PUBLICATION REVIEWS

Introduction to Archival Organization and Description: Access to Cultural Heritage, <http://www.schistory.org/getty/index.html>. By Michael J. Fox and Peter L. Wilkerson, South Carolina Historical Society, 1998.

Calling itself "the archivist's primer," this site introduces the user to the basic principles of organizing and describing personal papers and organizational records. The site focuses on processing collections as a means of creating physical and intellectual control over archival materials. Most importantly, it examines how archival principles are put into practice through numerous examples, and includes a tutorial that guides the reader through the decision-making process in an over-the-shoulder look at an archivist at work.

The audience for this site is broad and inclusive. Potential users are identified as archivists; laypeople; researchers; beginning archival students; novices in the field; and administrators who must hire, supervise, and evaluate archival activities and staff members.

The site is divided into six "chapters": "Theory," "Practice," "Standards," "Workflow," "The Future," and "Resources." Each chapter is further divided into subsections. Each chapter and subsection may be immediately accessed from the table of contents page or the menu bar. The site designers have done their jobs well and note that readers can access the material in a number of ways. For example, some readers may prefer to read through the site as if it were a book, while others may just want the information in the resource directory. The chapters are described below.

"Theory" This chapter defines the term "documentation" as a process and product, and examines the reasons documentation is necessary. It further looks at the nature of archival information, stressing that materials are created in the natural course of human activity and that the context in which they were created is essential to understanding their content. Finally, the chapter discusses the principles of *respect des fonds* (provenance) and original order.

"Practice" This is the heart of the Web site. In this chapter, the reader learns how the characteristics of archival materials shape practice; what information is collected when assembling documentation; and how description conveys information to users. The chapter also covers various descriptive tools and archival information systems.

The chapter begins with a chart that pairs the characteristics of archival material with appropriate archival practices. Each set is then discussed, giving excellent examples and rationales for the archival practice followed. Assembling information to create documentation is next covered in some depth and addresses provenance; order and organization of documents; physical extent and condition; scope and contents of the materials; and administrative matters. The authors also include information about analyzing the collection for internal information and context, and compiling information from external sources.

The next section deals with the two most common forms of descriptive tools, cataloging records and inventories/registers, and includes examples of both. The section on cataloging records is a bit too succinct for this reviewer, and could be made more useful by including a second version of the sample cataloging record with MARC tags in place. The section also mentions that the *National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections (NUCMC)* is available in published volumes; this needs to be updated to include *NUCMC* on-line information. Also, there is no mention anywhere on the site about the use of MARC Mixed Materials format for cataloging archival collections. The bibliography cites MARC AMC format, which became obsolete when MARC-integrated format was introduced; this needs to be updated as well.

The section on inventories and registers discusses the parts of these finding aids and the relationship to the physical and intellectual content and arrangement of the collection. There is also a four-page register included as an example. Further, there is an excellent chart that lays out the finding-aid component, the type of information that must be gathered or analyzed to create that component, and links to examples in the catalog record and inventory.

The chapter ends with a discussion about on-line cataloging records and inventories/registers. The authors recognize that some repositories maintain manual card files, while noting that many archival institutions have moved into MARC cataloging and contribute to OCLC or RLIN. They next discuss the electronic creation and delivery of inventories, including Encoded Archival Description (EAD) and the use of hyperlinks to connect cataloging records and inventories. This section could be made more immediately useful to readers by providing links to examples of MARC cataloging records and to examples of hyperlinked cataloging records and inventories.

"Standards" Beginning with a solid discussion of why standards exist, why they should be used, and the costs of both choosing to use and not use them, the chapter first looks at data structure, value, content, and interchange standards. The next section, descriptive standards for catalog records, outlines the major data content, value, and interchange standards used in the United States and Canada. It includes *Archives, Personal Papers and Manuscripts (APPM); Anglo-American Cataloging Rules,* 2nd edition *(AACR2); Rules for Archival Description (RAD); Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH); Art & Architecture Thesaurus (AAT); Library of Congress Name Authority File (NAF);* and the *USMARC Format for Bibliographic Data*, among others. The chapter concludes with an examination of data content, value, and interchange values for inventories and registers, and discusses RAD, EAD, and Standard Generalized Markup Language (SGML). There is also a link to the Library of Congress EAD site to aid readers who want more specific information.

