Review Essay

Fundamentally Speaking: The Third Version, A Review of the Archival Fundamentals Series II

Terry Eastwood

Understanding Archives and Manuscripts
By James M. O'Toole and Richard Cox. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2006. xvii, 237 pp. Illustrations, appendices, and index. ISBN 1-931666-20-2.

Selecting and Appraising Archives and Manuscripts
By Frank Boles. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005. xviii, 192 pp. Illustrations, appendices, and index. ISBN 1-931666-11-3.

Arranging and Describing Archives and Manuscripts
By Kathleen D. Roe. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005. xv, 180 pp. Illustrations, appendices, and index. ISBN 1-931666-13-X.

Providing Reference Services for Archives and Manuscripts
By Mary Jo Pugh. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005. xvi, 368 pp. Illustrations, appendices, and index. ISBN 1-931666-12-1.

Managing Archival and Manuscript Repositories
By Michael J. Kurtz. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2004. xvi, 255 pp. Illustrations and index. ISBN 1-931666-09-1.

A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology
By Richard Pearce Moses. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005. xxx, 433 pp. ISBN 1-931666-14-8.

All available from the Society of American Archivists, $35.00 members, $49.00 nonmembers.

Archivists in the United States have for thirty years engaged in a singular exercise to frame their fundamental knowledge. The six volumes of the Archival Fundamentals Series II published in 2004 to 2006 under review here follow the Basic Manual Series of the late 1970s and early 1980s and the first Archival Fundamentals Series of the early 1990s.[1] Over the same period, no other archival community and no other publisher took up this task, so my questions are: why have American archivists done so, and how well do these new works succeed in framing archival fundamentals?

The origin of the effort to produce general works on archival theory, methods, and practice goes back to the establishment of an ad hoc committee of the Society of American Archivists in 1973 to determine the need for publications beyond the society's journal and newsletter. As then SAA president Robert Warner put it in the foreword to the Basic Manual Series in 1977, "the committee concluded that a real need would be met by the development and publication of manuals relating to major and basic archival functions." As the word *manual* suggests, the aim was to produce instructive practical texts on these basic functions, about which at that time most archivists learned mainly on the job or through their own professional development efforts. As the series editor, Mary Jo Pugh, noted in the preface to the first Archival Fundamentals Series, it was intended for a general audience and set out "to discuss the theoretical principles that underlie archival practice, the functions and activities that are common within the archival profession, and the techniques that represent the best of current practice. . . . This series," she also said, "has particular value for newcomers to the profession, including students, who wish to have a broad view of archival work and an in-depth treatment of its major components." She also hoped that the series would be "a benchmark in the archival literature for many years to come," an idea repeated by Richard Cox in his preface to this latest series.

This same need has existed in other countries the world over, but no other archival community has launched, let alone sustained, such an extensive effort to characterize the fundamental ideas, methods, and practices of the profession, the much briefer treatment of fundamentals in the two editions of the Australian *Keeping Archives* being the only possible exception. This unparalleled thrust of SAA is best seen as but one of its many efforts to provide its members with professional development opportunities. It is easy to see in retrospect how, before the growth of graduate archival education programs, the spirit of self-help so characteristic of the American archival community seized on this way to improve practitioners' grasp of fundamentals. Even now, one may suppose,

[1] I reviewed the first fundamentals series in "From Practice to Theory: Fundamentals U.S. Style," *Archivaria* 39 (Spring 1995): 137–50. As I understand, it was this review that prompted the editor to ask me to review the new series.

the need is still there, for the recent census of archivists done by SAA shows that only 35 percent of the respondents to its survey questionnaire have a university graduate archival education of some kind, although the percentage for the cadre aged twenty-five to thirty-four is about twice as high, so the original need may be diminishing. In any event, the effort has grown from one striving to package practical knowledge to one comprising broader and, in Cox's words, "more open-ended" works "reflecting evolving viewpoints about archival theory and practice." In keeping with the times, this effort has itself evolved into something like a series of basic textbooks on archival knowledge. One may suppose that archivists and students of archives the world over will benefit from this truly remarkable effort to frame archival fundamentals, for it is no mean feat to characterize the profession's intellectual basis, all the more so, as Cox notes, because the literature has grown considerably broader and deeper in recent years (in blurblike prose he calls it "a vast sea of new titles").

The parallel of this effort with the growth of graduate archival education is noteworthy. The past thirty years has seen the arrival of archival knowledge on the academic scene, the steady improvement of pre-appointment education, and the fostering of a research dimension of the profession. As well, there is no doubt of the intellectual maturation of the field in the United States (and elsewhere) over this same period, not solely because of archival education to be sure. This intellectual maturation has certainly benefited the exercise to elucidate fundamentals, but it also creates a problem for the authors. For whom are they writing: the novice, the academic student, or the experienced archivist already literate in the fundamentals, all of whom, one gets the idea, may take shelter under Pugh's umbrella term "the general reader"?

The first Archival Fundamentals Series still had the appearance of a series of manuals. This new series comes in attractive paperback volumes that have the appearance of scholarly monographs. The authors provide guidance to further reading in various forms of bibliography and in citations to relevant native and foreign works in English on the subject. Scholarly archival discourse in English-speaking countries rarely takes account of literature in other languages, it would appear. All the volumes are well organized, and have illustrations and appendices. The editing is commendably thorough.

There is no change in the subjects of the volumes from the first to the second series. The O'Toole and Cox work provides an introduction to the field, and the other volumes treat the major professional functions archivists perform. A seventh and final volume on preserving archives is forthcoming. Although O'Toole and Cox touch on the origins of archival material in the activities of organizations and individuals, this second edition of the series still lacks a volume on the activities of making, organizing, using, keeping, and disposing of records, which comprise knowledge fundamental to the archivist. This lack is not unusual, for a quick survey of graduate archival education programs in the

country with five or more courses reveals that a minority of them have a course dedicated to this knowledge. O'Toole and Cox (pp. 92–97) do make the argument for the archivist's need of "knowledge of records," but they do so mainly from the point of view that "archivists become scholars of records and record-keeping systems" through their work with them in the historical repository. The rift between the archival and records management professions is no good reason to insulate archivists from mastering knowledge of these records activities; all the more so, it is widely recognized, in the case of digital records. In many settings, archives and records services are delivered by a single, unified unit of administration. Knowledge of how records are generated, organized, used in current affairs, and managed by their creators supports archivists' work in all the functions they perform. A text on this subject of archival knowledge, written from the broad sensibility that O'Toole and Cox are eager to encourage learners to take, would be a wonderful and much-needed addition to the series should it make it to a third edition. In my experience, teachers of records management in archival studies programs invariably lament the lack of a suitable fundamental text on the subject written with the needs of their students in mind. The first step is to recognize this knowledge as fundamental to the archivist.

Defining Fundamental Concepts

In assessing the series, it is useful to begin with the glossary, for a discipline's terminology is fundamental to intelligent discussion of all of its subjects. As Geof Huth says in his elegant and insightful review in the spring/summer 2006 issue of this journal, to which it is difficult to add, Richard Pearce-Moses's work of over 400 pages is "a remarkable piece of scholarship. . .with graceful definitions that cover the entire universe of archives" and that "will fill an honored and utilitarian space on any archivist's shelf for years to come." To my knowledge, this glossary is the most extensive and most cogently assembled archival glossary yet to appear anywhere in the world. The author—this is the right term, for Pearce-Moses is much more than a compiler, as Huth says, a lexicographer in fact—has given his work a didactic twist in notes that further explain the origins, context, or other details about terms, and has dug out from the literature quotations, many of them quite extensive, to give the reader a fuller sense of the meaning of the term. For nuanced terms and terms with varying meaning in different disciplines, the notes can run to several paragraphs and the quotations illustrate the shadings given to meanings by writers in the archival and other fields. For example, the entry for *authenticity* has a note of four paragraphs and nine quotations, the sources of which are traceable through a brief citation and a bibliography at the end of the work, and runs to almost two pages in total. To top it off, Pearce-Moses has done an enormous amount of work to characterize the relationships among terms by listing for each term relevant broader, narrower,

or related terms, synonyms, and terms distinguished from the one in question. He has also usefully included terms from other disciplines such as information science, computer science, and law when the term has a different meaning in these other disciplines.

All in all, Pearce-Moses's work is a monumental piece of scholarship, but he does not want us to merely admire it. He quotes Sidney Landau: "Not the least value of lexicography is that one learns to be humble about one's own knowledge of the language;" (p. xxix) and then later on invites us to offer him comments and suggestions to improve the next edition. We may pay him no greater tribute than to do just that whenever we note some need for emendation. I might give one example of the need, or so I think, to illustrate just how difficult and demanding is the exercise that no doubt kept Pearce-Moses's brain whirring. My chosen term is *evidential value*, which the glossary defines as:

> **evidential value**, n. ~ 1. The quality of records that provides information about the origins, functions, and activities of the creator. 2. Law. The importance or usefulness of something to prove or disprove a fact.

Pearce-Moses cites the apposite passage from the work in which Theodore Schellenberg coined the term and explained its meaning. It is fair to say that *evidential value* is a term of American archival science that has been adopted widely. Yet its meaning is elusive, and therefore often misunderstood, not a little because Schellenberg was not unfailingly clear in his explanation. In the passage Pearce-Moses chooses to help us understand the term, Schellenberg speaks of evidential value as attaching to "evidence" that records contain of "the organization and functioning" of the body that produced them. The passage concludes with this somewhat enigmatic sentence: "The quality of the evidence *per se* is thus not the issue here, but the character of the matter evidenced." A little later on, in a passage giving Schellenberg's reasons for the test of evidential value that Pearce-Moses understandably does not quote, we get a fuller idea of what he was driving at. I would like to quote it in full. All italics are mine.

> An accountable government should certainly preserve some minimum of *evidence* on how it was organized and how it functioned, in all its numerous and complex parts. All archivists assume that the minimum record to be kept is the record of organization and functioning and that beyond this minimum values become more debateable. By a judicious selection of various groups and series an archivist can capture in a relatively small body of records all significant *facts* on an agency's existence—its patterns of action, its policies in dealing with all classes of matters, its procedures, its gross achievement.
>
> Records containing such facts are indispensable to the government itself and to students of government. For the government they are a storehouse of administrative wisdom and experience. They are needed to give consistency and continuity to its actions. They contain precedents for policies, procedures,

> and the like, and can be used as a guide to public administrators in solving problems of the present that are similar to others dealt with in the past or, equally important, in avoiding [the repetition of] past mistakes. They contain the *proof* of each agency's faithful stewardship of the responsibilities delegated to it and the accounting that every public official owes to the people whom he serves. For students of public administration who wish to analyze the experiences of an agency in dealings with organizational, procedural and policy matters, they provide *the most reliable source of what was actually done.*[2]

We face a number of scholarly and lexicographical difficulties here. Taking Pearce-Moses's definition, to begin we may ask, is it actually a *quality* of records that is at issue here? No other values of records are called *qualities* in the *Glossary.* For instance, here is the definition of *informational value*, the companion secondary value to evidential value.

> **informational value** (also **reference value** and **research value**), n. ~ The usefulness or significance of materials based on their content, independent of any intrinsic or evidential value.

A quality of a thing is usually defined as a characteristic, property or attribute of it. In the realm of values, at least in the tradition of which Schellenberg is a progenitor, we are not exactly talking, it may be argued, about qualities of records but about their *utility*, as Pearce-Moses's definition of *informational value* clearly indicates. The nouns *quality* and *characteristic* are best left for definitions of the properties of things, such as in the following definition, also taken from the *Glossary.*

> **archival nature**, n. ~ the characteristics that are inherent in archival documents resulting from the circumstances of their creation, including naturalness, organic nature or interrelationship, impartiality, authenticity, and uniqueness.

It would perhaps get closer to the idea we are trying to frame here if we used the noun *capacity.* One of meanings of capacity, which I glean from *Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language,* is actual or potential ability to yield something or some outcome. For the sake of consistency, all the values in the archival taxonomy of values would, I humbly submit, be better described as capacities.

