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Reviews

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Lauren Kata, Peter J. Wosh, Ellen Garrison, Tina Mason, Anke Voss, and Patricia Willingham

Reviews

Digital Imaging: A Practical Approach. By Jill Marie
Koelling. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2004. Index, bibli-
ography, illustrated. 112 pp. Softcover, $24.00

    Digital Imaging: A Practical Approach is a perfect ad-
dition to the American Association for State and Local History
Book Series. Addressing the practical issues associated with be-
ginning and managing digital projects, Koelling provides a man-
ageable and easy-to-read text for users at all levels. Largely based
on Koelling's experiences at the Nebraska State Historical Soci-
ety where she served as curator of photographs and head of digi-
tal imaging, she designed this work as an overview of and intro-
duction to digital imaging, laid out in eight straightforward and
illustrated chapters. Covering such fundamentals as ethics and
copyright, project management, equipment, metadata and other
technical specifications, *Digital Imaging* discusses the core ele-
ments involved in any digital project. It also lives up to its title in
focusing primarily on practicalities. This text is useful not just
for archivists, but also for curators, librarians, technicians, schol-
ars, teachers, and students, and does include multiple formats

of documents, in contrast to many digitization guides that focus solely on photographs.

With so many guides to digital imaging and digital preservation now available online and on the market, Koelling's book has some interesting and unique aspects to offer, especially to beginners. First, instead of placing the glossary at the end, she has featured it in the beginning as Chapter One because, she asserts, it is very important to speak "digital." "Get comfortable with the language so that the rest of the book will be easy to understand," Koelling writes in the preface. This is a useful approach, especially as her glossary includes some annotation and illustrations in addition to definitions of key terms. Readers would be remiss in skipping over this chapter.

Digitization is not just an access tool, but also an enhancement tool, as Koelling contends in Chapter Eight, "Revealing History: Image Enhancement as a Research Tool." Here she explores techniques one can use to discover "hidden information," as well as to recover information from deteriorating originals, using digitization software. "The implications for historical research are mindboggling," she claims, as she provides several examples that speak to the power and possibilities of carefully supervised image manipulation for research. Koelling admits that she chose to include this chapter "just for fun and because not much is being said about the unexpected benefits of digital projects."

Koelling means for this book to serve as a beginner's practical guide to digital imaging. As such, the primary focus is on the process of digitization, rather than the issues surrounding it. For some of the more controversial or sophisticated issues covered, such as copyright and long-term preservation and storage, readers should probably look to other resources, as well as institutional policy and administration for guidance. Nor does she provide specific product comparison tables for digitization equipment or supplies: although these things may not be appropriate for this publication, they are necessary for managing digital projects. Finally, while Koelling does provide a bit of advice and project management strategy for working with vendors, *Digital Imaging* is more appropriate as a guide for in-house or do-it-yourself projects.

Overall this is a useful resource. In the current age, the likelihood that digital imaging will not involve or impact an archivist or local history professional seems slim. For anyone looking for a readable and approachable overview of digitization, I recommend Koelling's book.

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The Digital Person: Technology and Privacy in the Information Age. By Daniel J. Solove. New York: New York University Press, 2004. Index. 283 pp. Hardcover, $29.95.

Daniel Solove, a professor at the George Washington University Law School and a widely cited legal authority on privacy issues, has written this book primarily as a reformist tract. He argues that contemporary technological developments have successfully undermined traditional statutory regulations designed to safeguard personal information. American culture, in his view, requires both a new conceptual framework for thinking about privacy and new legal strictures in order to protect sensitive data in a freewheeling digital environment. Most archivists will recognize his record keeping concerns, though many may disagree with his dire prescriptions and question the practicality of his proposed legislative solutions. Solove succeeds in crafting a clearly written and vigorously argued advocacy piece. Readers will need to look elsewhere, however, for a balanced presentation that places privacy issues in a more satisfying and comprehensive historical perspective.

Solove builds his argument around the existence of "digital dossiers" in cyberspace culture. He briefly chronicles the rise of governmental and private sector databases, reciting a familiar litany of villains who threaten the sanctity of personal information: credit reporting agencies, careless bureaucrats, nefarious direct marketers, annoying spammers, and sinister hackers. Technological change has exacerbated the problem by permitting interested parties to easily amass and link individual data from varied sources. This produces an "aggregation effect" that

essentially destroys personal privacy by combining financial, educational, medical, and psychographic data concerning individuals into comprehensive digital biographies that often convey inaccurate and misleading information. Archivists who struggle to preserve electronic records might be amused by the author's offhanded contention that "little on the Internet disappears or is forgotten, even when we delete or change the information," but he successfully articulates the dangers and possibilities of unauthorized record linkage.

Conceptual and political problems, in Solove's view, have prevented Americans from effectively confronting the digital dilemma. Orwellian notions of Big Brother, attempting to stifle political dissent by conducting secret surveillance on unsuspecting citizens, have hitherto dominated the intellectual and legal discourse surrounding privacy. Solove views this metaphor as outdated and less relevant to contemporary concerns, proposing instead a Kafkaesque alternative. Drawing on the story of Joseph K. from Franz Kafka's novel, *The Trial*, Solove argues that ordinary citizens are most often victimized by thoughtless bureaucrats who carelessly handle personal information without malicious or sinister intent. Routine record keeping decisions, made by government officials and private employees without any accountability and often based on narrow short-term considerations, silently erode privacy. The existence of vast storehouses of personal information, though often acquired in a piecemeal fashion for relatively benign purposes, makes people vulnerable to such dangers as racial profiling, arbitrary decisionmaking, and petty retaliation.