"Workflow" In this section, the reader is taken through the three main activities that must be done to make a collection useable: gathering and analyzing information about the collection; organizing and arranging the collection; and creating finding aids for the collection. For each activity the reader is guided step-by-step through the information needed, where to find it, and questions to be asked along the way.

A tutorial follows the workflow section and pulls together everything the reader has just read in a highly practical and understandable way. The tutorial takes the reader through a detailed sequence describing what the archivist must think and do at every

step, the questions the archivist must ask, and where he or she finds the answers. Each step is laid out in two columns. The first column outlines the step to be taken, further defines it if necessary, and where appropriate, has a link back to a review overview of the step. The second larger column describes what the archivist is doing and thinking at each stage.

The tutorial is impressive in that it shows how an archivist must jump back and forth among the many steps in processing a collection and how the archivist uses information found in the collection itself. It includes excellent examples of decision making and details the complex relationship between creating physical and creating intellectual control for a collection. The tutorial would have been even more useful to this reviewer if it included a complete register or collection guide and a cataloging record in MARC format.

"The Future" This short chapter sums up where archival methods and descriptive tools could be going in the future. The authors discuss the impact of technology on the evolution of cataloging records and inventories/registers, suggesting that these two currently distinct tools may merge in the future, offering the user a finding aid that focuses on content and not on format.

"Resources" The final chapter is divided into a bibliography of "Further Reading" and "Tools and Technical Resources"; a list of acronyms; a glossary; and Web resources. The Web resources section covers organizations; information on further training and education; examples of various on-line projects for EAD and multilevel archival descriptions; and sites of general interest. The authors have taken full advantage of their digital environment by providing links in all of the above areas to internal pages with more information or examples, or to another organizational Web site.

Overall, this is a highly informative and useful site for its intended audience. It loads quickly, is easy to navigate, and has an abundance of links to take the reader forward to a more detailed explanation or back for a review, or to another Web site for examples or in-depth information. If the reader prints the site to use for in-house reference, there are headers and footers on each page that make it easy to compile the pages like a book.

Readers will take away from a visit to this site an excellent idea of what it takes to process a collection. The text often includes a description of an everyday activity that parallels an archival activity to help the reader better understand its purpose and reason. Examples throughout are well chosen and real; experienced archivists will recognize them all. The text is clear and straightforward, and reflects the practical approach the authors have taken to a complex subject. When archival jargon is used, it is immediately explained so novices are not left at a loss.

Further, the authors show clearly the relationship between the physical and intellectual ordering of a collection, and how processing is most definitely an art and not a science. They also clearly lay out the relationship between the inventory/register and the cataloging record, and they recognize that not every archives is on-line yet. And, they discuss with authority the impact of technology on archival tools and practices.

Most importantly, this site manages to convey in an orderly fashion the multileveled, highly complex, and often chaotic process of bringing physical and intellectual order to a collection. This reviewer has made the site required reading for her archival assistants to introduce them to the art of processing collections.

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Preservation of Library & Archival Materials: A Manual, 3rd Edition. Ed. Sherelyn Ogden. Northeast Document Conservation Center (NEDCC), Andover, Massachusetts, 1999. $50.00. 412 pp. Illustrations and bibliography. Cloth cover. Available from Northeast Document Conservation Center, 100 Brickstone Square, Andover, MA 01810-1494. Also available on-line at <http://www.nedcc.org/plam3/manhome.htm>.

One of the most challenging activities that archivists engage in is the proper care of the collections for which they are responsible. The majority of archivists have little or no training in conservation, yet they must deal with the differing preservation needs of a wide variety of media formats on a daily basis. *Preservation of Library & Archival Materials: A Manual* was developed by the staff of the Northeast Document Conservation Center to "provide the basic, practical information needed to enable non-conservator staff of libraries and archives to plan and implement sound collections care programs or to incorporate preservation principles into existing collections care programs." Now in its third incarnation, this manual should be a crucial component of every archivist's library.