The second difficulty is to pin down precisely what evidential value yields. Here Schellenberg leaves us a little at sea. First, he never speaks, as Pearce-Moses's definition does, of information. He speaks of evidence, in much the same vein as, for a period of time, the National Archives of the United States did when it claimed, after David Bearman's coinage of the term, that it preserved "the

[2] T. R. Schellenberg, "The Appraisal of Modern Public Records," in *A Modern Archives Reader: Basic Readings on Archival Theory and Practice*, ed. by Maygene F. Daniels and Timothy Walch (Washington, D.C., 1984), 59–60.

essential evidence of government." It seems that Schellenberg chose the word *evidential* to describe the idea he was trying to circumscribe because, as I believe the extensive passage I quoted here shows, he was trying to distinguish records revealing how the government (we could say any organization) organized itself and functioned or operated from records bearing information on "persons, or things, or phenomena."[3] Elsewhere in the same work, he says: "Information values derive, as is evident from the very term, from the information that is in public records *on the matters with which public agencies deal* [my italics]; not from the information that is in such records on the agencies themselves."[4] Where evidential value is concerned, he was interested in records revealing the organization of government and how it functioned under its policies and procedures. He also speaks of records with evidential value providing proof of faithful stewardship of responsibilities. Outside the passage quoted, he makes it quite clear that the two values are not mutually exclusive. Records can contain both values at once.[5] But then he veers off a little, when he speaks more broadly of records as being "the most reliable source of what was actually done," for evidential value expressed in those terms might *appear* to apply to many more records, to records of all of the activities of government, such as to all the operational records in case files, for instance, than that circumscribed minimum of records to which he wants to apply the concept of evidential value. That is not a correct interpretation. Schellenberg makes it quite clear that this secondary value, whether realized by government officials looking back or by students of government, yields information about how government organized itself over time, set itself to work, and governed its action in policy and procedure. From his training in history, he naturally used the word *evidence* to characterize what it is that an inquirer would scour from sources having this very particular and circumscribed utility. In the end, if we are to preserve any sense of the meaning Schellenberg gave to the term *evidential value*, it seems that we have to retain his word *evidence* over the word *information*, even though a good case could be made that he really intended to distinguish information in records about the organization and functioning of a body from information in records about the persons, things, and phenomena with which the government dealt. He chose the word *evidence* over *information* because he assumed that government records do indeed provide evidence of the

[3] Schellenberg, "Appraisal of Modern Public Records," 58, where he elaborates: "The term 'persons' may include either individuals or corporate bodies. The term 'things' may include places, buildings, physical objects, and other material things. The term 'phenomena' relates to what happens to either persons or things—to conditions, problems, activities, programs, events, episodes and the like."

[4] Schellenberg, "Appraisal of Modern Public Records," 62.

[5] Schellenberg, "Appraisal of Modern Public Records," 59. "The two types of values are not mutually exclusive. The value that attaches to it because of its evidence of government organization and functioning may occasionally be the same as the value that is derived from its information on persons, places, and things." This, by the way, is one of the passages that makes me say that Schellenberg sometimes fails the test of clarity.

organization and functioning of government to the student of government, and that those who approach records with purposes not involving assessment of government in mind quarry information rather than evidence from them. We may doubt the assumption that information about persons, things, and phenomena is always information rather than evidence. It all depends on the purpose of the inquiry. For instance, someone looking at public records of relief efforts after a natural disaster might be interested in accumulating information about the degree of damage or the number of people killed or injured by the event to characterize what happened, or, we might say, to assemble evidence of the effects of the event. In the *Glossary*'s definition of *evidence*, which by the way is a poor one in archival terms, I think, Pearce-Moses quotes Heather MacNeil's observation that "in its metaphoric sense, evidence is that which brings the invisible (that is, a past event) into plain sight."

Somehow, Schellenberg's "organization and functioning" has become "origins, functions, and activities" in Pearce-Moses's definition. It is true that every organization needs to know of its origins, its legitimate sphere of functioning, and so on, and anyone approaching an organization's archives would do well to know of these things to give them the context for understanding any of the organization's records, which seems to be one idea at the core of Schellenberg's thinking. He certainly says that such understanding is at the core of appraisal work, and indeed the term *evidential value* seems to be an archival term rarely wielded outside the fraternity, unlike research value or legal value. Still, a good case can be made based on usage and previous definitions for adding mention of origins to improve Schellenberg's definition of the term. However, it is quite wrong, I submit, to add the word *activities*. The phrase "functions and activities" trips from archivists' lips like a mantra, but by broadening the definition to apply to evidence or information on all of an organization's activities makes the term apply in effect to all of its records, and Schellenberg makes it absolutely clear he is talking about a restricted class of records. You may begin to feel, as I often do, that the term *evidential value* is not a particularly useful one that has caused no end of trouble, or just that I am an inveterate nitpicker. Nevertheless, I hope I have illustrated how difficult it is to frame fundamental ideas clearly. I am certain it is important to do so. Therefore, with the utmost respect to both Schellenberg and Pearce-Moses, I offer this definition as a possible emendation.

> **evidential value**, n. ~ 1. The capacity of records to provide evidence of the origins, organization, and functioning of the body that produced them.

The definition of *informational value*, which is, as Schellenberg clearly states, not independent of *evidential value*, could then be adjusted to keep something closer to its inventor's meaning. When archivists consider informational value, they are assessing aspects of the content of records. In Schellenberg's way of

thinking, with which not everyone agrees, of course, the grounds have shifted in the triage exercise when the archivist moves from assessing evidential to assessing informational value, but in any given case it is a question of the two assessments being part of the decision-making process, made separately but not exactly independently of one another. It should also be noted that it is quite clear that Schellenberg would consider both evidential and informational value, both being secondary values, under the umbrella of reference value or research value, so I am not sure it is helpful to reference only informational value to these two terms. With all this in mind, I offer this definition.

> **informational value**, n. ~ The capacity of records to provide information about persons, things, phenomena, and other subjects of inquiry.

I hope that adding the phrase "and other subjects of inquiry" makes it clear that this is a secondary value.

I cannot end without saying that I regard Pearce-Moses's *Glossary* as a treasure house of clearheaded thinking about a remarkably complex body of terminology. As Huth also observes, reading it does indeed impress us that the field is "rich in theory and deep with intellectual underpinnings."

Introducing the Field

Understanding Archives and Manuscripts by O'Toole and Cox retains "the structure and much of the original text" from its first edition. The authors set out "to understand that portion of the world of recorded information encompassed by the phrase 'archives and manuscripts.' " For them, such understanding comprises understanding "how and why records of all types are created" and appreciating what makes archives "informative and useful, both in the short run and over the long term." As was the case in the earlier edition authored by O'Toole alone, the authors want their text to provide an introduction to archives "for the beginning archivist, for the administrator contemplating establishment of an archives, for the potential donor of archival material, for anyone interested in learning about archives."

The beginning chapter on recordkeeping and using information places the making and keeping of records in the historical context of the rise and spread of literacy, and it discusses the reasons for recording information, the impulses to save and to destroy records, records technology, the character of recorded information in the modern world, and the usefulness of archives. More than any other, this chapter, which is virtually unchanged in this second edition, seems aimed at the perspective of readers who have never given a thought to recorded information or its archival component. It is a good text with that reader in mind, but I am not so sure it will serve well as a fundamental text on records and archives. At times, it is even a little confusing in that regard. For instance, at one

point when discussing destruction of records, the authors say: "The smashing of Confucian texts during the Cultural Revolution in China in the 1960s and 1970s is a reminder that no society, however advanced or sophisticated, can entirely avoid the temptation to destroy records." Is that episode really an example of the destruction of records, and does it really help the reader understand that portion of recorded information called "archives and manuscripts"? In fact, the authors' discussion of political and ideological reasons for destroying records almost completely overlooks the fact that individuals and organizations have routinely destroyed records as a regular and healthy practice.

The second chapter on the history of archives and the archives profession is an excellent introduction to the "origins of the profession. . .and its nature and purpose," despite curious overtones at times. In discussing the consolidation of professional identity, the authors have this to say about reaction to the report of the SAA's Committee on Goals and Priorities in the 1980s:

> Skeptics dismissed these efforts as too much introspection, absorbing energy that might better be applied to the concrete tasks of getting and organizing records. Others viewed the active re-examination of traditional theory and practice as essential parts of any living and growing profession. In either case, most archivists agree that a great many questions and problems remain, requiring considerable research and thought. (p. 81)

What is the novice reader to make of that? Is there an assumption that a significant portion (otherwise why make the remark?) of the American profession resists examining what they are doing? If so, they would hardly be eager to support "considerably more research and thought." At several other points in this chapter, the authors seem to want to criticize or exhort the profession on some score, but it all reads like editorializing, for such comments are often not the outcome of extended discussion and seem to fit ill in the context of the aims of the chapter. Even when they have a good point to make, such as when they explain the benefits of personal contact with archival sources, they then observe that this "somewhat intangible benefit . . . is no less important for human society even if it cannot be precisely measured in dollars and cents." Do they imagine they are talking to philistines? Although the chapter puts the American profession in its historical context, these curious, almost backhanded comments mar any effort to fire the reader with enthusiasm for the archival mission.

The tone of the fourth chapter on the archivist's responsibilities and duties is much more positive and even uplifting. Imagining myself a beginning archivist, I felt carried along by a coherent and persuasive argument that the archivist has responsibilities important to society and tasks demanding in their range and complexity. I could see relative newcomers being inspired by thoughts such as these. "The records in [archivists'] custody are genuine; they

are carriers of information that speak, from one person to another, across the barriers of time, distance, and experience."

The final chapter on the challenges archivists face today is new. It discusses postmodernism, the impact of the Internet, ethics and security, the effects of information technology, archival advocacy, recordkeeping in the digital era, and professionalism. The aim is obviously to open the reader's mind to the intellectual, strategic, and societal challenges archival work faces. The discussion of each of them is necessarily brief, but the book is the stronger for adding this chapter, for anyone with the remotest likelihood of making connection with the field would understand that the currents of thought and happening that the authors explore here indeed make the archivist's task an important one for society and full of possibilities for work of great complexity and interest. However, the discussion of the Internet and information technology at this tail end of the volume hardly amounts to the revision of the first edition's deficiency in this regard that the authors note in their introduction. By contrast, Pugh incorporates discussion of the uses and effects of digital technology on archival reference service throughout her volume.

I admit that I did not like the first edition of this book when I read it, but I made the mistake of thinking that, even if the authors had an audience little knowledgeable of archives in mind, they ought to be careful to instruct the reader in terms familiar to the archivist. The aim of this book is to socialize the reader about the world of archives. Assuming it finds its intended readership, it should do that very nicely. Students in an introductory university course on archives in the United States (because of course it talks about that context) could even read it with profit, for it introduces a wide range of literature to amplify the lines of inquiry the authors introduce, to which the extensive bibliographical essay adds a very great deal indeed. Moreover, no one else that I know has tried to write a book like this for the general audience beyond the profession. It is not an easy task. O'Toole and Cox have done it well.

Getting It under Control Fundamentally

In her work in the series, Kathleen Roe sets out to provide a context for understanding arrangement and description, to introduce core principles and define core terminology, to introduce common practices and standards, and to survey recent developments. She says that she aims "to provide the necessary theoretical and practical framework. . .for individuals with archival responsibilities" for this function.

Roe's imagined reader would appear to be something of a neophyte, so she rarely elaborates much on fundamental concepts, some of which are anything but simple. Her obvious desire to keep things clear, simple, and, it would seem, brief, betrays her into questionable statements. For instance, in the opening

overview, she says: "Essentially, *arrangement* addresses the physical organization of records while *description* is the process used to provide information about the context and content of records." In the next chapter on core concepts and principles, she observes that "arrangement involves identifying the intellectual structure of records," so, of course, she knows that arrangement has both a physical and intellectual (for lack of a better word) side to it. The definition of the term *arrangement* in the companion glossary in this series and in the *DACS* definition Roe adopts speak about it achieving "intellectual control," presumably of the sort Frederick Miller was thinking of in the parallel volume in the first fundamentals series when he said the process involved "identifying relationships among. . .sets of records and between records and their creators."[6] Indeed, most of the recent literature on arrangement strongly suggests, I think, that the most important facet of arrangement is not physical at all, but rather resides in the intellectual work of identifying archival relationships. It would not be untoward to emphasize even for neophytes that the physical aspects of the process are not its essential aspects.

Roe obviously likes to illustrate basic concepts rather than discuss them abstractly. At one point, when discussing the question of when to apply archival methods of arrangement and description, she makes the case that published maps and atlases assembled for their historical interest by the Rensselaer Historical Society are best described using library methods, but that "survey maps created for the Glass Lake Owners' Association to define property lines. . .are described using archival principles because they were created together in the process of fulfilling a function of the association" (p. 29). Such explanations are more informative of fundamentals than many of the examples of arrangement scenarios and finding aids, which appear in appendices, she has constructed to illustrate core concepts and principles of arrangement and description.

This work reads more like a beginner's manual than a text on the fundamental and animating ideas behind the processes of arrangement and description. No doubt it would be a very useful volume indeed for someone who has little knowledge of archives or arrangement and description and is handed responsibility to carry out this archival function. The author meets her goal of *introducing* readers to core concepts and principles and to common practices and standards, but gives little sense that arrangement and description are, in Huth's words, "rich in theory and deep in intellectual underpinnings."

[6] Frederic M. Miller, *Arranging and Describing Archives and Manuscripts* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1990), 7.

Selecting Archives: The Pragmatic Fundamentals

Frank Boles's volume is an extended argument for the author's strongly held pragmatic view of the purpose, theory, methods, and practice of selecting and appraising archives and manuscripts. Boles's being frank and open about his opinions makes his book a lively read, even if the sound of grinding axes tends at time to obscure his message. Recognizing the burst of writing with a theoretical bent on the subject in the last couple of decades, Boles say that "this manual aims to report straightforwardly on that theory" so that his readers can decide for themselves what makes sense.

