently; which areas of society to document; which collections to solicit and which of those offered to accept; what portions, if any, of a given collection can be discarded without losing potentially valuable information—that makes archival work appealing to Js while causing Ps to shy away from the profession.

A second major difference between survey respondents and the general population is the absence among archivists of any of the four types which include the SP combination although over one-third of the general population fits into this group. A possible explanation might be that nearly all archival jobs require at least a bachelor's degree, and SPs are the least likely of all types to earn college degrees. While following routines and procedures may be the very thing that leads SJs to become archivists, free-spirited SPs tend to shy away from such structured work.

SJs (56.8 percent of the total to 38 percent of the general population) tend to be demanding of themselves and of others and generally prefer to work in situations in which they can achieve practical and tangible results. They willingly take on new and additional responsibilities but are usually not innovators or instruments of change. Could the large number of SJs in the profession help account for the reservations about and even objections to the concept of archival theory which appear on the Archives Listserv and for the limited

number of articles on the topic?<sup>14</sup> This archival type tendency may also be a factor in the general public's lack of understanding of, and appreciation for, the importance of archives and archivists. SJs work hard at whatever they do, but the public seldom recognizes and appreciates their accomplishments.<sup>15</sup>

The NT (Intuitive Thinker) combination appears in only 12 percent of the general population, and most NTs are involved in science, technology, design, engineering, mathematics, and other fields seemingly foreign to archives. Yet survey respondents, 32.8 percent of whom fall within this

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<sup>14</sup> In his analysis of American archival literature between 1901 and 1987, Richard J. Cox listed seven challenges that remain to be met by the profession in creating a literature. The first one he listed was archival theory. Richard J. Cox, "American Archival Literature: Expanding Horizons and Continuing Needs, 1901-1987," *American Archivist* 50(Summer 1987): 314. An examination of titles of articles in the *American Archivist* during the last fifteen years revealed the following eight articles in which "theory" appeared: Frank G. Burke, "The Future of Archival Theory in the United States," *American Archivist* 44(Winter 1981): 40-46; Lester J. Cappon, "What, Then, Is There to Theorize About?" *American Archivist* 45 (Winter 1982): 19-25; Gregg D. Kimball, "The Burke-Cappon Debate: Some Further Criticism and Considerations for Archival Theory," *American Archivist* 48(Fall 1985): 369-76; Trudy Huskamp Peterson, "The National Archives and the Archival Theorist Revisited, 1954-1984," *American Archivist* 49(Spring 1986): 125-33; John W. Roberts, "Archival Theory: Much Ado about Shelving," *American Archivist* 50(Winter 1987): 66-75; Frederick Stielow, "Archival Redux and Redeemed: Definition and Context Toward a General Theory," *American Archivist* 54(Winter 1991): 14-27; Robert D. Reynolds, Jr., "The Incunabula of Archival Theory and Practice in the United States: J. C. Fitzpatrick's *Notes on the Care, Cataloging, Calendaring and Arrangement of Manuscripts* and the Public Archives Commission's Uncompleted 'Primer of Archival Economy,'" *American Archivist* 54(Fall 1991): 466-83; and Frederick J. Stielow, "Archival Theory and the Preservation of Electronic Media: Opportunities and Standards Below the Cutting Edge," *American Archivist* 55(Spring 1992): 332-43.

<sup>15</sup> Keirse and Bates, 39-47 and 189-96; Kroeger and Thuesen, 215-22 and 265-72; and Myers with Myers, 85-88, 92-94, and 102-05.

category, exceeded the percentage of the general population in three of the four types which include the NT combination. NTs regardless of profession usually have a passion for developing many competencies, and archivists too must have some basic knowledge of fields as varied as history, conservation, preservation, photography, administration, chemistry. Moreover, archivists like other NTs, who have little interest in sales and consumer relations, frequently do not promote themselves, their institutions, or their holdings as well as they might.

