

APPRAISAL OF CONGRESSIONAL RECORDS AT THE MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY: A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT: The papers of U.S. Senators and Representatives are fundamental sources for local and national history. However, their tremendous bulk and complexity makes such collections increasingly difficult for repositories to appraise and administer. The Minnesota Historical Society, which has one of the largest collections of Congressional papers in the nation, assembled an internal committee to tighten its appraisal criteria. Drawing from two decades of mostly abstract articles and books on Congressional records appraisal, the Society created a concrete records disposition list. This list has been invaluable in communicating with Congressional staffs (improving the content and reducing the size of accessions) and promises to deliver substantial space reductions through reappraisal.

“Because the documentation of Congress...directly reveals the will of the people as expressed through their elected representatives, it is especially crucial to preserve evidence and information about the legislative process and make it accessible to the public.”¹ That Congress should be documented is surely indisputable. The hard question is how to document Congress and—perhaps hardest of all—how *much* documentation is necessary. Both these hard questions have been discussed on and off in the archival literature for many years. But little has been published which attempts to connect the theory of appraising Congressional papers to the reality of a repository with an aggressive and broad collecting mandate. This article is a case study of how one such repository, the Minnesota Historical Society (hereafter, Society), converted theory into practice.

The History of Collecting Congressional Papers at the Minnesota Historical Society

The Minnesota Historical Society's interest in documenting public affairs has a long history, beginning with its organization in 1849 by men who were themselves active participants in politics and government. For more than a century before this emphasis was defined in a Public Affairs Center (1967), they and their successors on the Society's governing board, the staff, the state legislature,

and the public at large collaborated in bringing together a rich store of information. Among its holdings are the papers of many of the state's Representatives and nearly all of its Senators. These collections have brought the Society prestige, research use, strong documentation of individuals and issues throughout Minnesota, and (not unimportantly) relationships with politically powerful elected officials.

The breadth and depth of the Society's holdings of Congressional papers places it in a unique position nationally as the single largest repository of such material outside the Federal Government. To date, these collections total nearly 6200 cubic feet (this does not include the Vice Presidential portions of the papers of Walter Mondale and Hubert Humphrey), or approximately 16% of the Society's total manuscript collection. A full 95% of this volume documents Congressional activity since World War II; 82% (5000 cubic feet) since 1960 alone. These figures do not include ancillary public affairs collections such as the papers of the state's governors, the papers of appointed officials such as U.S. ambassadors Max Kampelman and Eugenie Anderson, the records of the state's major (and several minor) political parties, and the records of organizations such as the League of Women Voters and the Citizens League. The Minnesota Historical Society serves, moreover, as the archives for the state of Minnesota. Decades before the "documentation strategy" called for in *The Documentation of Congress*, the Society recognized the essential interrelationship of the state's many layers and kinds of political documentation.²

The Society's collecting of Congressional papers has taken place within the context of certain important assumptions and principles. As Roger Davidson argued in 1991, to understand Congress, or the reasons for documenting it, "one must first recognize its duality. One Congress is the lawmaking institution, the Congress of the textbooks. The second Congress is the representative assemblage of...men and women of diverse backgrounds...and personal and political beliefs. Their electoral fortunes depend...not upon what Congress produces collectively, but how well they individually cultivate the support and goodwill of voters...miles from the Nation's Capitol."³ Hence the importance of documenting Congress and its members has both a national and a local/personal component. On the one hand, the records of Congress are essential for understanding the nation's political history; on the other hand, "all politics is local" and each individual Senator and Representative (shaped by his or her own background and beliefs) represents and shapes state or district concerns. The personal papers of individual Congresspeople are one key component to documenting this duality.