He begins the task of sorting through the welter of ideas about selection (a term he argues better describes this archival function than the term *appraisal*) in a first chapter on why archivists select. Delving into the ideas archivists have had on the purpose or goal of selection is indeed a good place to begin the process of reporting straightforwardly on theory. Unfortunately, Boles seems not very interested in reporting fairly or widely on ideas about the purpose or goal of appraisal. He rather offers his own view of archival history: following the lead of Boles's favorite whipping boy, the British theorist Hilary Jenkinson, archivists passively avoided making appraisal decisions until "pragmatism, not theory, set American archivists on the path of selection" (p. 4) to wrestle with the modern problem that there were far too many records to keep. After demolishing a few straw men, he distills his answer to the question: archivists select because "they are the best trained professionals to do this task" and "selection is a societal requirement." It is a pity that he did not give due weight to Jenkinson's concern about the integrity of archives, for selection unavoidably affects what remains. Every archivist who will perform selection should have this concern in mind. Equally, he says nothing about the reasons for selection that Schellenberg evinces in the two paragraphs I quoted earlier in this review: institutional continuity and the needs of citizens in a democratic society to know of the doings of their government. It is not quite clear to me why mention of accountability is such a red flag for Boles. It is, of course, not the sole or even the main reason for preserving organizational records. Among those interested in being able to account for governments' actions are historians and others interested in the past. To be sure, the reduction of records to manageable proportions is a pressing need of all modern societies, but surely this particular conversation in which Boles engages can entertain ideas about positive reasons for appraising records for selection such as Schellenberg gives us.

Boles writes the next chapter, colorfully entitled "Muddied Waters and Conflicting Currents: An Overview of Appraisal Thought," in the same vein as the first. He touches on the ideas of several writers while advancing his view of the history of appraisal/selection in the United States. It is a pity he only refers vaguely to the ideas of Margaret Cross Norton, because, it could be argued, her

viewpoint of the goal of appraisal has been echoed in some measure since by other archivists of governments in the United States. A fundamental text on American thinking about appraisal should expose her argument that historical use of archives "is so much velvet" to some fair-minded critical examination. Writers as disparate as Roy Turnbaugh, Luciana Duranti, and Angelika Menne-Haritz have written about appraisal in that Nortonian tradition, which, as Boles notes, owes a debt to Jenkinson.[7] Boles delights in using Schellenberg's phrase "the old fossil" for Jenkinson, but the persistence of his concerns and ideas suggests that they deserve more than summary dismissal. I grant you, it is very difficult to trace ideas, let alone argue that there are schools of thought about appraisal, but the waters are not so muddied that with a little effort Boles could have revealed the richness of the viewpoints on the purpose of appraisal and still given us his twist on the matter.

In chapter three, Boles makes a good case that all selection is inevitably local in nature, influenced as it is by mission statements, records management, and collection development policies, which are his subject in his third chapter. Building a framework for the work of appraisal for both acquisition and selection is a strong feature of the American scene, and Boles is obviously comfortable in this realm, which he explains clearly and enthusiastically. In chapter four, he lays out his own "contemporary micro-appraisal strategy," which involves a matrixlike assessment of the value of information and costs, and then takes into account what he calls "political implications," by which he seems to mean external factors that may have to be taken into account when making appraisal for selection decisions.

In the fifth chapter, "Putting the Pieces Together: A Selection Model," Boles gives his view, which he acknowledges is heavily in debt to the work to develop the Minnesota Method, of the entire acquisition and selection process. The first four steps comprise all the activities of policy development and information gathering and analysis to determine the desired locus of acquisitions. These activities are one side of the appraisal function, which might be labeled "appraisal for acquisition." Boles's explanation treats them in the way they are conducted in the historical manuscripts tradition, or at least as it is proposed they should be. Despite Boles's claim that his method works for institutional records, I think it is fair to say that the way many archival services of governments and corporate bodies in the United States operate does not reflect his scheme of things. The fifth step involves the actual selection of records for long-term preservation, and the final step involves evaluating the operation of the entire process and periodically updating it. As Tim Ericson observes in his review in

[7] See Roy C. Turnbaugh, "Plowing the Sea: Appraising Public Records in a Historical Culture," *American Archivist* 53 (1990): 27–33; Luciana Duranti, "The Concept of Appraisal and Archival Theory," *American Archivist* 57 (1994): 328–44; and Angelika Menne-Haritz, "Appraisal or Documentation: Can We Appraise Archives by Selecting Content?" *American Archivist* 57 (Summer 1994): 528–43.

the spring/summer 2006 issue of this journal, the final chapter on the selection of records in other than textual form does little to end the isolation of discussion of appraisal of nontextual records. Indeed, given that increasing numbers of records will be in digital form, it could easily be argued that a very great deal of appraisal will follow rhythms familiar for nontextual records, particularly in determining the feasibility of preservation. Appendices on accessioning and on mathematical sampling complete the volume.

One admires Boles for his effort and his forthrightness. As Mark Greene says in his testimonial on the back cover of the book, it is a considerable feat to write on the fundamentals of "the most daunting and controversial task facing the profession." One might wish for a more balanced, and in some cases more accurate, portrayal of the richness of ideas about appraisal and for a little more help in understanding basic concepts, but Boles's arguments are clear and invite the reader, both beginner and old hand, to think, to appreciate the many complexities of the task, and above all to share his passion for the task and his faith that archivists can do it well.

Thinking Clearly about Serving Users

Mary Jo Pugh's contribution to the series on providing reference services is a tour de force on the subject. From the opening chapter, which reflects on the impact of digital technology on the world of archives and on reference service, through nine other chapters that logically and progressively cover all aspects of the reference function and clearly explain fundamental concepts, Pugh demonstrates comprehensive command of her subject and its growing literature. I can unreservedly recommend her book as a fundamental text for students in a graduate archival education program.

Pugh troubles herself to define general concepts, such as *document, record, personal records, organizational records*, and *archives*, as well as myriad concepts of her subject, such as *direct and indirect use, information seeking, query abstraction*, and *query resolution*, to name a very few, and then illustrates each concept and shows how it is employed in the work of reference service. From her general introduction to reference service in the second chapter, through chapters on identifying uses and users, providing intellectual access, the reference process (the best account of this subject I know of), determining access policies, providing physical access, copies and loans, and managing reference services, she keeps a nice balance between instruction in fundamentals and explanation of the rhythms and intricacies of the actual work. Part of writing a good fundamental text is explaining the sequence of activities in the function under consideration.

Pugh spends a good deal of time here and there inculcating the spirit of user-centered services. It is puzzling that vestiges of the old custodial orientation of reference service remain. To the extent that they do, it is part of the task of

a fundamental text on the subject to show the way to put users in the forefront, and, as Pugh also does, to show that user-centered services sit well with the intellectual underpinnings and custodial duties of other archival functions. It is a great pleasure to read her well-organized, thoughtful, and clearly written account of the basic purposes, concepts, and activities of reference service.

Managing the Shop

The volume by Michael Kurtz on managing archival operations sets out to cover "a wide variety of management tasks, responsibilities, and roles" and "to present a coherent and sensible narrative that provides the framework for understanding each issue in the archival context." No easy task. The literature on management in the archival context is not large. Kurtz calls on the larger literature on management to great effect, but the success of this book, and it is certainly the best book on the subject yet, comes from his own broad understanding of management and his admirable ability to explain tasks, responsibilities, and roles in an accessible manner that is full of good sense and advice.

Kurtz covers all the important aspects one would expect a good text on management fundamentals to address: management theory, leadership, organizational complexity, planning and reporting, project management, managing information technology, human resources, communication, managing facilities and finances, fund-raising, and public relations. He begins by justifying the contribution management makes to the success of organizations:

> Successful and functional institutions are the bedrock of society, and when institutions do deteriorate, often due to inept or dysfunctional management, society suffers. Such problems, if serious enough, can threaten the very foundations of our democratic society. So, management effectiveness matters. (p. 1)

His objective thereafter is to reveal ways in which managers can be effective, as the following excerpts illustrate:

> A manager known for poorly conceived, overly lengthy, and inconclusive meetings will ultimately drive the staff away or will find it rebellious and uncooperative. At that point, effective decision making and implementation are fatally undermined. (p. 148)

> In running the meeting, the manager must be sensitive to hidden agendas and lack of candor on the part of participants. These are to be expected, particularly in hierarchical organizations with supervisor-subordinate dynamics in play. Regardless of the type of meeting, the manager must establish a climate that fosters a variety of ideas and points of view, even though not all ideas will be accepted. Ideas should be treated and explored in a respectful way by the entire group. (p. 149)

> All the strategies discussed in this section [on "Staff, Peers, the Boss"] are useless if the manager is not perceived as a person of integrity whose communications can be relied upon to be truthful and accurate. If staff, peers, and the boss do not trust what the manager has to say, communication ends before it begins. (p. 154)

> [From his "Concluding Note"] . . .the archival manager is not alone. . . . Networking with other professionals to gain their expertise and help is absolutely essential. Information professionals increasingly interdepend on each other and on other professionals as well. The archival manager does not need to master everything but does need to know what help is needed to get the job done. (p. 246)

He also draws on literature outside the field, often to provide useful and interesting tables to illustrate a facet of management. I have no doubt that managers and archivists in working-level positions alike would benefit a great deal from reading this book, for it will give them a sound basis for assessing either their own management style or management in their institution and thinking of ways to improve it. I also see no reason why this book would not translate well to organizational environments in other countries. Like Pugh's, it would be an excellent general text in university courses on the management function in archival settings.

Conclusion

In sum, this series is much improved over its predecessor. There is much to admire in all these volumes, and everything to admire about the great efforts SAA and the authors have made. All the authors have more than justified the faith Robert Warner and his colleagues had that developing such a series of foundational texts would serve the community well. As I said at the outset, this effort is unparalleled, and I assure you that all my criticisms and quibbles are offered in the spirit of admiration and gratitude for a job well done. It is heartening indeed to witness the broadening and deepening of archival knowledge over the past thirty years that these volumes encapsulate. They are a benchmark against which we may measure the next effort. If a recently retired educator of twenty-six years might offer a plea, it would be to raise the sights here and there a little and to think of the exercise not for beginners but as statements of foundational knowledge American style, for there is no doubt that the archival community in the rest of the world continues to look at intellectual developments in the field in the United States with great interest and much profit. Despite the growth of the field's periodical and monographic literature, foundational texts on the various subjects of archival knowledge have a place, not just for academic students but for archivists everywhere. As a young archivist, I turned to

Schellenberg, Jenkinson, and the Dutch trinity to help me order my mind and my work, and I have returned to them over the years. So, general works that lay out foundational concepts can act as reference works for the field as well as texts for instruction of beginning students of the discipline. This series is a significant measure of growing maturity of the discipline in the United States. As I said, no other archival community has been up to displaying its grasp of our fundamental knowledge in quite so extensive a way as this series does for the world to judge. Lacking other efforts, next time round, some greater engagement with ideas outside the country would be welcome, as would the addition of a work on records making, keeping, using, and disposing by the bodies that produce them. In the meantime, I hope that many will join me in celebrating this achievement by reading the books in the spirit of inquiry in which they were written about the ideas that animate us.

BOOK REVIEWS

Jeannette A. Bastian, Reviews Editor

Archive Buildings in the United Kingdom, 1993–2005

By Christopher Kitching. Chichester, U.K.: Phillimore and Co. Ltd., 2007. vii, 148 pp. Illus. £17.95. ISBN 987-1-86077-443-0.

Archive Buildings in the United Kingdom, 1993–2005 builds on a series of books and national standards that encourage institutions in the United Kingdom to design and build archival facilities that preserve and protect their collections. Some of these publications include *Archive Buildings in the United Kingdom, 1977–1992* (1993), *Standard for Record Repositories* (1999), and *British Standard 5454, Recommendations for Storage and Exhibition of Archival Documents* (2000). Christopher Kitching, who served as assistant secretary and, later, secretary of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts until the commission became part of the National Archives of the United Kingdom in 2003, wrote or substantially influenced each of these.

Kitching's latest book follows a format similar to his 1993 volume, but is effectively a new edition. The book is divided into two nearly equal sections, the first devoted to discussion and description of the facility planning and building processes and the second providing detailed case studies of selected buildings completed in the United Kingdom from 1993 to 2004.

The book's layout and design have been significantly updated and improved, and it is well illustrated with color and black and white building photographs taken by Kitching himself. He also includes selected facility plans grouped by building type and simplified for easier viewing.

The book builds on Kitching's wide experience in the design and planning of British archival facilities. In addition, with a grant from the Society of Archivist's Travel Fund, he was able to visit 75 of the 108 new and remodeled facilities constructed during the period covered by his book. The knowledge gained from those visits and his discussions with the building planners and occupiers translate into detailed comments and insights into current building issues and concerns.

Subdivided into three parts, the planning section deals with an overview of current building issues, building functions, and the building site. Kitching offers excellent advice on planning issues. He suggests optimum spaces and offers caveats for specific problems drawn from building examples over the past ten years. The

planning chapter also includes a general outline for building requirements and standards that can be directed to the architect or a planning committee.

The building section includes chapters on structure, security, fire protection, environmental controls, and remodeling existing buildings. One significant change from Kitching's earlier volume is the general acceptance of sprinkler systems as a fire suppressant. This reflects new recommendations in *British Standard 5454* of both gas and water alternatives. Kitching offers excellent advice and detail on heating and air conditioning systems. His litany of problems and recommendations could easily be applied to archival facility projects in North America.

In addition to the excellent photographs illustrating many of Kitching's comments, he also includes some detailed flow charts and tables that provide easy-to-read access to information and data needed by building planners. Each chapter, and in some cases specific sections, provide lists of problems encountered in building projects across the United Kingdom. These specific examples provide planners with issues to be avoided or resolved before construction begins.