There is a similar anomaly in the frequent appearance of the NF (Intuitive Feelers) combination among participants. Here archivists exceed the percentages of the general population by a substantial margin in two types and by a slim margin in one. NFs, including novelists, dramatists, poets, playwrights, and biographers, lean towards the humanities and social sciences, disciplines in which most archivists work. NFs usually also want to make a difference in the world. Perhaps the 20.3 percent of archivists who demonstrate the same combination strive to make a difference through the preservation of the documentary heritage of the world in which they live even though the general population may not recognize the parallel. Buying, selling, and other commercial type occupations are of little interest to NFs, and this may be another factor which helps explain the reluctance of archivists to promote themselves or their institutions, their holdings, or even their profession.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Keirsey and Bates, 57-66 and 178-88, and Kroger and Thuesen, 226-30, 243-47, 261-65, and 276-80. Social Research, Inc., "The Image of Archivists: Resource Allocators' Perceptions," December 1984 (commonly referred to by archivists as the Levy Report), reported that "archivists have an identity that is a compound of specific abilities and attractions, somewhat vaguely conceptualized in the minds of others and burdened by unexciting

In the E-I preference, the total percentage among archivists is also considerably different from the percentage of the general population where ratio is about 75 percent to 25 percent. The total archival population has far fewer extroverts and far more introverts than does the general population, and male archivists seem to lean slightly more to introversion than do female archivists. The preponderance of introverts over extroverts may be yet another factor which helps explain the reluctance of archivists to engage in outreach activities and their failure to obtain the support they need to carry out their responsibilities.<sup>17</sup>

### **Patterns of Type Differences Among Archivists**

A second purpose of this study was to explore variations in type differences based on gender, age, years in the profession, and type of repository. Of particular interest were gender patterns among archivists. These calculations appear in Table 2.

The general population consists of approximately 70–75 percent Ss and 25–30 percent Ns. Sensors deal in the present in a sequential manner; are realistic, actual, down-to-earth, practical and specific; and emphasize facts. Intuitives, on the other hand, concentrate on the future; deal in concepts, theories, and generalities; emphasize ingenuity; and look for inspiration. When one considers the nature of archival work, one might expect archivists to express a preference for sensing at a higher percentage than does the general population, but exactly the opposite occurred in this study with male archivists

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stereotypical elements."

<sup>17</sup> Kroeger and Thuesen, 33–36, and Keirsey and Bates, 14–16.

**Table 2**  
**Percentages of Archivists Favoring**  
**Individual Preferences by Gender<sup>18</sup>**

Pref.	All	%	Males	%	Females	%
I	100	45.3	37	49.3	63	43.7
E	94	42.5	30	40.0	63	43.7
X	27	12.2	8	10.7	18	12.6
Totals	221	100	75	100	144	100
S	116	52.5	41	54.6	74	51.5
N	95	43.0	30	40.0	64	44.4
X	10	4.5	5	5.4	6	4.2
Totals	221	100	75	100	144	100
F	76	34.4	22	19.3	52	36.3
T	128	57.9	46	61.3	82	56.9
X	17	7.7	7	9.4	10	6.9
Totals	221	100	75	100	144	100
J	192	87.3	65	86.7	126	87.5
P	22	10.0	9	12.0	13	9.0
X	6	2.7	1	1.3	5	3.5
Totals	221	100	75	100	144	100

being slightly closer to the general population profile than their female counterparts.<sup>19</sup> From the higher than normal percentages of intuitives among archivists one might also expect there to be significant archival literature on theory, but archivists actually are much more inclined to write about practice than theory.

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<sup>18</sup> This table includes both regular and student members of SAA. While 221 individuals completed and returned the Kersey Temperament Sorter, two of them did not return the data sheets. Thus there are two fewer numbers in the male and female calculations than in the all category.

<sup>19</sup> Kroeger and Theusen, 24-27, and Keirse and Bates, 16-19.

There are also significant differences in gender profiles between archivists and the general population in the T-F preference. Overall the general population is about equally divided between these two, but there is significant difference in preference depending on gender; males are about two-thirds Ts, and females are about two-thirds Fs. Male archivists are close to the general population in the T preference but below that group in F while female archivists are substantially above the general population in the T preference and far below the general population in the F preference. A large percentage of male archivists expressed equal preference for T and F, female archivists slightly less so. In other words, female archivists, who seem to think very much like their male colleagues,<sup>20</sup> differed far more significantly from their female counterparts in the general population than did male archivists.

As noted above, the general population is divided about equally in the J-P preference. But more than 87 percent of archivists prefer judging to perceiving, and female archivists exhibit this preference slightly more strongly than do male archivists.

