Notes

1 Rachel Walton, "Looking for Answers: A Usability Study of Online Finding Aid Navigation," *American Archivist* 80, no. 1 (2017): 30–52, https://doi.org/10.17723/0360-9081.80.1.30.

2 See Dennis Meissner, "First Things First: Reengineering Finding Aids for Implementation of EAD," *American Archivist* 60, no. 4 (1997): 372–87, https://doi.org/10.17723/aarc.60.4.6405275227647220.

3 TS-DACS has moved toward a continuous improvement model, leveraging GitHub for ongoing requests for change to principles and standards, alike. This new approach diverges from previous practice of codifying DACS in a publication that would be reviewed periodically.

4 Meissner does mention "challenges to original order" in his "Emerging Trends" chapter (p. 144), but this change to the DACS principles is not referenced in his writing on the topic.

5 Society of American Archivists' Technical Subcommittee on *Describing Archives: A Content Standard* (TS-DACS), *Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DACS)* (2019). Most up-to-date documentation is available on GitHub at https://github.com/saa-ts-dacs/dacs.

The Digital Archives Handbook: A Guide to Creation, Management, and Preservation

Edited by Aaron D. Purcell. Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 2019.
270 pp. Softcover and EPUB. Softcover $50.00, EPUB $47.50.
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The Digital Archives Handbook seeks to provide practitioners with the "who, what, and how of digital archives" (p. xx). Bringing together archivists and experts, Aaron D. Purcell has created a guide on how to handle digital archives. The volume is divided into two sections, the first addressing practices and processes and the second detailing specific types of materials and archival environments. Functional aspects of digital archives, such as infrastructure, access, donors and deeds of gift, institutional commitment, and researchers' needs, are illustrated with real-world examples. Each of the ten chapters in the book is written by a practitioner or expert who has hands-on experience with digital archives. Much like Purcell's book about donor relations, *Donors and Archives: A Guidebook for Successful Programs* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2015), this volume is intended to be a practical guide to help archivists begin managing digital archives and not stay mired in theory or presumptions of ideal situations.

The first five chapters in part 1, "Processes and Practices," address the fundamentals of digital archives. In "Acquisitions, Appraisal, and Arrangement," Lisa Calahan writes about the acquisition, appraisal, and arrangement of digital materials at University of Minnesota Libraries. Dorothy Waugh tackles description and access in "Description and Delivery," with examples of the Salman Rushdie computers at Emory University. These two chapters demonstrate how

archival fundamentals apply to digital materials and reflect processes already familiar to archivists. The following two chapters focus on the preservation of digital archives. Bertram Lyons's chapter, "Digital Preservation," details how to create a digital preservation program and how this can be done with the staff and resources realistically available. In "Digital Forensics and Curation," Martin Gengenbach explains how digital forensics can increase access to materials trapped on obsolete carriers and ensure the integrity and authenticity of files. The last chapter in the section, "Contracts, Intellectual Property, and Privacy," by Heather Briston, addresses copyright, intellectual property, and deeds of gift. Copyright and intellectual property have always been difficult issues for archives, but Briston provides clear definitions and sample deeds of gift to help archivists feel more comfortable about broaching the issue with donors.

The second section, "Collections and Environments," starts with Vincent J. Novara describing the unique challenges of rights management, obsolete formats, and creators' demands for digital performing arts collections at the University of Maryland in "Performing Arts Collections." Douglas Boyd, the creator of OHMS (Oral History Metadata Synchronizer), discusses in "Oral History Collections" the recent explosion of oral histories and how archivists need to be involved early in the process and be aware of technical and access challenges for these materials. In "Architectural and Design Collections," Aliza Leventhal handles the constantly shifting world of proprietary formats for the creation and rendering of architecture and design collections. Leventhal's chapter is also a reminder to archivists that accepting complex digital collections means a certain level of institutional buy-in for digital preservation, public access, and staff technical training. "Congressional Collections," by Danielle Emerling, features large and complex papers from members of Congress that not only contain hundreds of linear feet of paper records, but also websites, emails, and constituent correspondence databases. Matthew Farrell's chapter "Email," explains the challenges of voluminous emails, their proprietary formats, and the latest tools that allow for access and conversion to more sustainable and open formats. These chapters deal with proprietary formats, rights management, copyright, file size, and access. Each writer stresses the need for archivists to talk with donors early and provide realistic expectations concerning donors' digital materials. These examples demonstrate that digital content can be managed in a variety of ways and settings, allaying fears that archivists must create the ideal situation before attempting to collect digital materials.