The thirty-five case studies describe a mixture of purpose-built and renovated facilities. Each example briefly describes the building's background and specific problems or concerns that planners encountered. In the United Kingdom and Europe a variety of historic and nonhistoric buildings have been repurposed for archival use. The renovation chapter and the case studies offer examples of converted schools, churches, warehouses, and factories and assess their strengths and weaknesses. Kitching also lists building costs and sources of funding, names of architects, and print reviews or descriptions that appeared about the case studies.

The book references different sections of *British Standard 5454*. These links provide guidelines and a road map for planners and architects. Since this standard is not widely accessible outside the United Kingdom, it would have been useful to include it as an appendix if the British Standards Association had allowed its publication here.

Although directed to a British audience, *Archive Buildings in the United Kingdom, 1993–2005* provides archivists and building planners with the knowledge and understanding needed to construct well-designed and functional archival facilities. The author's many site visits provide insights that make this volume particularly valuable as a resource and planning guide. It draws on Kitching's wide experience with building design and planning, significantly improving and upgrading his earlier work.

Thomas Wilsted
Thomas J. Dodd Research Center
University of Connecticut

Planning New and Remodeled Archival Facilities

By Thomas P. Wilsted. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2007. 204 pp. Soft cover. Available from the Society of American Archivists, $35.00 members, $49.00 nonmembers. ISBN 978-1931666251.

Thomas P. Wilsted, co-author of the award-winning 1991 SAA manual on managing archives (with William Nolte), has now produced a much-needed update on the subject of planning new purpose-built buildings for archives, the first volume on the topic since Ted Ling's 1998 publication from Australia. Wilsted has presented a number of workshops (including several with Ted Ling) and papers on the topic of planning archival facilities over the years. He bases this book on research and extensive professional experience consulting on building projects in America and New Zealand; the most recent of which was the YMCA of the United States.

Chapter 4 on the building program is one of the strongest in the volume, almost every line making a significant point. The author stresses the importance of the archival staff's contribution to this part of the planning process because the archivist is the best (usually the only) source of accurate information on the workflow and essential functions of the organization. The building program is the archives staff's best opportunity to provide a prioritized list of program elements. The author would have been entirely justified in giving even stronger emphasis to the architects' lack of experience in building an archival facility; for even though the architectural firm may have undertaken other archives projects, the same team of architects working on one archival facility is seldom available for subsequent commissions because so few archives facilities are built.

In chapter 5 on the building process, Wilsted presents the basics of design and construction, stressing the documented communication required between the client and the construction team. Acknowledging that these projects may not always be within the control of the archives staff because the archives is often part of a larger institution, the author recommends the construction team include at least one representative who can effectively convey the archives' special needs. Wilsted's timeline for the process indicates only two or three months for design—not enough for staff review in a large project. Too often, the critical approval of the final design falls to a governing board that is more interested in impressive open spaces than the functional areas of a building. This political reality coincides with the architects' interest in designing the impressive "wow" spaces, which strain the budget and even undermine the functional goals of an archival repository. It would have been helpful for Wilsted to suggest that the design phase be extended to allow time for staff review and meaningful input before the drawings are finalized

Chapter 6 on creating the optimal environment is somewhat confusing, though it cites the NISO and ISO standards, includes useful terminology, and

discusses several of the options pursued in parts of the United States and in Europe. It makes clear the increased long-term costs of maintaining an improved preservation environment. The environmental consultant's role is critical, for he or she will have the technical knowledge to communicate effectively with design engineers. An experienced consultant provides the guidance an archivist needs to select cost-effective parameters for storage to meet the particular needs of the collection. Since multiple storage environments are expensive to construct and maintain, a consultant uses the archivist's detailed knowledge of the collections to project cost savings over time, determining whether it is both good preservation practice and fiscally responsible to opt for a single set of environmental parameters to house the majority of the collection under very good conditions that will also be "adequate" for more fragile items in the collection. A citation to the Canadian standard for archival storage, which approaches environmental decisions based upon the chemical stability of materials, would have been useful in the discussion of various environmental standards. No description of evaporative cooling, an HVAC option widely employed in dry climates, is included, possibly because evaporative cooling cannot maintain the very narrow environmental parameters spelled out in the NISO standard. Still, it would be helpful for archivists in arid regions to have an authoritative list of reasons to avoid evaporative cooling for archival storage; most building engineers in drier climates regard evaporative cooling as the only cost-effective means of conditioning the air in a large building.

In chapter 7, Wilsted provides a nice overview of security and fire protection for the collections, citing the current NFPA standard specifically for archives and record centers. While an archivist is unlikely to understand the details of the standard, it is essential to know that this and other standards cited by the author exist. His review of available fire detection and suppression systems gives the major advantages and disadvantages of each, though no mention is made of the complex maintenance required for a dry-pipe fire suppression system. Wilsted reviews briefly the type of security features commonly included in new facilities, ranging from different types of key systems to closed circuit cameras. A security consultant is recommended, but the client should carefully review his or her recommendations because most such advisors may recommend more equipment than necessary for closed stacks.

Wilsted includes a brief chapter on the renovation of older buildings. His points are all pertinent, and he reviews some interesting case studies; but this subject really deserves more space than the author has in this brief manual. Renovations so frequently encounter unexpected problems that budget overruns and delayed completion dates are common. Additional research on the costs of upgrading infrastructure, installing compact shelving, and asbestos abatement would be useful.

The discussion of office equipment and furniture in chapter 9 incorporates excellent recommendations, covering everything from furnishings in the

public areas, to equipment in processing areas and laboratories, to shelving in the archival stacks. Wilsted discusses all of the significant aspects of different types of archival shelving, both static and mobile. While useful, his narrative reinforces one inaccuracy promulgated by vendors—that several mechanically assisted (hand-cranked) carriages of mobile shelving can be moved at once. In fact, though several *can* be moved at one time, they *should not be*. The movement of multiple carriages quickly breaks down the operating mechanism, and the client soon sees the repairman far more often than the salesman who delightedly demonstrated how one can move many multiple carriages with the twist of a single crank. Staff members who page records are forced to spend more of their time doing so to keep the movable shelving in good working order, a matter that should be considered when deciding whether or not to invest in the more expensive motorized shelving. If motorized shelving is considered, the planners would be wise to check the history of power failures at the new building's site; frequent power failures force the staff to resort to cumbersome battery packs to service records.

Wilsted provides figures for translating collection holdings into shelving needs, but many archivists work with unreliable figures for their collections. It is important that the archives staff complete an accurate survey of their holdings during the preparations for the building program, using clearly defined standards such as "cubic feet" or "linear feet." Only with a current, accurate count of their collections, can they obtain sufficient shelving.

The author indicates the complexity of selecting furniture for offices, the reference room, and other areas. Though the task is one of the most important to the institution's functionality, it is all too often an afterthought in the process. Oversight of the design and selection of furniture and equipment should be assigned to at least one person who has no other responsibilities in the project. Staff members should be given time to review the equipment in their respective work areas before final selections are made. Personnel in charge of the equipment should carefully track the budget for it; if cuts are necessary, they should have a clear idea where compromises can be made. Wilsted presents some good guidelines for selection, sharing some excellent examples of specialized equipment.

The last few chapters of the book deal with moving into the new facilities, and the author provides useful check lists. Unfortunately, he does not recommend the employment of a professional moving consultant, who can facilitate a large, complicated move. Moving consultants routinely organize office moves, select and supervise qualified moving firms, and—provided they are hired early enough in the process—can help plan the move of collections to a new building where the layout of new stack areas is likely to require a reorganization and relabeling of every container in the collection.

The book concludes with useful appendices—particularly the listing of new archival facilities built in the last ten to fifteen years (including contacts for

further information). The equipment suppliers and moving specialists listed are almost all located in the eastern and midwestern United States, but they are an excellent resource.

Wilsted's book builds upon the strengths and fills in some of the gaps in Ling's very good earlier work, and it provides valuable references to further reading on the topic. The volume addresses issues related to computers, Internet access, and digital technologies, which were just emerging when Ling's work was published. The single chapter on renovation acknowledges the "landlocked" situation of many aging archival repositories, mentioning the most prominent issues involved in a renovation. Wilsted's work is useful for a wide variety of archival institutions. The limited format of a basic manual often forces the author to provide important ideas in succinct lists; any project that takes years to plan and execute can hardly be discussed fully in a work of less than 200 pages. If one is contemplating a new building, a major addition, or a renovation, *Planning New and Remodeled Archival Facilities* should be the first volume to buy and consult. Wilsted's excellent bibliographic references will also lead to other valuable resources in the field.

Patricia Morris
Preservation Librarian
University of Colorado at Boulder

Water in Buildings: An Architect's Guide to Moisture and Mold

By William B. Rose. Hoboken, N. J.: John Wiley and Sons, Inc. 2005. xi, 270 pp. Index. Photographs and illustrations. Cloth. $90.00. ISBN 0-471-46850-9.

Water, water, everywhere. . . . During my career in a wide variety of settings I never once worked in an archives building free of a leaking roof or some other water-related problem. In one building after each storm, I routinely emptied buckets of water pouring into a stack area as a result of a defective roof slope and drain system that year after year defied every attempt at repair. Sadly, many archivists can relate to these woes. Myriad building concerns, and just attempting to keep collections dry and mold free, frequently consume an inordinate amount of a manager's energy and capacity to worry.

What are the causes of these seemingly ubiquitous problems? Apart from occasional catastrophic accidents and acts of God, one can point to faulty architectural design, shoddy construction techniques, inferior building materials, and inadequate maintenance as probable sources. To complicate matters, archivists usually have little background in the arcane world of the construction industry. We are often at a serious knowledge disadvantage during new building and repair and remodeling projects, and we take at faith what "experts" tell us, sometimes to our later dismay.

William Rose, research architect at the Building Research Council at the University of Illinois, has devoted his career to the study of water in buildings, and this volume is the fruit of his many years of research. He has considerable practical experience in new building design and has been a consultant to museum and historic buildings, as well as an instructor of architects through the American Institute of Architects.

The author includes chapters on the physics of water in all of its manifestations, as well as practical matters of roofs and facades, attics, walls, soils and foundations, mechanical systems, and the collusion of biological and physical forces in internal environments leading to rot and mold.

Rose does not mince words as he takes on the construction industry. "A theme of this book will be the confrontation between conventional wisdom and science. Most of the people who make on-the-spot decisions about buildings do not make those decisions scientifically." He challenges much of the moisture control advice of the building industry over the last fifty years, while exposing the inside squabbles and shortcomings surrounding this issue in the architectural, engineering, and construction world. He believes building science is "messy and immature." His eye-opening, candid, insider view is one of the books chief virtues.

Rose is especially critical of the reliance on building codes, where moisture control was introduced in the 1940s, prompted by insulation manufacturers. The coding jumped quickly from inadequate observation and research to design recommendations that are still in effect all these years later. The result, he believes, is that building codes are unreliable sources for water management because they are outdated, not based on scientific research, and recommend simplistic designs for inherently complex problems in a diversity of situations.

The book is not a "how-to" but rather, as Rose puts it, a broader, more evaluative "how-come." He states, "It does not tell you what to do, it tells you what water does: you may do what you wish armed with that knowledge. The natural tendency of any reader is to jump to the results and bypass the process. But someone, somewhere must address the process: thus this book." Of particular interest for archivists is the in-depth analysis of what Rose considers an inaccurate popular view of condensation in buildings and the use of vapor barriers/retarders. These topics touch directly on conundrums archivists and conservators face in attempting to create an optimum preservation environment.

Grounded in the basics of physics, mathematics, and chemistry, this book is not a quick read; it requires a thoughtful comprehension of difficult topics, such as the understanding of soption and suction isotherms. However, it not impossibly technical or overly obscure either, and it contains essential information an archivist involved in a building project needs to know. Being concise, well organized, and witty enhances its usefulness, as do the case studies, photographs, and illustrations. Of course, one book will not transform archivists into hygrothermal experts or design engineers, but it can help the archivist ask

probing questions when critical water management features are planned. If archival buildings are to improve in the future, archivists need to be directly involved in the planning and process and have much more knowledge of construction specifics.

John Irwin
Retired archivist
Phoenix, Arizona

Practicing Ethnohistory: Mining Archives, Hearing Testimony, Constructing Narrative

By Patricia Galloway. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006. 544 pp. $24.95. ISBN 0-8032-7115-8.

There has been much debate about what constitutes proper archival research methodology and what should be considered archival research. Patricia Galloway's book *Practicing Ethnohistory: Mining Archives, Hearing Testimony, Constructing Narrative* is a case in point. Ethnohistory is the study of peoples in the past based on contemporary sources not created by those peoples. Using archival, historical, anthropological, and archaeological methods, Galloway does a close reading of documents and carefully unpacks the different cultural assumptions, knowledge, and political agendas present in primary sources. This makes the book solidly archival, but also demonstrates how other techniques can be brought into the archives to inform archivists and other researchers about the limitations and strengths of the documentary evidence. Different chapters explore the intersection of methods in different ways. For example, chapter 3, Louisiana Letters, begins with the archival theory of provenance and moves to a study of recordkeeping practices. Chapter 4, The Unexamined Habitus, combines archaeological and ethnohistorical approaches. By doing this, Galloway shows the value that interdisciplinary perspectives and research methods can bring to archives.