Regular members indicated their ages in specified brackets so that an analysis could be made of any patterns in preferences within those groups, and age did indeed make a difference. Respondents in their sixties preferred E over I by a margin of 66.7 percent to 19.0 percent and those between sixteen and twenty-five years of experience also included more extroverts than introverts. In all the other age brackets (more

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<sup>20</sup> Kroeger and Theusen, 28-32.

than half of the respondents) over 50 percent preferred I. In other words, archivists over sixty and under twenty-five more closely resembled the general population than did those between twenty-five and sixty. A second interesting age-related trend appeared in the J-P preference. Those in their twenties preferred J over P by 94.0 percent to 6.0 percent. This figure dropped several percentage points for those in their thirties, rose steadily until reaching 95.2 percent of those in their sixties, then dropped to 80.0 percent for those over seventy.<sup>21</sup>

Regular members also indicated their years of experience in established brackets,<sup>22</sup> but while there proved to be considerable variation within each pair, no overall pattern of differences appeared based on years of experience. Those with less than five years experience divided evenly between E and I, those with between five and fifteen years experience and those with over twenty-six years of experience preferred I to E by about 10 percent, and those with sixteen to twenty-five years of experience preferred E to I by 10 percent. Respondents with fewer than five years and those with between sixteen and twenty-five years of experience preferred S over N whereas those with between five and fifteen years and those with over twenty-six years of experience preferred

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<sup>21</sup> While there were some slight fluctuations within the S-N and T-F preferences in the various age levels, there were no major differences such as that of the E-I preference of those in their sixties and those between 16 and 25.

<sup>22</sup> The percentages of those in the various experience brackets were as follows: less than five years, 20.8 percent; five-fifteen years, 41 percent; sixteen-twenty-five years, 31.5 percent; twenty-six or more years, 6.7 percent.



N over S. Those with five to fifteen years of experience preferred F to T by a very slight margin while those in all other brackets of experience preferred T to F by large margins. The trend in the J-P preference was similar; those with fewer than five years of experience leaned slightly more toward J while those with more than five years of experience showed increasing preference for J as the years of experience increased with those with more than twenty-six years of experience being 100 percent J.

To analyze whether individuals who worked in one type of repository had different preferences from those who worked in others, respondents were asked to check the type of archives in which they worked from a list of the institutional sections within SAA.<sup>23</sup> Business archivists differed significantly from their colleagues in several categories and more closely matched the general population than any other group. In contrast to the aggregate response, for example, they preferred E to I by 73.1 percent to 23.1 percent (with 3.8 percent having equal scores), and they had a lower percentage (76.9) of Js than archivists from other types of institutions. Perhaps these differences stem from the very different culture

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<sup>23</sup> The percentages of archivists in this study who work in the various types of archives are College and University, 26.2 percent; Government, 22.4 percent; Religious, 11.8 percent; Business, 13.9 percent; Museum, 9.1 percent; and Manuscript Repositories, 16.6 percent. Of the 2891 SAA members who belong to these five sections listed in the *1996 SAA Directory*, the percentages are as follows: College and University, 24.3 percent; Government, 16.3 percent; Religious, 12.5 percent; Business, 12.2 percent; Museum, 14.6 percent; and Manuscript Repository, 20.1 percent. Apparently, this study was based on a fairly representative sample of archivists from the perspective of the institutional sections to which they belong.

in which business archivists work and from their frequent collaboration with advertising and public relations personnel in promoting their employers.

The responses by type of repository roughly paralleled the aggregate response except that college and university respondents scored a few percentage points below the general body in preferring J over P while manuscripts curators and government archivists displayed a preference for J over P a good bit more than did other respondents. Manuscript curators and museum archivists preferred T over F at a three to one ratio, higher than any other archival group and much higher than the general population.

There are a number of other variables within the archival community which might be explored as a follow up to this study. Would an investigation of archivists in Canada or Europe reveal differences between professionals in those areas and archivists in the United States? Would detailed studies of members of several SAA sections or of archivists who reside in the different regions of the United States uncover significant differences between, for example, government and business archivists that affect relationships between those constituencies? Or among New England, midwestern, southeastern, southwestern, northwestern, or intermountain archivists?

Additional studies might compare archivists with librarians and museum professionals, the other two professions which are primarily concerned with the preservation of documentary and cultural heritage. Table 3 (see p. 33) provides an example of similarities and differences between the profile of

librarians from one such study and the results of this survey.<sup>24</sup> A similar comparison of specialist groups within the archives, library, and museum professions (namely, reference librarians, museum exhibits staff, and members of SAA's Reference, Access, and Outreach Section) might also be useful.