The "who and what" in this handbook are practitioners from a wide variety of institutions handling various digital formats. The "who" are archivists in university settings, corporate archives, regional history centers, and specialty format archives. The "what" are digital materials that vary by format, size, and levels of access. Examples, such as a congressional constituent database, CAD

drawings, oral histories, emails, dance performances, and university records, demonstrate that solutions can be found for any format. As Matthew Farrell explains in his chapter on email, platforms such as ePADD or the storage format MBOX can help make emails more accessible. The unique demands of performing arts materials, such as providing access to legacy formats like VHS or reel-to-reel by creating digital surrogates while staying true to the artist's original vision, are addressed in Vincent J. Novara's chapter on performing arts materials. This broad inclusion allows readers to see solutions in several settings with multiple formats.

Purcell aims to show the "how" of digital archives by having the writers provide specific examples about how their institutions manage digital materials. Lisa Calahan describes how the Electronic Records Task Force at University of Minnesota Libraries created its policies, guidelines, and procedures through trial and error and realistic expectations of arrangement and description and access. Seeing that policies and procedures can be continually refined by lessons learned about the abilities and funding of a given institutional setting has value. Dorothy Waugh offers a compelling example about access with Salman Rushdie's computers. Emulation allows users to interact with a version of Rushdie's Performa 5400 computer in the Rose Library at Emory University. This type of access enables users to see the environment in which Rushdie was writing and experience the original order of his file system. While the Rose Library hoped to have all four of Rushdie's computers available for this emulation access, currently the Performa 5400 is the only computer accessible in this manner. The technical infrastructure and resources needed to emulate access to the other three computers was prohibitive, but the emulation of one computer was a worthwhile endeavor to understand what level of access could reasonably be given in the current setting. Heather Briston provides sample deeds of gift to show how issues of copyright and intellectual property can be handled for donors and their digital materials. This sample language provides a starting point for archivists and institutional counsel to address the long-term component of access, while considering the complexity of copyright.

The value of this book is not just in the examples provided or practical explanations of theory, but also as a source for further reading. Each chapter is rich with citations that can provide more information about a particular aspect of digital archives. Even if the actions taken in each chapter do not feel useful to an archivist in a specific setting, the book does prove that digital materials can be managed and that there is not just one way to manage them. However, the text would have benefited from the addition of details about staffing numbers, budgets, and training provided to paint a more complete picture of how each institution was able to manage digital archives. But this is a minor criticism. This volume is a great companion to Michael Shallcross and Christopher

J. Prom's edited volume, *Appraisal and Acquisition Strategies*,[1] as the best practices described enrich Purcell's real-world examples and give readers an informed view of digital archives.

The goal of this book is to give archivists the tools and confidence to "overcome current challenges and chart paths that anticipate, rather than merely react to, future donations of digital archives" (p. xxiv). These records cannot wait for the ideal situation; archivists must act now by learning about the formats being acquired by their institutions, setting realistic policies and procedures, talking early and often with their donors about expectations and access, documenting the work so future archivists understand their choices and actions, staying abreast of new technologies and tools, and continuously advocating for resources. Archivists have learned to maintain analog collections without the benefit of ideal staffing, funding, or resources, and Purcell wants to empower them to handle digital materials in the same manner. Action is important, and *The Digital Archives Handbook* provides realistic solutions and a way to get started.

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NOTE

[1] Michael Shallcross and Christopher J. Prom, eds., *Appraisal and Acquisition Strategies* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2016).