The book documents Patricia Galloway's life of scholarship and the evolution of a research agenda spanning several decades. She refers to it as her "intellectual autobiography" (p. 1). The subject matter concerns Native Americans and their interactions with Europeans (Spanish, French, English) in the colonial period (1500–1700) and the nature of the extent to which records document (or do not document) these peoples. The book is divided into four overlapping sections. The first focuses on historical editing and the limitations of the visual and textual documentary evidence. The second explores the relationships of native peoples and Europeans across time and demonstrates how modern geographic information systems (GIS) technology can be applied to archival maps. The third section is the most historiographical and concerns the use of language, political negotiations between native peoples and Europeans, and reconstructing the familial and organizational structures of the different

tribes. The final section discusses the ethics of ethnohistorical research and the redesign (re-presentation) of an outdated history museum exhibition in light of current knowledge and interpretative norms.

Practicing Ethnohistory raises as many important questions as it answers. For example: What should archivists know about reading their own documents? How might the new generation of scholars utilize archival records to challenge or confirm previous work? What new opportunities does technology offer for research in records? How should archivists judge past representations of their collections, and how can they do better in the present? I will briefly explain how these questions permeate the book.

The first major question for archivists occurs in section one and concerns the nature of evidence. Galloway shows how European records have been used to reconstruct the life of native peoples in the Southeast. Sifting through the perspectives and biases inherent in these documents makes it difficult, if not impossible, to hear a Native voice, let alone construct a narrative from the Native perspective. Galloway demonstrates how the ethnohistorical approach in this instance can begin to fill in some gaps. Thus, by examining a diverse set of "documents" and other evidence such as maps, archaeological sites, and material objects, in addition to the written records, inklings of the lives of Native Americans can be gleaned. This implies significant questions for archivists, though Galloway never states them directly: Should archivists leave such interpretation to researchers? What type of scope and content notes are appropriate? Is the subject appropriately identified as "Native peoples," or can it be represented as about European perspectives of Indigenous groups? These questions resonate today as we find under- or undocumented communities documented in government and institutional records but not self-documented in their own voices.

Chapter 9, Multidimensional Scaling for Mapping Ethnohistorical Narrative: Choctaw Villages in the Eighteenth Century, features a discussion and example of how GIS systems are used to do multidimensional scaling that leads to the reconstruction of Native villages, trials, and loci of interactions between Europeans and Native peoples. This is fascinating and provides insight into how new technologies can be applied to older records and how modern research techniques are integrating evidence in new ways. Again, Galloway takes archivists to the edge and lets them develop their own questions. This chapter inspires questions about appraisal. Galloway notes the absence of records (p. 114), and so we wonder, were these conscious appraisal decisions or results of the vicissitudes of time? Also, exactly what records are needed for this type of analysis, not only of the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries, but also of the nineteenth and twentieth? Do current records schedules and appraisal strategies allow for the retention of records required for this type of analysis?

Representational issues emerge in several ways in the latter part of the book. Chapters 11 (A Storied Land: Choctaw Place-Names and the Emplotment of Land

Use) and 12 (Choctaw Names and Choctaw Roles: Another Method for Evaluating Sociopolitical Structure) concern Native American naming practices and genealogies. Here we see how transliteration and European misunderstanding of Native culture and organization make it difficult to track even the most prominent Native Americans reliably in the colonial period. The passage of time, in this case centuries, makes the search for and retrieval of this information even more difficult.

This representation bent comes to a head in chapter 20, Mississippi 1150–1800: Revising the South's Colonial History for a Postcolonial Museum Audience. The chapter discusses the phased redesign (and accompanying re-researching and re-presenting) of a 1961 exhibit on Mississippi history at the Mississippi State Historical Museum. While this recounts a museum process, the idea of presenting and re-presenting history resonates in archives as well. The lessons here are about older finding aids and the language and perspective inherent in these descriptive products. The discussion of these and other issues keeps the book interesting.

The book has some minor problems. Because Galloway is speaking to multiple audiences, more translation is sometimes needed among the languages of different disciplines. The author also seems to assume that most readers will be interested in this book because of the subject matter rather than the research methodology or the more general topic of documentary/recordkeeping studies. As a result, Galloway supposes more knowledge of the geography and history of the southern United States, particularly of the Native American tribes who inhabited that region. I particularly missed a more detailed map of the regions discussed in the early chapters. Some maps are poorly annotated (e.g., page 132) and require more metadata. However, these flaws are minor and do not detract from the work as a whole.

While all the essays pertain to archives, archival collections, and the interpretation of primary sources, none was published in the archival literature, but rather in various forms in other disciplinary journals. By pulling these essays together, Galloway makes them more accessible to archivists as well as to related professionals, such as archaeologists, museum curators, anthropologists, and historians. The fact that she writes to these different audiences is one of the strengths of the book; another is her thoughtful discussion of research methods. This book should be essential reading for archival doctoral students and any archivists interested in the broad topic of social history and archives. There is much here for archivists about records and how documentation of the past or the present misrepresents (intentionally or not) minority views, cultures, and groups. This "intellectual autobiography" represents a life well spent. I look forward to hearing more from Galloway in the future.

Elizabeth Yakel
University of Michigan

Archives and Archivists

Edited by Ailsa C. Holland and Kate Manning. Portland, Oregon.: Four Courts Press, 2006. 230 pages. $55.00. ISBN: 978-1-84682-016-8.

Archives and Archivists is a collection of fifteen essays concerning archives and archival practice in Ireland. Ailsa C. Holland, lecturer at the University College Dublin School of History and Archives, founding member of the Irish Society for Archives, and member of the editorial board of the *Journal of the Society of Archivists;* and Kate Manning, archivist at the University of College Dublin Archives, reviews editor for the *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, and editor of the newsletter and website for the Irish Society for Archives co-edited the volume. The publication of this collection marks new developments at the University College Dublin (UCD) in professional training for archivists and records managers, as well as acknowledges the role of UCD in the past formation of Irish archivists. All of the contributors to the volume are UCD alumni.

In terms of focus, the editors note in their preface that "no effort was made to shape this volume thematically. Contributors were asked to write on themes which they found personally interesting or professionally intriguing" (p. 10). Consequently, the fifteen essays address a broad array of issues and concerns, generally united in their emphasis on Ireland.

A quick review of the already extant professional literature on archives in Ireland indicates the void that this collection helps to fill. In her own contribution to the collection, Ailsa C. Holland notes that the Irish Society for Archives, which "is not a professional association," publishes the journal *Irish Archives*, and that "articles by archivists working in Ireland in the peer-reviewed *Journal of the Society of Archivists* (*JSA*) have been disappointingly few in number particularly as the Society of Archivists is the professional association for archivists in Ireland and the U.K." (p. 144). A combined subject search for "Ireland" and "archives" on EBSCO's *Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts* (LISTA) database returns a list of results that includes no books or book chapters, conference papers, bibliographies, dissertations, interviews, or case studies. Of the small number of articles that appear, most deal with digitization. The only policy-related article dates to 1991. Clearly, *Archives and Archivists* provides some much-needed discussion of archival issues in Ireland.

The topics addressed by contributors include digitization, rare book curatorship, user surveys, changes in archival education, the history of Jesuit and other Roman Catholic archives, ethics codes, city and county archives, corporate archives, publication of personal papers, architectural collections, cultural genocide, and the sociology of records creation. With only a couple of exceptions, the contributions are based on case studies of specific archives in Ireland. As such, the writers face the challenge always inherent in presenting case studies: how to provide enough detail about a specific archives to create a

useful portrait of that repository, while at the same time being able to generalize sufficiently from those same particulars to answer the "So what?" question. As with any collection, the results are somewhat uneven, as is the unavoidable irony involved in a collection of case studies limited by geography. Either the reader is already interested in Irish archives *per se*, and the broader, more general questions raised by the case studies are not necessarily of primary importance; or, alternately, the reader is interested in the broader archival questions prompted by the case studies, in which case the fact that the repositories all happen to be located in Ireland is not in itself of great importance.

To a certain extent, this unavoidable irony is mitigated by placing the case studies within the context of a national history of archival practice. This national history is not the subject of a sustained discussion anywhere in the collection, however. Instead, it appears in passing references, scattered across many of the essays. If I were to single out one feature of this collection for criticism, it would be this. Insofar as the volume is intended to be by Irish archivists for other Irish archivists who may already be well versed in the national history of their discipline, it may be understandable that more attention is not paid to elaborating on that history. For archivists outside of Ireland, however; or for archivists anywhere who want to answer the "So what?" question of these case studies in part by considering their place within a national history of archival practice, the absence of a more lengthy presentation of that history compromises the compelling quality of the individual case studies.

Ailsa C. Holland's contribution pays the greatest amount of attention to the national history of archival practice in Ireland. Most intriguingly, she posits that in Ireland, "the origin of formal archival tradition is linked to colonial governance" (p. 128), suggesting that the kinds of recordkeeping necessary for consolidating colonial administration in Ireland itself inaugurated Ireland's history of modern archival practice. Insofar as the postcolonial work of writers such as Edward Said and Frantz Fanon undergird contemporary archivists' commitment to archives as allowing for governmental accountability and transparency, Holland's argument is as unsettling as it is fascinating. Holland continues by tracing the changing political realities in Ireland as informing corresponding changes in recordkeeping and archival practices. If attention to this history had been more pronounced in the framing of this collection, the significance of each of the individual case studies would have been even more clearly borne out.

In turning to the individual contributions, one is struck by the range of the case studies. Caroline Brown looks at digitization projects at the University of Dundee (Scotland). She notes how digitization helped in collections surveys, storage, standards, and cataloging, while cautioning against being driven by funders' goals, losing provenance for items, and not developing means for evaluating changes in use of the archives precipitated by digitization. Mary Esther Clark examines Dublin's civic collections of medieval and early modern

manuscripts, and considers changes over time in custody, preservation, publication, and exhibition practices. Lisa Collins and Orna Somerville report on the findings of a user survey for UCD archives and argue for a national survey of users. Michelle Cooney describes recent changes in professional training and education for archivists in Ireland and compares this with parallel training in other countries. Marianne Cosgrove and David Sheehy survey the history of Roman Catholic archives in Ireland, noting the dominance of church repositories in the overall archival landscape in the country. Gráinne Doran, Dónal Moore, and Joanne Rothwell compare the changes of three contiguous local repositories: those of Waterford city, Waterford county, and Wexford county councils, by attending to their physical plants, organizational structures, services, outreach programming, records management programming, and challenges. Clare Hackett outlines possibilities for outreach in corporate archives, using the Guinness Storehouse as an example—noting that the program has become Ireland's premier tourist attraction. Charles Horton provides a history of the Chester Beatty Library, a personal collection that features ancient materials. Karl Magee reflects on the policies and ethics of publishing personal papers held at the University of Sterling. Elizabeth Mullins considers changes in archival practice among Jesuits in Ireland. Colum O'Riordan portrays nineteenth-century architect William Kaye Parry as contributing to the development of records management policies. Ciaran Trace uses a study of elementary school students that incorporates sociological theories and methods to argue that describing the practices involved in creating and using records is worth archivists' attention.

In addition to these essays that generally focus on particular repositories, a few authors step away from the case study model to make more general arguments. Bernie Deasy posits that archivists and records managers need to develop codes of professional ethics that can be enforced. Ailsa C. Holland offers a comparison of the development of archival practice in Ireland and South Africa, suggesting that the political histories of the two countries can account, at least in part, for the divergence in their respective archival practices. Patricia Sleeman offers a comparison of two other national histories—those of Iraq and the former Yugoslavia—to describe how assaults on archival holdings can form part of an attack on an entire people. Sleeman continues by considering how developments in theorizing about legitimate forms of conflict have come to incorporate questions regarding the protection of cultural property.

Archives and Archivists is perhaps most helpful in providing selected portraits of developments in the history of Irish archival practices. For those with an interest in Irish archives *per se*, this collection serves to redress the paucity of professional literature on that topic. This is particularly appropriate at a time when standards for the professional training of archivists are changing in Ireland. For those with an interest in the broader questions that can be construed by generalizing from the individual case studies, there is ample material

to consider here, including digitization, outreach, organizational structure, professional development, user surveys, codes of ethics, and preservation. And for yet other readers, the true value of *Archives and Archivists* might lie in the stage it sets for further discussion of the ways in which the practices at individual repositories in Ireland and elsewhere can be considered in light of national political histories—especially in terms of the relationship between changing political developments and the corresponding needs for changes in recordkeeping practices.

Drew Bourn
Lane Medical Library Archives and
Special Collections
Stanford University

Domesticating Information: Managing Documents Inside the Organization

By Carol E. B. Choksy. Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow Press, 2006. xxii, 227 pp. Bibliography. Index. $40.00. ISBN: 0810851903.

Domesticating Information: Managing Documents inside the Organization is Carol E. B. Choksy's effort to delineate the responsibilities of records managers and the spheres in which they work. Understanding and negotiating the respective roles of archivists and records managers has been a source of friction and disagreement for some decades, and this is Choksy's contribution to a debate that has manifestly become more contentious with the dawning of the age of electronic records. Choksy's tone, attitude, and arguments bring both renewed and needed energy and disappointing partisanship to this debate.