Moreover, the Society has implicitly made a commitment to document its Congressional *delegation*, not simply to document individual Congresspeople. Unlike many other repositories of Congressional papers in other states, it has embraced the idea that the group of individuals representing the state in Washington is more than the sum of its parts. These collections are important both as pieces of a national collection documenting Congress as a whole, and as resources for more local study: the lives and attitudes of individual elected officials; the interaction (political and personal) of the state delegation; the local (district, state, and regional) issues and concerns which formed the crucible of national action. In the past, however, the commitment to the delegation existed side by side with a desire to comprehensively and exhaustively

document each Congressperson individually. Implicit in this approach was a belief that all functions of every Congressional office must be documented, and an unwillingness to make difficult (and possibly unpopular) appraisal choices. Short of financial receipts and award plaques, every record generated by every Congressional office was sought and retained. By contrast, only a small portion of the records created by a business or other organization are accepted.

The Need for Appraisal Guidelines for Congressional Papers

Historians and other users of Congressional papers have admitted (often against their will) that the size of modern Congressional collections—and especially the ever diminishing ratio between content and quantity—make them difficult and frustrating to use; at the same time, many researchers are becoming increasingly adept at using the wide range of other sources which document Congress in less bulky form. In the words of one scholar, “Congressional collections are far larger than they need to be in order to reflect the important issues and activities that they document,” and “only by paring down these collections to their unique elements will archivists succeed in making them useful to researchers and manageable for archives.”⁴ To be blunt, however, making Congressional collections manageable for archives is an even stronger imperative than making them useful to researchers. Unless archivists can develop appraisal guidelines to significantly reduce the size of Congressional collections, overall documentation of Congress will suffer because fewer collections will be preserved. “Because of the growth in the size and complexity of these collections, congressional staff and archivists need to improve their understanding of what constitutes archival material and to develop the management skills to ensure its preservation.”⁵

It was, ironically, the Society’s construction of a \$74 million building in 1991-92 which focused attention on appraisal issues. While the new building (called the History Center) contained about 50% more archival storage space than our previous facility, our past rate of acquisitions would fill this space in less than half the time it took us to outgrow our previous building. Simply put, the Society does not (and will not) have the resources to acquire, arrange, and store Congressional papers at the rate it has done in the last decades. In 1991, therefore, we assembled an interdivisional committee to review our past collecting and issue appraisal guidelines. These guidelines, once approved by the Society’s director and Executive Council, would govern future collecting and also guide reappraisal efforts. The committee represented the Acquisitions and Curatorial, Reference, Research, Processing, and State Archives departments. The Acquisitions staff is charged with negotiating with donors as well as making appraisal decisions; Reference and Research represent both the general public and academic users of our collections; Processing organizes and describes the collections; State Archives represented neutral but interested observers.⁶

Several previous studies, discussions, and recommendations existed on which to build our appraisal guidelines, but none offered an adoptable blueprint.⁷ The most specific set of appraisal recommendations to date was Karen Dawley Paul’s, *Records Management Handbook for United States Senators and Their Repositories*. Paul’s handbook was indispensable in identifying and defining records series, but in several instances her retention guide-

lines give disproportionate weight to the individual Senator rather than to documenting the office, the delegation, or the institution.⁸ The less formal House retention guidelines are more realistic about space constraints and researcher interest. However, the House handbook does not (cannot) modify the appraisal of Representative's records in light of parallel records kept by Senators from the same state.⁹ Moreover, our discussions were informed by conversations with and reports by archival colleagues at the Senate Historical Office, the House Historical Office, the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, the University of Delaware, and the University of South Carolina.¹⁰ Finally, and in many instances most importantly, the guidelines have benefited from conversations with the staffs of several members of the Minnesota Congressional delegation.