One of the unique features of this manual is that it is available in both hard copy and on the Internet in electronic form. In fact, the hard copy is a print version of the electronic copy, capturing its contents at a specific time. The electronic version of the manual is the most current one because it is constantly updated to reflect changing opinions and new information. The hard copy can stand alone and be extremely useful by itself. However, it is better to use it in conjunction with the electronic copy so that all of the available information associated with preservation is accessible. The electronic version of the manual can be used in two different ways. Archivists can directly access the Web site and then read the manual on-line. They can also access the Web site and download the entire manual into an Adobe Acrobat file for printing. It is also possible to download and print specific sections of the manual.

The manual is divided into six sections covering critical elements of the conservation process. They include "Planning & Prioritizing," "The Environment," "Emergency Management," "Storage & Handling," "Reformatting," and "Conservation Procedures." Each section contains a number of technical leaflets concerning specific issues and containing practical information on how to deal with those issues. Every leaflet from the first two editions has been updated to reflect new information. Additionally, a number of new leaflets were added that deal with issues such as digital technology, choosing a fire prevention system, preservation assessment and planning, and collections security. This review will briefly cover each section of the manual and discuss some of the new leaflets.

The first section deals with planning and prioritizing. This is, perhaps, the most important section of the entire manual. It underscores the importance of making preservation a component of an institution's overall collection policy. When preservation is viewed as part of the ongoing activities of archives, rather than as a last-ditch effort to save damaged or deteriorating materials, then all of the materials in archival collections are more likely to be available to future generations. It also highlights the importance of developing a preservation plan and gives practical guidelines for doing so.

This group of leaflets is a "must read" for all archival professionals no matter what their responsibilities may be.

The second section discusses the impact that the environment has on the long-term preservation of collections. Technical leaflets cover topics such as relative humidity, light damage, HVAC systems, air quality, and temperature. They provide simple, effective solutions that almost all archives can implement to limit the damage that the environment inflicts on collections. They underscore the importance of understanding the impact environmental changes have on archival collections and they stress the importance of establishing effective monitoring so that archivists can know which environmental elements to focus their attention on. Does institutional focus need to be on stabilizing relative humidity and temperature? Or does the focus need to be on controlling light damage to collections? Technical leaflets on the proper installation and use of HVAC systems and properly displaying archival items discuss possible approaches archivists can take to answering these questions.

The third section covers emergency management. The best way to deal with threats to collections, such as water or fire damage, biological agents, and theft, is to be prepared for them. Each institution should have "a systematically organized, formally written plan" for mobilizing efforts to deal with emergency situations. Each staff member should read and understand the plan and his/her role in implementing it. Especially useful for non-conservator staff of archival institutions is the disaster plan checklist provided as part of the manual that allows staff to check off the items needed in a successful disaster plan. This section also provides handy guides on how to deal with a number of different media when they suffer water damage. New to this section is a discussion of how to select the proper fire suppression system for your repository. This new leaflet identifies the many different types of fire suppression systems available and highlights their strengths and weaknesses for use in archival and museum repositories. This is an important guide for making critical decisions about the type of fire suppression system to be used in your archival repository.

The fourth section deals with storage and handling. Both the staff of archival repositories and the patrons of those repositories should read this section. Storage and handling are discussed in terms of individual media types. Practical suggestions include that books should be held upright on shelves; documents and manuscripts should be stored in archival-quality document boxes; oversize materials should be stored flat; and pamphlets can be stored in boxes or folders. This section also provides a handy guide for determining what the best storage furniture is and how it should be used. Another important feature of this section is the simple, concise instructions on how to make storage enclosures such as book shoes and book jackets.

Section five examines the often perplexing issue of reformatting. It discusses the available types of reformatting and their strengths and weaknesses. Of special note are the two new technical leaflets dealing with digitization. The first leaflet discusses digital technologies from the perspective of communication and coding. It then examines the key components of digital imaging systems and how digital imaging works. Finally, it engages some of the questions that archivists and librarians need to consider before making digitization part of their work process. The second leaflet examines preservation in the context of a digital world and attempts to provide a framework for

understanding how preservation fits into that world. These two leaflets provide a powerful introduction to preservation and digitization issues.