First, the good news. *Domesticating Information* is a usefully articulated overview of the current state of the records management profession and the issues it faces. Choksy refreshingly departs from the usual how-to manual that simultaneously informs and plagues the records management literature and instead reflects on the work records managers do. The first chapter, History of Records Management, reads as many histories do, replete with references to classic works on the history of the word and of technologies that changed that history in the West. It is peppered with such pithy reminders as "until recent developments in computers, we did not expect the same technology to manage tabular and documentary information. The printing press was not designed for counting, and the abacus was not designed for printing or displaying documents" (p. 7). Unfortunately, while apt especially for readers new to the topic, Choksy's reminders bear a just-in-case-you-don't-know tone that foreshadows the finger-waggingly aggressive stance she assumes throughout the rest of her exposé.

From the outset, Choksy seems bent on demarcating the areas of operation among all who deal with records and information, but she is most emphatic in

her efforts to distinguish records managers, who deal in business requirements, regulations, and the law, from archivists, who traffic in culture and "what scholars will need" (p. xiii). While useful to a point, this divisive stance permeates *Domesticating Information*. It is plainly visible, for example, in the second chapter, The Context of Records, that addresses a topic of discussion all the more important in today's electronic environments where our systems and specifications tend to atomize files. According to Choksy, on one hand, records managers are accustomed to working in one context—business requirements and process (which also, by the way, explains to the reader why Choksy treats records managers as business analysts throughout). On the other hand, records managers need to pay greater attention to the computerized context of the records they handle. Choksy bemoans their technological shortsightedness (and returns to this again nearer the end of her book): "Computer forensics has produced a spate of examples of how a record custodian's ignorance of how a computer, a computer system, or an application works can produce embarrassment and adverse results within a legal system" (p. 70). All of this applies, it seems to me, to records managers, business analysts, and archivists who deal with electronic records. Indeed, if scraps of information and data files that aren't identifiable as parts of series or collections are at great risk of being lost or as good as lost (not interpretable by mind or machine), then both archivists and records managers ought to be concerned. It behooves archivists to pay attention to the issues since records will be all the more wanting of context if they don't, and archivists' end-of-cycle work will be all the more forensic.

In subsequent chapters, addressing what records are and what records managers do with them, Choksy rolls up her sleeves and attacks very specific archival hallmarks. In the battle lines she draws over the definition of a record, for example, she takes to task first the international ISO 15489 standard and then David Bearman, whose often-cited definition of records as "evidence of business transactions" benefits from a good deal of currency. She goes on at length about how not all records are evidence, and how records managers concern themselves with records, not evidence (which, she argues, takes on meaning only in a court of law). Instead, she espouses terms like "digital objects" (borrowed from computer science) to define records in order to retain some of their key characteristics: "an object is a whole that can be moved around without losing its context, because it has clearly defined content, attributes, and methods" (p. 78).

Choksy then turns to the science of diplomatics. To indict it, she calls upon Indo-European etymologies to differentially define records and documents, invoking European uses of the term *document* to further fine-tune a set of distinctions that may matter, but that also, given the use and abuse of language, quickly fade away again. Yet, even with all of this apparent ammunition, Choksy ultimately ends up in quite an unsatisfying and unsatisfactory place: she concludes that "[t]he document is whatever the environment requires it to be—not what an archivist or an

information scientist defines it to be. [. . .] A document, like a record, is a concept, not a real thing" (p. 93). This level of abstraction and equivocation, suggestive and defensible though it may appear, unfortunately muddies all of the distinctions that Choksy troubles herself to make.

Just as Choksy emphasizes the importance of context by devoting a chapter to it, she also highlights the concept of the life cycle of records by devoting a chapter to it, analyzing its place in the work of an organization. In this chapter, The Life Cycle: Business Processes in Relation to Records, Choksy makes her case for the organizational importance of the records manager. Her case is persuasive, and her vision is grand: "Records management planning begins with determining where records management fits in within the mission statement, goals, values, and objectives of the organization. The higher the profile of records management within the organization, the more aggressively information can be managed" (p. 120). With such breadth at the planning phase, the role of the records manager will be in part to maintain a high profile throughout the life cycle as well.

Choksy is at her best when it comes to discussing slightly longer-term attention to the records of our organizations. The speed with which we transact business electronically has altered our expectations, and Choksy expresses disappointment with our general lack of patience with electronic data, records, and documents: "We accept that hard-copy documents are subject to wear and tear, that they must be carefully handled and preserved. We show no patience, however for electronic records" (p. 144). Keeping records in recordkeeping systems and documenting functional requirements, while necessary and helpful, do not get us close enough to the materiality of the electronic records to care for them as they need to be cared for. To my mind, Choksy's urgings apply to archivists as well as to records managers.

Discussing government records also offers Choksy another vantage point from which to hammer at the importance of sound records management, this time from intellectual, political, and practical points of view. "What differentiates government records from organizational records is that stakeholders have two sets of values for records: as records for performing an act and records memorializing an act" (p. 152). With any luck, archivists will actually reach this point in her book, as this is where she allows them in, albeit very briefly.

By the end of *Domesticating Information*, readers gain an extensive understanding of what matters to records managers and the issues and minutiae with which they contend. Choksy has dotted many *i's* and crossed many *t's*, often, it seems, to stir the pot and generate discussion made all the more urgent by the way electronic environments have changed the work so many do, all over the world. Insofar as she succeeds, Choksy's contributions will be excellent fodder both for classroom discussions and a great deal more back and forth among information professionals. On the first page of her book, Choksy tells us that domesticating is "what humans do with information: capture it, add to it, copy

it, refer to it, transmit it, retrieve it, make decisions with it, show it, describe it, organize it, study it, and manage it, among other things." Archivists should note that Choksy does not include "purge it." Nonetheless, by the end of the book, Choksy may have incited us to do any and all of these things with it—an informative book indeed, with few peers in the literature of records management, and one that archivists would do well to peruse.

Patsy Baudoin
MIT Libraries

The Buried Book: The Loss and Recovery of the Great Epic of Gilgamesh

By David Damrosch. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2007. xi, 315 pp. Illustrations. Notes. $26.00. ISBN-10 0805080295; ISBN-13 978-0805080292.

In the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, Belet-seri, the recordkeeper of the gods, ensures that the book of the dead is a true and trustworthy record. The record of the dead among the living, however, is a different matter—an uneven endeavor that has fallen to innumerable "information professionals" distributed over space and time. Although at its core *The Buried Book* is the story of the emergence, loss, and recovery of the text commonly referred to as the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, this book is also a story of the sometimes careful, sometimes careless, and sometimes comedic activities of those who enable the production, dissemination, and preservation—or destruction—of texts in various formats.

In his introduction, David Damrosch, a professor of English and comparative literature at Columbia University, describes how archival research "sometimes becomes almost its own branch of urban archaeology" and explains how he experienced "the archaeologist's sense of discovery" when he found records in the Central Archives of the British Museum documenting part of the modern history of Gilgamesh (pp. 6–7). Proceeding as an archaeologist would, backward through time—backward, that is, through the records of the British Museum to the records of antiquity—Damrosch's narrative proceeds from the recent past and works back to and beyond that vague point at which cultural memory becomes mythic.

The first chapter tells of the discovery, in 1872, of the text of the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, which had been forgotten for more than two millennia. George Smith, an assistant curator at the British Museum, was reading his way through the museum's massive collection of cuneiform tablets when he found an account of a great deluge, one that was similar in many ways to the flood story in the biblical book of Genesis. This discovery resulted in an expedition to Iraq to find a missing fragment. The second chapter continues Smith's story through his sudden fame and death. Near the middle of this chapter, as he explores the details surrounding Smith's death, Damrosch pauses in his narrative to explain how a dentist's unpublished 464-page account of his Middle Eastern travels was

saved from oblivion by British Library staff, who created a catalog card for the ten pages that related to Smith's death, performed conservation work on the manuscript, and then converted the catalog card into an electronic record. This interlude, which temporarily reverses the flow of his narrative, is a nice tribute to the meticulous and continuing labors that preserve and provide access to the cultural record.

Chapter 3 explains how the tablets that came to the British Museum were recovered from oblivion by archaeologist Hormund Rassam in 1853, when he uncovered the palace and library of the long-forgotten Assyrian king Ashurbanipal. While he did not disappear from the record as Ashurbanipal had, Rassam's name and records were not preserved as well as Smith's. Rassam was quickly disassociated from his discovery of one of the greatest libraries of the ancient world, and fire and water largely destroyed his papers, as they were not kept in some kind of repository. Chapter 4 continues Rassam's story, journeying from the world of archaeology and cultural heritage institutions to Ethiopia to relate a tragicomic episode from Rassam's diplomatic career. (The British Museum appears here, too; at the end of this colonial skirmish, a representative was present to pick up some illuminated manuscripts.)

The fifth chapter jumps back to the seventh century BCE. Through extensive use of ancient cuneiform records, Damrosch reconstructs the world of Ashurbanipal. Here, too, we find out about recordkeeping practices, some familiar and some strange. "The court bureaucracy lived to write memos," claims Damrosch (p. 158). Also popular were oracular records—direct communications from the gods—which were read to read heaven and earth. Unlike his father, Ashurbanipal could read and write; and for personal and political reasons, he built a large and well-organized library. Perhaps greater than any that had preceded it, this library was destroyed with the sack of Nineveh not too long after Ashurbanipal's death. When it was uncovered, numerous copies of the *Epic of Gilgamesh* were found, including the most complete text of it discovered to date.

Leaving the scribe-king and his library to slip temporarily into oblivion, we come to the *Epic of Gilgamesh* itself in chapter 6. Here, Damrosch discusses the *Epic*'s textual history and provides commentary on its text. Like much of the story that Damrosch has told thus far, the *Epic of Gilgamesh* also concerns records. Gilgamesh seeks adventure, to accomplish something that will be recorded and remembered. Then he seeks immortality, but learns from his father that there is no permanence. (The story of the deluge that follows reinforces his father's point.) Defeated, Gilgamesh returns home to finish his mortal life, the end of which is, ironically, missing from extant copies of the *Epic* or other records. Damrosch's final chapter, which takes us back another two millennia, looks behind the long succession of texts about Gilgamesh in a quest for the historical figure. Finally, Damrosch looks beyond history, to consider Gilgamesh's mythical role as judge of the dead.

Damrosch concludes this book with a curious epilogue, "Saddam's Gilgamesh," which looks at Saddam Hussein's interest in the history and literature of Gilgamesh and the status of the *Epic of Gilgamesh* as world literature (the *Epic* influenced Saddam and Philip Roth). Oddly, and unfortunately, Damrosch says little about the damage that has been done to the cultural record after Saddam's ambitions, historical, literary, and otherwise, came to an end. The only major criticism I would add has to do with the book's awkward notation system: one must look up a fragment of quoted text among unnumbered endnotes to uncover its source (additional information about secondary sources and sources of illustrations is buried in two separate appendices: a four-page bibliographic essay titled "Sources" and a list titled "Illustration Credits"). A more standard citation format would have better exhibited Damrosch's process of discovery and provided him with an opportunity to tell his fascinating story of textual transmission on another level.[1]

I initially picked up *The Buried Book* because I was interested in Gilgamesh; but I read it because it connects antiquity and modernity by drawing attention to many of the activities that create and preserve the cultural record. Through the story of one text, this book reveals how libraries, archives, and other cultural heritage institutions preserve not only the means of accessing the past but also the impulse to preserve, an impulse older than human written communication. Those who read this book will learn much about how and why, from ancient Nineveh to modern London, textual records in various forms have been created, collected, preserved, and used. For we who work as keepers of books or records, this is one of those uncommon books that helps us understand the historical dimension of our daily activities and their continuities (and discontinuities) with what others, in similar positions, have done in the past. Although we labor under our own local constraints of space and time, we transcend these limits by participating in the ancient endeavor to extend the spatial and temporal reach of human communication.

Gilgamesh achieved his dream of immortality—initially, and for the time being—because, the *Epic* tells us, he engraved his story onto stone. Damrosch's book reminds us that such textual survival depends on many things, not least of which are the continuing efforts of individuals and institutions to preserve the cultural record.

Michael J. Paulus, Jr.
Whitman College

[1] See Anthony Grafton, *The Footnote: A Curious History* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997), 232.

Preserving Archives

By Helen Forde. London: Facet Publishing, 2007. Principles and Practice in Records Management, series, edited by Geoffrey Yeo. iv, 320 pp. Hard cover. Available from the Society of American Archivists, $99.00 nonmembers, $79.00 members. ISBN-13: 978-1-85604-577-3.

Preservation issues color all aspects of archival work. The job of an archivist, when distilled to its essence, entails the safekeeping of significant materials in perpetuity. Given the primacy of preservation to the profession, there is a surprising dearth of up-to-date works that cover this important topic and its multifaceted dimensions. Helen Forde seeks to remedy this deficiency in her new book, *Preserving Archives*.

Forde is exceptionally well qualified to tackle this complex subject. In addition to an impressive string of academic credentials, she is the former head of Preservation Services at the United Kingdom National Archives and has served as a consultant on preservation issues at repositories throughout Europe. She has published extensively on the topic of preservation and currently lectures on the subject at the University College of London's School of Library, Archive, and Information Studies.