We quickly found that on many appraisal issues, consensus does not exist and cannot exist, because of the multifaceted character of the institutions and groups of individuals involved in or concerned with documenting Congress. Individuals include historians, who use the papers, and the Congresspeople themselves, who create the material. Institutions range from the House and Senate historians' offices, to Congressional Research Centers (such as the Dirksen Center in Illinois), to university special collections (many of which hold the papers of only one or two Congresspeople), to state historical societies, and even to county historical societies. Each of these groups of individuals and repositories has a distinct purpose or mission, and a distinct perspective on appraisal. On the other hand, some consensus does exist, although as one archivist remarked, even where agreement exists on appraisal standards, there is often an unwillingness or inability to actually apply them. Thus the guidelines presented here will not be relevant to all other repositories; however, the size and depth of the Society's collections, along with the concentrated study afforded by its internal deliberations, may prove useful to other archives which collect Congressional papers.

Goals of Society: Congressional Papers Appraisal Guidelines

The central goal of these guidelines is to balance the Society's resources against the increasing bulk of Congressional collections, and to define the most stringent appraisal criteria possible consistent with preserving collections which serve the long-term historical objectives of historians and other researchers. To accomplish this, the guidelines specifically rely on the Society's accomplishments in documenting the state's entire Congressional delegation. Because much redundancy and duplication exists among members of the delegation in terms of the issues and projects dealt with,¹¹ as well as with the constituents helped or heard from, the guidelines seek to reduce this overlap by treating the collections of Senators differently than the collections of Representatives. As Frank Mackaman has argued, by choosing to more thoroughly document the activities of Senators a repository has the assurance of receiving materials documenting concerns of importance from all corners of the state.¹² The papers of Representatives, therefore, can be reduced further (especially such series as constituent correspondence), and focused to provide better documentation of those activities unique to the particular legislator and/or to his/her district. Also, the guidelines make serious use of the assessment of records—especially constituent correspondence and case files—provided by Congressional staff.

The guidelines also have as a goal improved communication between the Society and the Minnesota Congressional delegation, by enabling Society staff to explain from the beginning which series they wish to preserve and why. And the guidelines must reflect a realistic assessment of the needs/demands of the Congresspeople themselves and the needs of their offices. While the Society does not preserve Congressional collections principally as biographical icons to the elected official, part of what motivates a politician to donate his/her papers is the desire to have their personal accomplishments preserved for posterity. The proposed guidelines ensure that those portions of a Congressperson's papers most likely to reflect his/her personality and accomplishments—speech files, clippings files, files of bills authored—will be retained. Fortunately, these series are also generally considered useful by researchers, and so their preservation benefits not only the Society's relationship with its donors but also the historical record.

Explanation of Appraisal of Specific Series

Much of what appears in the guidelines will engender no controversy. Our approach to a few specific series, however, is more radical than what passes for conventional wisdom.

Invitations. These files consist of letters (and supporting documentation) requesting the member to appear at a function or give a speech. They are not only bulky, but also redundant. The principal information contained in them relates to where the Congressperson was at a particular time and what he/she was doing, and this information is available in much more condensed form in the schedule files. It should be noted, too, that Invitation files are among the least used according to a recent user survey.¹³ Only if the Speech Files were integrated into the Accepted Invitations files would they be considered for retention. Here the Society's guidelines are stricter than those in the Senate *Handbook*, but mirror those in the House recommendations.

Academy Files. Requests for assistance seeking nominations to service academies. Virtual unanimity exists in the archival world that these bulky files do not have long-term historical value. Moreover, the contents of the files raise serious questions concerning third-party privacy rights, and access to them prior to the death of the supplicants probably violates Federal privacy legislation.¹⁴ Summary lists, if any are compiled by the Congressional office, will be maintained, as well as memos and/or form letters that illustrate the office's policy in responding to academy applications or queries.

Routine Requests. These files contain requests from constituents for such things as: flags flown over the capital, tours of the capital, copies of Congressional publications. Again, no one in the historical or archival community recommends retention of even a sample of these bulky records. The fact that these requests must be dealt with by the Congressperson's staff is documented in the office manuals and other administrative records which will be retained.