The final section discusses important conservation procedures that all archivists should understand or know how to perform. The section opens with a discussion of library binding and what non-conservator staff need to understand when they choose materials to be rebound and companies to do that rebinding. The rest of the section focuses on simple conservation procedures that all archivists should be able to perform. Topics include surface cleaning of paper; repairing paper artifacts; matting and hinging; encapsulation using double-sided tape; and humidification to relax and flatten items. These leaflets do not just explain how to do these procedures, they also indicate when it would be better to let a professional conservator perform the procedure. The simple, yet effective illustrations make this section one of the easiest to follow.

This otherwise excellent manual is marred by the lack of a comprehensive index. The introduction explains that an index was not included in order to keep costs down and because a search engine is available to use with the electronic version. The fact that the electronic version has an accompanying search engine is very useful, however, it is of no use when Internet access is unavailable. There is also another problem with the search engine: It does not search just the electronic version of the manual; rather, it searches the entire Northeast Document Conservation Center (NEDCC) Web site. Even when the search criteria are extremely specific, the user has to wade through a number of extraneous hits. It is critical that users know the URL for the preservation manual if they want to be able to determine which of the hits actually come from the manual itself and not from elsewhere in NEDCC's Web site.

In spite of the lack of an index, this manual is an excellent introductory guide to conservation issues and how archival repositories can deal with those issues. It enables all archival personnel to ensure that their collections are properly cared for and it allows them to answer "How do I . . .?" type preservation questions from the general public by referring them to the manual. Not only should every archivist have a copy of this delightful manual in his/her personal library, every archival institution should also own a copy.

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Human Response to Library Technology. Ed. Janice J. Kirkland and Michael Gorman. *Library Trends* 47:4. Champaign, Illinois, 1999. $18.50. 225 pp. Index for volume 47. Paper bound. Available from University of Illinois Press, Journals Department, 1325 S. Oak Street, Champaign, IL 61820-6903.

When was the last time you *really* thought about technology? Not about how we can build new tools or resources or how we have to deal with electronic records, but about how the explosion of information and the ubiquity of computers affect our patrons, our workplace, and, ultimately, the society that we strive to document. The spring 1999 issue of *Library Trends*, "Human Response to Library Technology," attempts to examine the broad impacts of technological development. The result is an uneven collection of 11 articles, many of which are relevant to archives and archivists.

Kirkland and Gorman sum up their introduction to the issue by writing:

> In short, there is a continuing need to examine frequently how technology in libraries is affecting human beings, how it affects the surviving work of persons now gone who contributed to the record of civilization, and how it affects persons now living who are the record's caretakers.

Their introduction sets the tone for the journal, arguing that the ever increasing focus on technology in the library profession takes librarians away from the traditional services librarians have provided, such as subject expertise and public services. Thus, they draw a dichotomy between the technological and human aspects of libraries, generally affirming the latter and treating the former with skepticism. While, ultimately, this is a false dichotomy, the journal breathes fresh air into a professional discourse that often takes technological development for granted without asking fundamental questions about its effects on our users, on our profession, and even on society in general.

Library Trends is a quarterly journal that routinely devotes its pages to specific professional themes. In 1989, the journal addressed the theme of human response to library technology. In revisiting the topic 10 years later, the issue includes articles addressing faculty use of library resources; the impact of new technologies on gender equity in the profession; the management of Listservs; the use of retreats to mediate change; and support staff perceptions to automation. Many of the articles are applicable to all library settings, but the overall perspective of the issue caters to academic libraries. While the journal is primarily focused on the affairs of libraries, the concerns of many of the articles overlap with the archival profession as well. Themes of particular interest to archives include users' perceptions, management issues, and the authority of electronic sources.