Preserving Archives is the second volume in the recently launched Principles and Practice in Records Management and Archives series, published by London-based Facet Publishing. In his introduction, editor Geoffrey Yeo cites rapid changes, particularly the proliferation of digital documents and recent initiatives by many governments requiring greater recordkeeping accountability, as the catalysts for this series. Contributors to Principles and Practice represent countries from throughout the English-speaking world, reflecting the end goal of the series to present a collection of works that is international in scope. In the same vein as the Society of American Archivists' Archival Fundamentals Series II, this series seeks to publish texts covering the core competencies of archival science but it also encompasses the associated discipline of records management. The University of Pittsburgh's Richard J. Cox has already contributed a volume entitled *Ethics, Accountability, and Recordkeeping in a Dangerous World* (2006).

In her volume of the series, Forde organizes each chapter around the lectures she delivers to graduate students in her preservation course. She intends the book to function both as a comprehensive full-text treatment of the subject and to serve as a general reference source with stand-alone chapters to be referenced by professionals as particular needs arise. She sets the stage for her discussion of preservation with a brief introduction to the subject and a short overview of archival materials and their characteristics. The chapters that follow explore various aspects of the topic, including digital preservation, security needs, disaster planning, storage environments, transfer issues, exhibition design, fragile materials handling, pest control, and the creation of surrogate records. In each section,

Forde addresses specific preservation protocols for both traditional paper-based collections and digital items.

Forde's masterful knowledge of preservation, gained through a combination of exhaustive research and years of experience, permeates every page. Each chapter is richly textured with relevant information. For example, the section on the ongoing maintenance of digital records contains solid, practical advice that any archivist would do well to consider. Forde warns readers that loss threatens much of the historical record created in the last thirty years unless immediate action reverses the poor management of electronic data. She encourages archivists to put aside their aversion to the preservation of digital records and to accept the professional responsibility of ensuring the continuing viability of these documents.

Forde then prescribes strategies for dealing with the often daunting task of planning for the long-term preservation of digital materials. She astutely counsels that the easiest and cheapest course of action is to build preservation into electronic records at the time of their creation. This saves the hassle and expense of attempting to access needed data down the line when it may be lost or forever imprisoned in antiquated hardware or software. She explains that the protection of digital records entails a continuous management process that includes the regular back up of files and the off-site storage of duplicate files. Further, she makes a strong case for the need to educate oneself about the software in which the materials are housed. Those who know the frustration of struggling to unlock electronic information on the back end of a project, sometimes long after files have been generated, will appreciate the wisdom of planning for preservation and ongoing access early in the life cycle of digital records.

Forde also excels when she addresses more traditional preservation concerns. In her chapter on exhibitions, for example, she expertly guides the reader through the process of developing an institutional exhibition policy. Such a policy, she notes, should be defined and written, rather than passed on by oral communication. She advises that this document should outline which materials in the collection can be displayed, whether originals or copies will be exhibited, and the conditions under which borrowing institutions may secure items for temporary exhibits. She explains the importance of utilizing loan agreements and condition reports and includes a sample lending policy from the National Archives of Australia in an appendix. Forde details acceptable light, temperature, and humidity parameters for exhibited materials and lists inert materials that are safe to use in display cases. She also identifies those that off-gas and may harm exhibited items. This chapter will be a valuable resource for those repository staff members who lack training in standard exhibition procedures but are eager to develop professional exhibition guidelines. Forde's treatment of the many other preservation issues, including record handling procedures, security initiatives, and pest management, is equally thoughtful and thorough.

While Forde's insight and advice on all aspects of preservation work represent *Preserving Archives'* greatest strength, the book is also appealing because of its international scope. Although many examples draw on repositories in the United Kingdom, Forde cites best practices from the United States, Canada, Australia, and continental Europe. The appendices include a list of British and international standards relating to archival preservation as well as the contact information for professional organizations in such far-flung locations as Brazil, China, and South Africa. Despite the inclusive nature of the book's content, Forde's distinctly British perspective pervades the work, often with charming effect. To minimize the risk of fire she advocates the use of a central water boiler for staff members' tea, rather than individual kettles. In a section on disaster supplies, Forde recommends that staff keep "Wellington boots" and a "helmet with torch attached" on hand for emergencies (p. 129). Such touches bring an engaging flair to the text.

Preserving Archives includes supplemental materials that add value for the reader. Each chapter features sidebars with short case studies that provide concrete examples of the general principles covered by the surrounding narrative. Every chapter concludes with a summary of the major points comprehensive enough to give a solid overview of the foregoing pages. These summations, however, are not so detailed that a time-pressed graduate student could rely on them in lieu of reading the text. A useful collection of illustrations enhances the work throughout. The book also includes an index and an extensive bibliography of sources.

The one weakness of this work is Forde's apparent presumption that all archives are endowed with considerable operating and supplies budgets. Many of her suggestions will seem unobtainable to lone arrangers or those members of the profession working for organizations that limp along on shoestring budgets. For instance, when discussing exhibition management, Forde explains that "Curating, co-ordinating and running exhibitions is a major responsibility, involving many of the archive staff in different capacities. . . .Conservators should be involved in the planning of an exhibition from the start" (pp. 182–83). It is not clear, given this directive, how an exhibition can be properly mounted in a repository that employs only one staff member and has no access to curatorial services. A similar problem arises in Forde's description of the tools that archivists should employ. In her chapter on moving records, Forde states that dollies "should be steel-reinforced, lightweight and have a standard flush deck protected with carpet or other soft covering; the castors should be non-marking and double-ball with replacements easily available. . . .Various sizes are required to accommodate different needs" (p. 166). Repositories operating with financial constraints will no doubt find it difficult to purchase or even to hire a moving company that possesses equipment of this caliber. To be fair, Forde does, in select instances, recommend alternative courses of action for the

budget-conscious archivist. For example, if the resources to barcode individual items and record their location via an electronic database are not available, she suggests using a system of note cards to track materials during a move. However, considering the current funding woes for nearly all archival agencies, Forde might have elaborated further on cost- and labor-conscious alternatives for small repositories with limited monetary and human resources.

This one relatively minor criticism is not intended to detract from the work's overall excellence. Forde has compiled a definitive guide to preservation that condenses current, relevant information into an immensely readable work. It will serve as an ideal textbook for graduate courses in preservation and will likewise prove to be an indispensable reference source for practicing archivists and records managers. This exemplary book sets the standard for works on the vitally important topic of preservation, and it belongs on the bookshelf of everyone who bears a responsibility for ensuring the long-term availability of the historic record.

Heather Block Lawton
Special Collections Librarian
Minneapolis Public Library/
Minneapolis Athenaeum

A Handbook to Twentieth-Century Musical Sketches

Edited by Patricia Hall and Friedemann Sallis. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004. xiii, 254 pp. Illustrations. Music. $73.10. ISBN-13: 978-0521808606.

The study of musical sketches and drafts of musical compositions has been an intrinsic component of music scholarship for more than a hundred years. The term *musical sketch* usually refers to the written material that a composer produces while composing a musical work. This material can take the form of basic jottings of musical notation on paper to more elaborate sections of a work, and even written descriptive instructions and marginalia. The study of music manuscripts and the different types of musical notation has served as the theoretical foundation of manuscript studies since the nineteenth century. The body of work that has stemmed out of Beethoven's sketches, such as Douglas Johnson, Robert Winter, and Alan Tyson's *The Beethoven Sketchbooks: History, Reconstruction, Inventory* (1985), or the diverse studies of European musical notation, such as Willi Apel's *The Notation of Polyphonic Music, 900–1600* (1942), are examples of the application of musical manuscript studies. The new book *A Handbook to Twentieth-Century Musical Sketches* is among the first of its kind, mainly because it focuses on twentieth-century musical works and the composers who wrote these sketches. Editors Patricia Hall and Friedemann Sallis start out with an ambitious goal by labeling this publication as an "indispensable handbook [that] explains

how scholars and students should work with and think about the composer's working manuscripts" (p. i).

The book is a compilation of fourteen essays written by musicologists, music theorists, and composers who are currently working in Europe and the United States. The book is divided into two principal sections. Chapters 1to 6 provide the reader with the "knowledge and skills necessary to work efficiently in archives or other institutions housing manuscript material" (p. 2), and chapters 7 to 14 illustrate examples of studies on different composers and works that rely on the study of musical sketches. Overall, the book is quite interesting as it traces the ephemeral relationship of musical ideas and completed works relying on fragments of works and marginalia to understand how a piece fits within a composer's particular style or the use of a certain technique in a composition. Some chapters were not written originally in English, and though the translation proves to be adequate, in some instances the choice of terminology is not what is commonly used in archives and library literature. The section that directly addresses archival research leaves many questions unanswered for users of archival material, the intended audience. This section might also be of interest to practicing archivists wanting to familiarize themselves with how researchers perceive archival research. This review focuses on this first section, mainly because it addresses issues that directly relate to using archives as opposed to the second section, where the authors focus solely on the product of their research using musical sketches.

The first chapter, Sketches and Sketching, illustrates the main uses and characteristics of musical sketches, and the practical problems associated with studying and interpreting these fragments of musical thought. Chapter 2, Preliminaries Before Visiting an Archive, presents crucial tidbits of advice for those who are planning on visiting an archives to conduct research on manuscript material. Even though this chapter focuses on primary music sources, advice such as securing copies of the material prior to the visit to familiarize oneself with the composer's handwriting, makes a great starting point for anyone interested in preparing for researching manuscript sources. However, it was disappointing to find no mention of any kind of access tool to archival materials, either online or on paper. The author also does not mention two important archival principles, provenance and original order, which should probably be top subjects in any manual or guide to archival research. Chapter 3, Archival Etiquette, focuses on the basic handling and storage of paper documents and provides useful advice and illustrations on how to handle manuscripts while researching at the archives.

Chapter 4, the most captivating of this publication, is titled Coming to Terms with the Working Manuscripts. The author focuses on the current terminology that describes different types of sketches, including terms such as *sketch, draft,* and *fair copy*, and the different schools of thought that have

influenced the study and interpretation of sketches in musicological research. Chapter 5, The Classification of Musical Sketches Exemplified in the Catalogue of the Archivio Luigi Nono, explains the classification schema used by the archives of the Italian composer Luigi Nono (1924–1990), which involves a complex item-level numbering system that connects each item with related materials within the collection. While not the most traditional choice for archival arrangement and description, the author makes the case for arranging the material in this manner to highlight relationships between the different bodies of material within the collection. The next and closing chapter of the first section, Digital Preservation of Archival Material, presents a naïve approach to digitizing archival materials. The author explains the necessary steps that go into a digitization project but barely scratches the surface of the issues that arise when embarking on such an endeavor, mainly metadata creation, digital asset management, access, and long-term preservation of the reformatted material.

From an archivist's perspective, this book presents an interesting view of the distant relationship that exists between the scholarly and the archival communities. Archivists as a community of professionals strive to provide the best service to their constituency, always increasing access to holdings, and constantly improving access tools to facilitate the researcher's experience. But one can feel hopeless after reading comments such as "[g]iven the increasing complexity of compositional procedures, archivists and librarians often turn to musicologists because the challenges of cataloguing twentieth-century source material can be overwhelming" (p. 59). The researcher assumptions of how archival materials should be organized and interpreted reflect a lack of understanding about archival arrangement and description practices. This lack of understanding is noted again as some of the chapter authors refer to the "lack of organization" or the "need to systematically classify" archival collections to aid the researcher in the interpretation of the sources without ever mentioning finding aids and how they meaningfully describe a collection to facilitate access, or that standards for archival arrangement and description are methodically applied to finding aids and other access tools. This is, perhaps, the experience of the scholars that work in European institutions, but does not fall near archival practice in the United States. Nonetheless, this issue emphasizes the need for archivists to focus their outreach and access efforts on better educating users about what they do and how appraisal, arrangement, and description practices work in concert with one another resulting in the most useful research material.

The book provides a good selection of works on modern manuscripts and the skills needed to embark upon research projects of such caliber as those described in the last six chapters. It also may be a useful resource for anyone looking to develop or improve an introductory lesson on archival research since it casts a light on some of our users' assumptions and expectations. Archivists caring for music collections might want to examine this volume to gain further

insight into their target user community and the wide range of possibilities for the use of music manuscript sources.

Adriana P. Cuervo
Sousa Archives and Center for American Music

Build It Once: A Basic Primer for the Creation of Online Exhibitions

By Sarah Goodwin Thiel. Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow Press, 2007. 101 pp. Soft cover. Illustrations. Appendices. Bibliography. Index. ISBN 978-0-8108-5225-9.

An archives serves two important roles: providing a place where collections can be preserved and supplying a space where users can have access to these collections. In an attempt to preserve materials and at the same time encourage greater user awareness and access to specific collections, many archives and libraries with special collections have started online exhibition programs. A thin book, *Build It Once* in eight chapters attempts to be a basic manual for creating online exhibits intended for librarians and archivists who suddenly find themselves thrust into the role of creating exhibitions from scratch. Drawing from her work with online exhibitions at the Spencer Library at the University of Kansas, author Sarah Goodwin Thiel wrote this book with several purposes: first, to give practical advice at the start of a project and guidance along the way; second, to serve as a useful reference guide after the first project is completed and subsequent ones are being considered. The casual tone of this volume, the detailed step-by-step instructions, and the examples drawn from the online exhibitions of the Spencer Library, make readers feel that they are getting advice directly from someone who has been there and knows what she is talking about.