Issue Mail. Mail sent by constituents expressing opinions on issues before Congress receives moderate research use. However, several factors mitigate against the wisdom of retaining the huge bulk represented by this series of records. First, even the most dedicated historians admit that no one can or wants

to read all the letters received on a specific issue; most scholars use this series to find quotable examples. Second, neither historians nor the Congressional offices themselves rely on issue mail as an indication of the strength of popular opinion on a specific issue: district and statewide polls, not mail or phone calls, are how offices judge voter opinion. As the chief of staff of one of Minnesota's Congressmen noted while their mail ran 60-40 against gun control, polls in their district consistently showed 70% voter approval of gun control. In addition, he added, "most of the letters we receive are inane, and so are most of the responses we send out." One Senate office stopped microfilming or preserving issue mail five years ago, and relies instead on summaries and analyses as well as polling data. Furthermore, the system used to film and index this mail often makes it impossible to find letters either by topic or by constituent name (once the film is separated from the Congressional services facilities). By preserving a random sample of randomly microfilmed issue mail of the Senate offices, a selection of letters on most issues of importance to Minnesota will be preserved for illustrative purposes. Summaries and analyses of issue mail, when created by any Congressional office, would be preserved.

Case Files. These files consist of requests for assistance from constituents; for example, seeking increase in military pension or some other Federal benefit. Conversations with the House and Senate historians' offices, and the staffs of two Minnesota Congressional delegates, indicates a growing realization that these files pose a privacy concern that has not heretofore been recognized. Most of the material in these case files is protected by Federal privacy legislation. At least three of Minnesota's Congressional offices have expressed reluctance even to donate these records; others (and the Senate Historical Office) have indicated that any case files accepted and retained by a repository will have to be sealed for 75 years from date of closing. A staff member of one of the congressional historical offices was blunt about the fact that "those [case] files aren't worth the papers they're printed on" in terms of long-term historical value. Indeed, the Veterans Affairs Committee of the Senate schedules its case work files for destruction after 10 years, a reflection both of privacy concerns and of appraisal of research potential. The Senate and House Historical Office documentation group also reported at SAA (in 1991) that "projects and casework files are duplicated in many places [e.g., Executive agency files], use was complicated by privacy laws," and in any event researchers made virtually no use of these files.

The one element of longer-term historical value that may inhere in case files is a pattern of public interaction (mostly problems) with the federal government that in turn reflects aspects of public policy, especially as it may concern current events or governmental policy or philosophy (e.g., draft issues during Vietnam, shifts in immigration policy). In most instances, however, the responsibility for preserving evidence of the interaction of government and individual citizens should fall on the National Archives; to attempt this through the papers of congresspeople insures nothing if not inconsistency and redundancy; most cases are not geographically specific (veteran's benefits case files are the same in California as in Minnesota). The appraisal guidelines for the Society permit, where feasible, the sampling of case files which a) illustrate the "personal" aspects of governmental policy and b) relate specifically to Minnesota. For example, one of our Representative's district office kept the "agriculture and

economic development” case files separate, and these were sampled to give a picture of the impact that the farm crisis and wetlands legislation had on southwestern Minnesota farmers. In addition, summary lists and statistical reports regarding casework would be retained for all offices. This appraisal approach mirrors that now suggested by the House Historical Office. Given the extraordinary bulk of these records, their low research rate, and the fact that personal case files will be inaccessible for nearly a century after creation, broader retention strategies are not defensible.

Plaques and memorabilia. Elected officials receive astounding numbers of plaques, certificates, buttons, hats, jackets, pins, medallions, trophies, shovels (from groundbreaking), and other expressions of gratitude and esteem from constituents, lobbyists, and others. A member who serves for a decade or more may acquire dozens and dozens of cubic feet of such material. Virtually none of them represent significant accomplishments or are not documentable in some other way (through the appointment calendar, for instance). Some repositories whose collections focus on a single Congressperson preserve virtually all of this material and some even item catalog it. Undoubtedly an element of local “color” exists in much of the material, but our committee—in consultation with our Museum Collections department—concluded that such value was minimal compared to the bulk, preservation problems, and huge resources necessary to provide reasonable access to such material.