One article specifically addresses archival issues. David Zeidberg's "The Archival View of Technology: Resources for the Scholar of the Future" articulates many of the problems relating to primary sources in digital formats. He points out that, while there are some benefits to having materials in electronic form (full-text searching and potential for distributed access chief among them), they do not liberate us from our traditional duties. We still must collect materials, provide contextual information, and help

researchers find and use the sources. Furthermore, the relative fragility of electronic media makes it necessary to engage in caring for records earlier in their life cycle and to continue to migrate them as platforms change or become obsolete. Zeidberg's article provides a good overview of the problems of electronic records, and one that is appropriate in its presumed intention of introducing these ideas into the field of librarianship. But none of his ideas are new and archivists even loosely familiar with the electronic records discourse carried out in archival journals and conferences over the past decade will not learn much from this article.

Since many archivists recognize academicians as the core constituency of their programs, two articles reporting on similar studies that gauged faculty use of library resources potentially have great value to our field. Virginia Massey-Burzio, studying faculty in the humanities, notes that many professors do not easily find out about new electronic resources, nor do they seamlessly make transitions to new interfaces or care much for learning new technology unless it is uncomplicated. Wendy M. Starkweather and Camille Clark Wallin echo some of these sentiments in their broader study of faculty across disciplines. In particular, they find that libraries have failed to do a good enough job publicizing their resources. Each article concludes that librarians need to proactively engage with faculty in order to provide them both information as to what is available through library services and instruction in using library technology. Each article's chief benefit for archivists is the report of faculty research tendencies. A major drawback is that the authors of both articles seem as interested in reporting the process of their research as they do the results and conclusions of their study. This makes for dry reading for those not fascinated by the intricacies of social science research methodology.

Archivists will find many pertinent management issues discussed in several of the journal's articles. The strongest among these is Laverna M. Saunders's "The Human Element in the Virtual Library." Saunders begins by giving an excellent report on the development of the virtual library and then proceeds to examine the impact of this development on the staff and patrons of libraries. She argues that, while technological innovations have allowed libraries to make great strides in increasing access to materials, there have been drawbacks to the centralization of technology in library work. As one of many examples, she notes that many librarians have experienced increased workloads as new types of work have been added to more traditional duties that remain a priority. Saunders's article represents the journal at its best; it carefully and realistically weighs both sides of the technology-humanity dichotomy and asserts that librarians are in an excellent position to evaluate both benefits and drawbacks of new technologies and to make appropriate decisions accordingly.

Many authors address a final theme, of great import to archivists, maintaining that research materials mounted on-line lack the authority of physical records. The historian Gertrude Himmelfarb makes this case most bluntly in a reprint of her essay, "Revolution in the Library." She lauds "democratization of access" to information, but decries the "democratization of knowledge" and the lack of authority in cyberspace. Himmelfarb writes, "In cyberspace, every source seems as authoritative as every other. . . . The Internet is an equal opportunity resource; it recognizes no rank or status or privilege. In that democratic universe, all sources, all ideas, all theories seem equally

valid and pertinent." After drawing a parallel between the information revolution and the postmodern intellectual revolution (which she treats even more harshly), she posits that critical thought and analysis of texts cannot be accomplished on computer screens, that students and intellectuals alike need the physicality of a given text "in our hands, for that is the only way of getting it into our minds and our hearts." Himmelfarb's piece is truly challenging and provocative because it runs counter to the assumptions made behind the myriad digitization projects and other technological developments currently under way throughout the archives field. Although her position is fundamentally and irritatingly elitist, we have a responsibility to listen to and acknowledge her critique and devise methods, in both a technological sense and a public relations sense, to assure the authority of those materials we choose to make available on-line.

As a whole, the articles in the spring 1999 issue of *Library Trends* portray the role of technology in libraries as a series of choices, not as givens. Most authors believe that choices to employ technology should be rooted in core principles of librarianship and should not be governed by commerce or pressures to be "cutting edge." Archives, in one key arena, do not have such choices, however. While libraries can choose how to apportion resources between traditional materials and systems development, archivists are faced with a present where key information is created only electronically and with a future that promises an increasing amount of this type of documentation. As a profession, we need to embrace technological solutions because many of our current and future troubles are technological problems.