### Implications and Speculations

Beginning with the premise that every person is born with certain type preferences which may be modulated or intensified by circumstances but are not likely to be completely reversed, this study sought to map the preference profile of a sample population of archivists and to compare that profile with that of the general population. It appears from the foregoing analyses of the sample population that significant differences do exist between the two groups. However, it is not at all clear how those types join the archival profession in the first place since archivists and archival work seem to be so much of a mystery to the general public. Perhaps that could be the subject of another study.

Meanwhile, the author will share his reflections on the causes and implications of these differences and suggest ways in which the profession can build on this study. Anyone who works in an archives or is familiar with the operation of an

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<sup>24</sup> There appears to be considerable similarity of type preferences between librarians and archivists. ISTJs are the predominant type in both professions, and both professions are far below the general population in the four types that include the SP combination and in preferring extroversion to introversion. However, a substantially larger percentage of librarians prefer perceiving than do archivists, and archivists prefer judging by a much larger percentage than do librarians.

Table 3  
Comparison of Archivist and Librarian Type Preferences<sup>25</sup>

Type	Number of Archivists	Percentage of Archivists	Number of Librarians	Percentage of Librarians
ISTJ	36	21.5	265	16.5
ESTJ	32	19.1	98	6.1
ENFJ	28	10.7	81	5.1
INTJ	17	10.2	184	11.5
ISFJ	14	8.4	27	8.1
ENTJ	13	7.8	127	7.9
ESFJ	13	7.8	66	4.1
INFJ	9	5.4	104	6.5
ENFP	4	2.4	96	6.0
ENTP	4	2.4	94	5.9
INTP	4	2.4	146	9.1
INFP	3	1.8	116	7.3
ESFP	0	0.0	13	.8
ESTP	0	0.0	18	1.1
ISFP	0	0.0	27	1.7
ISTP	0	0.0	36	2.3
Totals	167	100%	1600	100% <sup>1</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Scherdin, Mary Jane, "Vive la Difference: Exploring Librarian Personality Types Using the MBTI," in *Discovering Librarians: Profiles of a Profession*, ed. Mary Jane Scherdin (Chicago: Association of College and Research Libraries, 1994), 125-58. Three groups were included in this study—730 American Library Association officers and committee members, 615 members of ALA, and 255 members of Special Libraries Association. Scherdin used the Expanded Analysis Report version of the MBTI, which consists of 131 questions instead of the 126 in the regular MBTI. Although Scherdin used a different survey instrument and her method of selecting participants was different, it is suitable to use the percentages of individuals in each of the sixteen types to demonstrate a very general picture of the types of individuals included in the two professions.

archives should not have found the preponderance of introverts in the profession surprising, but the differences between archivists and the general population in their preferences between S (Sensing) and N (Intuitive) might have been.

Perhaps the most disconcerting discovery of the study was the very large difference between archivists and the general population in the J (Judging) and P (Perceiving) preference. Do archivists make decisions too easily and too quickly? Would archivists do a better job of preserving society's documentary heritage if there were more perceivers in the profession or if archivists made more of an effort to strengthen the perceiving qualities that exist within themselves? Would collaborating with perceivers help archivists alter the public perception that they work in dark, damp, dusty basements trying to save old things?

That this study failed to turn up a single SP might also cause some concern. How different might the profession and the preservation of society's documentary heritage be if the profession included a few of these free spirits?

Can the profession or individual members do anything to change the makeup of the profession? Probably, but it will take some time, effort, and attitude adjustment by archivists. The first thing to do is to recognize what types of people are likely to become archivists. A second is to acknowledge that unless the public's perception of what an archivist is and does can be changed, it is unlikely that more extroverts and perceivers will enter the profession.

And third, individual archivists can explore their types and work on strengthening their less developed areas. Introverts could occasionally force themselves to think and act like extroverts. Thinkers could give more attention to people and a bit less to things. Judgers might act more like perceivers

and take somewhat more time in deciding what to solicit or ignore, to accept or decline, to retain or discard.

Any strategy that broadens and diversifies the profession will inevitably not only strengthen the profession itself but also improve the ability of the profession to carry out its responsibility to preserve society's documentary heritage. Maybe now is the time to revise the old adage When in doubt, throw it out to When in doubt, think about it some more and seek advice from someone who may have a different perspective.

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