Other Files. By reducing the amount of time and storage space the Society spends dealing with series such as case files and constituent correspondence, the acquisition staff will be in a better position to focus energy on the files of administrative and legislative assistants, and on electronic records in the Congressional offices—records of indisputable long-term historical value but which have heretofore been acquired only sporadically if at all. Congressional staff tend to view their files as personal, and to overcome this tendency the Society must take pains to highlight these records and speak specifically to the respective staff members. Electronic records in Congressional offices, as in so many other places, are rapidly evolving, and efforts to both understand these systems and to appraise the data contained in them should take precedence over arrangements for the sampling, shipping, and acquisition of hundreds of cubic feet of case and issue files. Other series the acquisition staff will be seeking to highlight with Congressional staffs are those dealing with the member’s party activities and his/her involvement with Congressional Membership Organizations.

Proposed Appraisal Policy, by Series

KEY:

S and D—Selection and Disposition; series probably needs to be appraised folder by folder.

Retain—Probably will be retained intact, except for duplicates or if inspection suggests that value is minimal.

Dispose—Normally will not be retained (and should not be sent to Society), unless inspection or information from the Congressional office indicates value sufficient to warrant S and D or sampling.

Personal/Political Papers

Appointment Books	Retain
Biographical Files	Retain
Campaign Committee Records	S and D
Chronological File (Correspondence control file)	S and D
Congressional Membership Organizations	Retain
Control File (Correspondence control file, alphabetical)	S and D
Correspondence w/other members, White House, other dignitaries	Retain
Correspondence w/family, friends, colleagues	S and D
Daily Schedules	Retain
Desk Calendars	Dispose
Diaries or Personal Journals	Retain
Financial Disclosure Reports	Retain
Invitations (accepted and rejected), unless interfiled w/appearance files	Dispose
Job Recommendations/Patronage VIP appointments, Judgeships All Others	S and D Dispose
Memorabilia, Plaques, etc.	Dispose
Party Leadership Files	S and D
Political Party Files (state and national)	S and D
Polling Data	Retain
Scrapbooks or Clippings notebooks (only articles about the Member and only if well organized, identified, and in good physical condition)	Retain
Telephone Conversations Summary reports Message slips Logs	Retain Dispose S and D
Trip File Investigative/Policy related trips Speeches, routine appearances, campaign stops	S and D Discard
VIP Correspondence (photocopies ok)	Retain

Legislative Records

Agency/Department Files (Correspondence and supporting material filed by Executive department or agency; often relate to case files)	S and D
Bill Files Bills authored/coauthored by the Congressperson All Others	Retain Dispose

Briefing Books	Retain
Committee and Subcommittee Files <i>(NB: Official committee and subcommittee records are property of the Senate or House)</i>	
Correspondence and Memos	S and D
Lists, Calendars/Agendas, Background, Minutes, Reports (those reflecting substantive activity by the member should be retained)	S and D
Congressional Record Inserts (Items inserted into the Record by the Congressperson)	Retain
Congressional Record (bound sets)	Dispose
Legislative Assistants' Files	S and D
Legislative Subject Files	S and D
Other Staff Project Files	S and D
Publications of State and Federal Agencies	Dispose
Voting Attendance Records	Retain
 <i>Constituent Service Records</i>	
Administrative Assistant's Files	S and D
Case Files	
If filed by type	S and D
If not filed by type and not microfilmed	Dispose
If microfilmed	S and D
Casework Reports and Indexes	Retain
Congrats/Condolences/Greetings (Incoming letters acknowledging members' election victory, expressing sympathy for illness; outgoing letters acknowledging valedictorians at district high schools, 100-year-old constituents, etc.)	Dispose
Grants and Projects (Federal grants to state or district organizations)	S and D
Grants and Projects Reports and Indexes	Retain
Issue Mail	
Senators: If filmed and indexed	S and D
Senators: If not filmed	Sample if feasible
Representatives	Dispose
Issue Mail Master Library or Library of Form Paragraphs (Pre-written letters or paragraphs used to answer issue mail)	Retain
Issue Mail Indexes and Reports	Retain
Letters from School Children	
Senators, if not filmed	S and D
Representatives	Dispose
Military Academy Appointment Files	Dispose, except for summary lists
Petitions	Dispose