But "Human Response to Library Technology" does provide a coherent voice that cautions librarians not to lose sight of traditional functions in order to develop technology for the sake of technology. Archivists can benefit by considering this voice through a selective reading of the journal, especially the writings of Kirkland and Gorman, Himmelfarb, and Saunders.

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Basic Book Repair Methods. By Abraham A. Schechter. Englewood, Colorado: Libraries Unlimited, 1999. $36.00. 102 pp. Fifty-three black and white photographs, four appendices, index, and bibliography. Paper bound. Available from Libraries Unlimited, P.O. Box 6633, Englewood, CO 80155.

Basic Book Repair Methods fills a void in the literature on paper conservation and book repair, in particular. It was written as a manual to be used by anyone who is faced with the ever-growing backlog of books and documents in need of repair, either from damage or just normal physical handling over time—and that is just about all libraries today and most book collectors. Other books on the subject of conservation, preservation, and book repair offer some of the same advice and more, in much greater detail. Many of these works, such as Carolyn Clark Morrow's *Conservation Treatment Procedures,* are listed in the manual's appendix, but this manual distills the information on conservation today to the essential steps one can take without a great deal of time, money, and staff to repair books. Small libraries with limited staff and budget resources will find the manual especially useful, but large libraries with existing conservation and book repair facilities that are already doing the things described in Schechter's book can still make use of it as a training manual. Even individuals involved as their family or organization's "preservationist" can make good use of this inexpensive tool to help them make their collections last longer.

The book's arrangement is very helpful and will aid the reader in quickly finding the procedure needed. Each chapter describes a different technique in step-by-step fashion. At the end of the chapter, Schechter gives his "postscriptum," not a summary, but a couple of helpful hints to remember when applying the particular technique described. At the end of the book are four appendices, a wheat starch paste recipe, a list of suppliers, a bibliography, and a glossary. An index is also included, although the layout of the book almost makes it unnecessary. There are also some blank pages listed as "Reader's Notes," each with a chapter heading.

Eight subjects are covered: cleaning paper, mending paper, book hinge tightening, repairing interior hinges, hinging-in pages, case and textblock attachment, cloth rebacking, and retitling. The first two chapters, "Cleaning Paper" and "Mending Paper," describe common techniques and when it is appropriate to use them, such as using opaline bags for gentle cleaning and erasers for smaller areas of higher strength paper, as well as when tape should be used instead of glues. This sort of information is common knowledge in the archival community, but not among the general public from which many book repair staff will come.

Later chapters cover areas that are more involved and seldom performed outside of library book repair departments. They are not, as the book shows, hard to learn. In fact, the numerous black and white photographs illustrate each technique. Frequent reference to the illustrations as one follows along the text with supplies at hand is how the book is best used (it would have been even better had the book been spiral bound). "Case and Textblock Attachment" and "Cloth Rebacking" are good examples. One of the most common problems with frequently used books is that the spine becomes detached or the whole textblock comes loose from the case. Schechter's approach to each procedure demystifies them for the average reader with no experience in book repair.

Each process is broken down into various tasks, such as preparing the endpapers and cloth backing, shaping the backing so that it is neither too loose nor too tight for proper opening of the book, and trimming these parts accurately. The postscriptum for "Case Textblock Attachment" notes that, "As lengthy as the process may appear . . . the repair can be completed in less than 30 minutes." Batching the books is, as the author notes, the most efficient way to approach book repair. Several cloth backing strips are cut and shaped to each book, then the next step is applied to those same books in assembly-line style. Schechter gives one note of caution for the uninitiated: Try these methods on expendable, noncollection books first.

Basic Book Repair Methods is an important addition to any library; serious readers will appreciate its usefulness. Our resident book repair specialist has a copy she uses for reference and finds it a great backup tool. Advantages of this book, as the preface points out, are that it can save the user money over commercial binderies, insure that archival quality materials are used, and keep the materials in-house—all important selling points for the archivist. Book and paper repair is not that difficult to learn. It just takes practice, and use of Schechter's manual is sure to help.

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