Attempting to walk the reader through the entire process of setting up an "exhibition- style" website is an ambitious undertaking, and so, with no superfluous text, the author gets down to business. Chapter 1 is three pages long and addresses how to define an exhibition's scope. Critical questions must be asked: Who is the target audience? What will the exhibit encompass? What resources do you have and what design considerations do you need to keep in mind before you start? Chapter 2 is two pages longer than the first and discusses the selection of equipment such as scanners, digital cameras, tripods, and imaging and Web-authoring software. Thiel also discusses a pattern common in creative technology projects—no matter how thorough the planning process, something always needs to be reconsidered. Speaking from my own experiences creating three online exhibitions from scratch, this should not be underestimated. Equipment needs, for instance, can evolve once the project is underway either because of the fragility of the material itself, or because of the inefficiency of the equipment initially selected. The author does well to point out that extra funds and lead time should be budgeted into every project, just in case.

Chapters 3 and 4 are surprisingly concise at six pages combined. Here, the author discusses the layout of the main Web page and how it relates to secondary and tertiary pages. She also defines the main exhibition components. At this point, I had expected a more detailed discussion of unifying a website's appearance, but Thiel only states that it is good practice to use cascading stylesheets and tables and then provides instructions for making them. She mentions design principles later, and then only in general terms. Chapters 5 and 6 provide detailed instructions for creating digital images to be used as exhibition graphics, navigation menus, and exhibition material and then how to insert these images once the layout has been established. Chapters 7 and 8 explore how Macromedia Dreamweaver works and how to use it to create an exhibition through step-by-step explanations and checklists. All six of these technical chapters use screenshot examples and fundamental design and Web architecture principles to illustrate the author's points, making all of her instructions very easy to follow.

The final part of the book contains appendices, a bibliography, and an index, and it includes much useful information in a section on the Leab Exhibition Awards evaluation criteria, a digitization glossary, and W3C Quick Tips to Make Websites Accessible. However, I did find this section incomplete for future reference. The bibliography could have benefited from including other good online exhibit sites.

Indeed, in the introduction and in chapter 3, Thiel suggests looking at a wide variety of websites to get ideas, yet I feel a complete novice would probably welcome a few more specific suggestions. For example, http://www.sil.si.edu/SILPublications/Online-Exhibitions, the Smithsonian Institution's link to online exhibitions created by libraries, archives, historical societies, and museums, focuses on paper collections, and it is international and multilingual in scope. The author also could have mentioned a few previous winners of the Leab Awards and commented on features that make an exhibit particularly good, or how a technique or style influenced a particular Spencer Library online exhibition. In keeping with the conciseness of the book, this information could have been conveyed in a paragraph or listed in bullet points.

For the most part, the book serves as a case study of how to build an online exhibition using examples from the Spencer Library. The illustrative screenshots included throughout the book, not in color unfortunately, invite the reader to look at all the Spencer Library's online exhibitions. In viewing them, one can see how Web design techniques and style have evolved over time. Although in the bibliography Thiel does refer readers to *Creating a Winning Online Exhibition: A Guide for Libraries, Archives, and Museums* and *Homepage Usability: 50 Websites Deconstructed*, both of which provide in-depth design and usability implementation, she might have recommended other design books that she used herself. I was curious about what key ideas worked for the Spencer

Library's exhibits and how their creators came to some design decisions. I also wondered how earlier facets of one particular exhibit might have influenced decisions on subsequent ones.

The Spencer Library seems to have some fantastic collections, and looking at some of its online exhibitions, one cannot help but be impressed at the range. However, whether the author intended it or not, her book implies to novice Web designers that any special collection will automatically provide enough inspiration to make a good online exhibition. Whether it will or not depends, in fact, on the creativity and intuition of staff. Online exhibitions can be unified visually in three major ways: by color, motif, or metaphor. It would have been helpful to readers if Thiel had analyzed any of the three websites she sampled in her book. She might have stated explicitly how the color scheme for *John Gould: His Birds and His Beasts* was chosen to complement the artist's drawings, watercolors, and prints of the natural world; or how the metallic background image for *The Great Exhibition of the Industry of Nations, 1851*, which resembles an early machine engineering plan, links visually with the Victorian era; or, that in the *Frosted Windows: 300 Years of St. Petersburg Through Western Eyes*, "window" is a metaphor for a limited view into another world. These three techniques work fairly well online, and using them to illustrate design ideas (in addition to creating something practical) need not have detracted from the book's brevity.

The final concern that some readers may have with this book is its emphasis on Macromedia Dreamweaver software. For those who may know some manual HTML/XML coding and are in the process of acquiring software to assist with layout, this book is a useful guide to learning about specific features and advantages of Dreamweaver. For hand-coding technicians, or those who aspire to be, this is probably not the right book. But then it does not claim to be. Thiel intends this book to be a "practical, focused road map" for those who consider themselves "un-techie" or "techno-newbies." She succeeds with this effort overall. This book shows exactly how the world of archives and special collections can thrive in the digital age and gain new audiences, and it provides basic standards and best practices anyone can use.

Rose Roberto
University of Leeds, U.K.

WEB REVIEWS

Jeannette Bastian, Reviews Editor

North Carolina Postcards: North Carolina Collection, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, http://www.lib.unc.edu/dc/nc_post/
Accessed 9 October 2007.

North Carolina Postcards is an online exhibit available through the North Carolina Collection at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The North Carolina Collection "documents the history, literature and culture" of the state and features maps, journals, newspapers, and photographs, as well as more than 120,000 books and 78,000 pamphlets. The postcard exhibit contains a selection of the more than 12,000 North Carolina postcards found in two collections, the North Carolina Collection and the Durwood Barbour Collection of North Carolina Postcards. *North Carolina Postcards* contains 1,360 items and includes at least one image from each of the hundred counties in North Carolina.

From the main page, users can search across the collection using a text box, browse the collection by location or subject, learn more about the site, or select links for the North Carolina Collection, Digital Collections, or Research Help, which directs users to contact information for the university libraries. Although it is not entirely clear from the homepage, users can also click on the large postcard image, which displays a selection of "Greetings from North Carolina" postcards, to browse the entire collection.

Browse by Location links to a map of North Carolina with clickable counties, as well as a list of locations, which includes counties, towns and cities, and geographical areas such as Great Smoky Mountains. Browse by Subject features a list of broad subject terms from "Actors" to "Young Women's Christian Associations." A column on the right of the screen highlights specific subjects. Click on the image for "Textile Mills" and jump to a Google map identifying the location of mills. Select a mill, and its location with an image is highlighted on the map. Click on the image to view the full record for that postcard.

About this Site includes detailed information on the standard metadata fields established for the collection: Title, Caption, Transcription, Creator, Publisher, Date, Description, Subject, Subject—Name, Subject—Topical, Subject—Geographic, and Local Identifier. For example, Subject—Name lists the proper names of businesses, individuals, or institutions that appear on a number of cards, while Subject—Topical is for broad subject headings describing what the card is about, with "Postcards—North Carolina" being the most frequently used heading. This section also defines and describes the standard date ranges

applied to postcards that did not have an exact printing or mailing date, lists permissions and reproductions information, and provides links to related regional collections.

The University of North Carolina uses CONTENTdm to organize, manage, and present *North Carolina Postcards* and seven other collections. The digital collection management system does allow for the creation of multiple collections, but it is not always easy or possible to keep those collections separate. Project staff members used customization options to brand the collections. *North Carolina Postcards* has its own homepage, and users are not taken to the CONTENTdm pages until they view search or browsing results. Within those results pages, the postcard collection has its own identifiable banner and color scheme. The results page has also been changed so that users view the results as thumbnails with just the title, instead of the default grid option. These customizations help to identify this digital collection within a larger set of collections and assist users with navigation.

The difficulties arise when users try to search instead of browse the collection. Searching is available through a free-text box on the main page, but this does not allow for searching within specific fields. To do that, users must select "Search selected collections" from the results page. On this page, the *North Carolina Postcards* identity is lost and users are taken to a general UNC Library Digital Collections page. They can use this page for a more advanced search but will have to deselect the other collections listed if they are only interested in the materials within the postcards collection. A Help link does provide general CONTENTdm information on how to use the page. The About link, however, directs users to a blank page with no information on any of the collections.

Once users reach the Advanced Search or Search Selected Collections page, they will have difficulty returning to the *North Carolina Postcards* site. The Browse link directs users to the results for the *Billy E. Barnes Collection;* a pull-down menu allows them to select *NC Postcards.* Because users of the other collections are also directed to this general Advanced Search page, there can't be a link back to one collection; otherwise, there would need to be a link to each collection. To make up for this, there is a link to All Collections Home, which allows users to select *North Carolina Postcards* again. Users not familiar with the site or CONTENTdm may get lost within the pages or depend on their browser's back button, which may or may not be reliable.

North Carolina Postcards is a clean, attractive site that makes good use of CONTENTdm's customization options to identify its pages. It is an excellent sample of two large collections and provides a broad array of postcards in terms of subject, location, and period. Its content appeals to users interested in postcards, North Carolina, or aspects of the early twentieth century. Overall, it is easy to navigate but has some drawbacks due to limits imposed by its system's current version.

Online Archive of California, http://www.oac.cdlib.org/. Accessed 9 October 2007.

On the other side of the country is the *Online Archive of California* (OAC), which is part of the California Digital Library (CDL). The OAC formally joined the CDL in 1998 but has its roots in the work of Daniel Pitti and others at the University of California Berkeley Libraries and the development of a finding aid standard using an SGML DTD. This led to the development of EAD through the Society of American Archivists and Library of Congress.

According to its description, the OAC is "a digital information resource that facilitates and provides access to materials such as manuscripts, photographs, and works of art held in libraries, museums, archives, and other institutions across California." It contains more than 120,000 images; 50,000 pages; and 8,000 guides. Materials are organized into collections based on theme and institution. Users can browse virtual collections and search by type of material (finding aid, image, text). From the homepage, users can learn more about the OAC, view a list of contributing institutions, and submit a survey assessing the website. They can also select one of three tabs—Finding Aids, Images, or Text—and conduct a search in a free-text box.

The OAC is designed for a variety of users, from scholars and researchers to students and the general public. Because the site wants to reach a wide audience, it provides tips and descriptions to facilitate usage. Beneath the search boxes are truncation tips. For users not familiar with finding aids, the OAC includes a brief definition next to the search box. Selecting Advanced Search under Finding Aids allows users to search an entire finding aid or search by collection description, collection inventory, collection title, or call number and to limit the search by contributing institution. The search can be for all institutions or one, but multiple institutions cannot be selected. A list of finding aids is available under Related Pages. This allows users to browse an alphabetical list of all finding aids by collection title. A small camera icon indicates which finding aids include digital images.

An advanced search is not available for images, but users can browse by topic: History, Nature, People, Places, Society, and Technology. Hover over the link or image to view a pop-up of categories covered within the topic. For example, Nature covers Landscapes, Animals, Waterfronts, Plants, and more. Click to browse by category or to browse an alphabetical list of materials. Selecting Nature, Waterfronts, and "beach," retrieves 2,266 items, with twenty thumbnails on a page, sorted by relevance. No identifying information is available until a user selects a thumbnail, and the results look almost cramped on the page, with a table of five items by four items on the left half of the screen and whitespace on the right half. Users can re-sort the results by Title, Publisher, or Year but can't adjust the number of results on a page or the level of information provided. Once they select an image, users can view descriptive details and select

a printable version with or without those details. Fields vary depending on the collection, but include elements such as Title, Identifier, Subject, Creator, and Collection.

Texts available on the site include newspaper articles, press releases, correspondence, and transcripts of oral histories. An advanced search is not possible, but the texts can be browsed by collection. Click a link to visit the original digital collection's website or click the link to the number of results. Most of those links direct users to a page with numbered results, twenty results per page, sorted by Title. Users can also sort by Relevance, Publisher, and Year. The results show the title, publisher, and subject(s). Click on the title to view the full item or click on a subject to retrieve other items with the same subject heading. When they select a text, users can also search within the text to find a specific word or phrase. Instead of directing users to a numbered results page, the links for the Free Speech Movement Digital Archive and the UC Berkeley Regional Oral History Office point to a list of categories within the collection. Selecting one of those categories lists the individual results.

The Online Archive of California is a comprehensive site that will appeal to serious scholars and casual researchers looking for texts and images about the history and culture of California. The site is relatively easy to navigate and uses breadcrumbs on some pages to direct users back to previous pages. A Help page provides searching tips for each of the categories, and a Site Map lists the pages for each category. Some links are buried under Related Pages, which appear on the left-hand side of the screen on some pages. These links could be organized by category or be included on the homepage. To find out about Technical Information, which discusses the use of EAD and Text Encoding Initiative (TEI), users need to refer to the site map or click on the link for About the OAC, but the homepage does not include Technical Information with the other About links. A link to the survey appears on multiple pages, which indicates the organization is serious about wanting feedback to make the site as user friendly and navigable as possible.

Emily Symonds
Metadata and Digital Initiatives Librarian
Wabash Valley Visions and Voices
Indiana State University