Reference Files (Clippings and publications used for background research)	Dispose
Requests for Material (flags, passes, etc.)	Dispose

Press Relations/Media Activities Records

Constituent Mailings	Retain
Editorials written by the Congressperson	Retain
Newsletters, updates, and other mailings to constituents	Retain
Newspaper Clippings (background)	Dispose
Photographs, Slides, Negatives	
Identified events and activities	S and D
Unidentified	Dispose
Duplicates	Dispose
Press Mailing Lists	Dispose
Press Releases	Retain
Speeches	Retain final drafts
TV and Radio Files (audio and video tapes, transcripts; may include campaign spots and interviews)	S and D

Office Administration Records

Office Administrator's files	S and D
Office Operations and Procedures	
Operations Manuals	Retain
Staff Directives	S and D
Staff Meeting Minutes	Retain
Records Management Manual	Retain
Form Letters, Master Library and Cumulated Indexes	Retain
Personnel	
Personnel Manuals	Retain
Annual Lists of Staff Members	Retain
Applications	Dispose
Personnel Files	Dispose
Security Clearances	Dispose
Office Equipment (inventories, purchase orders, etc)	Dispose
Office Funds: Payroll, accounts, vouchers	Dispose
Travel	
Expenses, vouchers, etc.	Dispose
Itineraries and trip reports	S and D

Policy on First-term Representatives

Members of the U.S. House of Representatives who serve only one term are usually less historically important than those who serve several terms. Therefore, normally it will be Society policy not to seek donor contracts with

Representatives until after their first re-election. In the case of a Representative who is defeated after one term, the acquisition staff will contact his/her office after the election, and request donation of a very limited number of series: mass mailings to constituents; biographical files; VIP correspondence; speech files; press releases; well organized newspaper clippings, and in some instances selected campaign files.

Follow-up

As a courtesy to our colleagues in the SAA Congressional Papers Roundtable, these guidelines were circulated to them in the fall of 1993. The Society's Acquisitions staff has also given the retention schedule to the Administrative Assistants of all of our Senators and Representatives. The response from the Hill has been very encouraging. The two offices (one Senate, one House) which will be closing at the end of this year expressed great pleasure in having a clear set of guidelines to help them as they begin packing. The schedules have, of course, engendered questions, which has enabled us to speak in more detail to the staffs. The Senate office, while not quarreling with our assessment of plaques and memorabilia, did express frustration that we had not come up with alternative disposition. The only instance in which an office has questioned our appraisal guidelines has been to express doubt that even microfilm of case files should be preserved because of privacy concerns.

Conclusion

At the Minnesota Historical Society the papers of Congresspeople would comprise fully one-third of the manuscript collection, if not for the anomaly of the massive records of the Great Northern and Northern Pacific railroads.¹⁵ If one adds to this the Vice Presidential papers of Hubert Humphrey and Walter Mondale, and the papers of state senators and representatives, and of governors, then close to half the (non-railroad) manuscript collections are comprised of the papers of elected officials. Without disputing the importance of these people to the history of Minnesota, it is surely debatable whether their importance is equivalent to the space and other resources they have traditionally occupied in the repository. As one of our committee members asked: "Do we really need 116 feet of material to document Congressman Tom Hagedorn's 8 years in office when we keep 110 feet for nearly 70 years of the St. Paul Area United Way?"¹⁶ For the Society to have the ability to aggressively document communities of color, major Minnesota industries, women's groups, and all the other aspects of Minnesota history it wishes to see adequately represented in the manuscript collections, it is necessary to revise the traditional "take anything" approach to Congressional papers.

Too often in the discussions of documentation strategy the implicit assumption is made that there is an objective answer to the question, "what is an adequate record of X?" To document Congress (or an individual Congressperson, or even a state's delegation) "adequately" can mean: 1) if this is all we are worried about documenting, what functions and what level of detail should we preserve; or 2) if this is one of many things we want to document as part of a larger whole, what is the minimum necessary to do that job. The appraisal criteria

developed at the Minnesota Historical Society sits somewhere between maximum possible and minimum necessary; committee members advocating for researchers argued for preserving more, while other members (including the author of this article) argued for preserving less. But the guidelines are a serious attempt to grapple with the realities of limited space, important collections, and competing priorities.

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NOTES

1. Karen Dawley Paul, project director, *The Documentation of Congress* (Washington: Historical Office, U.S. Senate, 1992), p. iii.
2. *The Documentation of Congress*, iii-16.
3. Roger H. Davidson, "The Study of Congress," *Understanding Congress: Research Perspectives*, Roger H. Davidson and Richard C. Sachs, eds. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1991), 10-11.
4. Patricia Aronsson, "Appraisal of Twentieth-Century Congressional Collections," *Archival Choices*, ed. by Nancy Peace (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1984), 82-83.
5. *Documentation of Congress*, p. 3.
6. The Committee consisted of
 - James Fogerty, Acquisitions and Curatorial (chair)
 - Todd Daniels-Howell, Acquisitions and Curatorial
 - Mark Greene, Acquisitions and Curatorial
 - Dallas Lindgren, Reference
 - Lydia Lucas, Processing
 - Kathy Marquis, Reference
 - Dennis Meissner, Processing
 - Deborah Miller, Research and Publications
 - Duane Swanson, State Archives
7. In addition to those already cited, see Richard A. Baker, editor, *Proceedings of the Conference on Research Use and Disposition of Senators' Papers* (Washington: Historical Office, U.S. Senate, 1978); Frank Mackaman, editor, *Congressional Papers Project Report* (Washington: National Publications and Records Commission, 1986); Todd J. Daniels-Howell, "Appraisal of Congressional Papers," unpublished paper presented at the May 1991 Midwest Archives Conference; Eleanor McKay, "Random Sampling Techniques: A Method of Reducing Large, Homogeneous Series in Congressional Papers," *American Archivist* 41 (July 1978), 281-88; Lydia Lucas, "Managing Congressional Papers: A Repository View," *American Archivist* 41 (July 1978), 275-280.
8. Karen Dawley Paul, *Records Management Handbook for United States Senators and Their Repositories* (Washington: Historical Office, U.S. Senate, 1991). For example, despite their extreme bulk and high degree of repetitiveness, Clippings, Photographs/Slides/Negatives, and TV and Radio Files are designated by the *Handbook* as permanent records. A thoughtful selection or sample of these materials will, to my mind, serve the needs of virtually all researchers. Another example: the *Handbook* designates "Party Leadership Files" as permanent, even though for most Senators these files will contain mostly circular memos and reports better preserved in the papers of the Senate leaders themselves.
9. "Recommended Disposition: Papers of Members of U.S. House of Representatives," (1993) unpublished handout available from the Office of the Historian, U.S. House of Representatives.

10. We benefited in particular from discussions with, or papers by, Richard Pifer (State Historical Society of Wisconsin), Herb Hartsook (University of South Carolina), Rebecca Johnson (University of Delaware), Karen Paul (Senate Historian's Office), Cynthia Pease Miller (Office of the House Historian).
11. Aronsson, 83.
12. Mackaman, 158.
13. *Documentation of Congress*, p. 138.
14. *Documentation of Congress*, p. 42.
15. The manuscript collection as a whole is 37,000 cubic feet. Of the whole, the railroad records are fully 15,000 cubic feet, and therefore greatly skew most analyses of the MHS collections.
16. Daniels-Howell, p. 7.