Even worse, the legal system offers few remedies. In the most convincing section of his book, Solove illustrates the way in which privacy legislation has evolved in an idiosyncratic and patchwork fashion. Over the past three decades, Congress has passed a series of laws designed to deal with such specific issues as student files, video rentals, motor vehicle records, personal health care information, and cable viewing habits. This largely ineffective legislative potpourri fails to articulate any overarching social philosophy, provides only inadequate tort remedies for aggrieved consumers, and focuses on issues involving discrete pieces of data rather than more systemic flaws in the informational universe. Solove argues that the United States requires a new legal "architecture" to protect privacy by restructuring the

relationship between business and government. His specific so-
lutions include holding record keepers more accountable for the
types of data they maintain, empowering citizens to control ac-
cess to their personal information, better balancing the compet-
ing social demands for transparency and privacy, and shifting
the informational power dynamic from institutions to individu-
als. Solove believes that the Fourth Amendment, properly inter-
preted, can serve as the basis for this new legal architecture, when
supplemented by a new and improved Privacy Act and a more
coherent legislative approach.

Archivists may view some of Solove's solutions with a
wary eye. He confidently embraces records redaction as an ef-
fective regulatory mechanism, but this complicated and time-
consuming process remains administratively unwieldy for pub-
lic records professionals. He somewhat cavalierly advocates
mandatory destruction schedules for documentary materials,
without considering their historical, cultural, and permanent
archival significance. His suggestion that "information collected
from third party records may only be used for the particular pur-
pose for which it is collected" would appear to negate most re-
search use. Depending on one's philosophical and political pro-
clivities, *The Digital Person* either correctly shifts accountabil-
ity for record keeping dilemmas to governmental entities and
the private sector, or constitutes an alarmist jeremiad that will
both hinder ongoing public regulatory activity and stifle private
commerce.

Philosophical considerations aside, the book illustrates
one other problematic academic issue. Solove accurately ac-
knowledges that "privacy is contextual and historically contin-
gent," shaped by particular cultural norms and social practices
that constantly change and evolve. His argument would have ben-
efited from a more sustained engagement with the historical
forces that have shaped American attitudes toward privacy. He
presents some useful background concerning late-nineteenth
century privacy debates, but remains sketchy about overall trends
and historical roots. Solove provides a "history of public-sector
databases" in three pages, and churns out a "history of private-
sector databases" in only five. He contrasts "traditional" concep-
tions of privacy with contemporary formulations, thereby mask-
ing the complexities and disagreements that swirl around such
issues during particular historical moments. Solove would have

strengthened his case by systematically consulting the growing historical literature on privacy, and by examining in more detail the ways in which archivists and record keepers have attempted to balance privacy and access. In fact, Solove seems largely unaware that such debates and discussions take place in the archival world. Legal scholars, historians, and archivists clearly live in different professional universes. Their literature rarely overlaps, to the detriment of each discipline. Archivists may not all agree with Solove, but they need to take his arguments seriously, read widely in such literature, and build more effective links with academics who share their concerns.

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Lester J. Cappon and the Relationship of History, Archives, and Scholarship in the Golden Age of Archival Theory. Edited with an introduction by Richard J. Cox. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2004. Illustrations, index. 234 pp. Softcover, $45.00 (SAA Member Price, $35.00)

The editors of the 1981 *Who Was Who* chose to describe Society of American Archivists Fellow Lester J. Cappon as a "historian," a choice that might have both pleased and puzzled Cappon himself. Pleased, because throughout his life he advocated historical training as the essential preparation for an archival career. Puzzled, because his job title at Colonial Williamsburg, the institution with which he was most closely associated, was "archivist;" he also served successively as secretary, from 1942 to 1950, as vice-president in 1955, and as president of the Society of American Archivists in 1957; and his work frequently appeared in *American Archivist*. But then, Cappon would not have seen the terms "historian" and "archivist" as contradictory or mutually exclusive.

Anyone familiar with the current spats among archival educators might therefore consider Richard Cox an unlikely candidate to edit a collection of Cappon's writings. In fact, such a pairing would seem to be the modern equivalent of asking John Calvin to edit a volume of papal encyclicals. Fortunately, Cox did decide to edit such a volume, for he has produced a work

that is both balanced and useful in spite of the editor's predictably Jovian tone.

Cox clearly explains the value of this volume by saying that Cappon's essays, in his view, "document the formation of an American archival profession," an accurate assessment of Cappon's position in archival history. Cappon's writings, like those of others of his generation, were also both elegant and learned, and the thorough and often witty reviews of the professional literature that he incorporated into virtually every essay would themselves justify the publication of this volume. However, in his wide-ranging introduction Cox exhibits such considerable skill in relating Cappon's writings to current problems in what he calls "historical hermeneutics" that he adds to the usefulness of this work for both scholars and practitioners.

Inexplicably, the volume does not incorporate several of Cappon's writings described at length in the introduction. One wonders why, for example, Cox omits what he himself calls "the best scholarly treatment on genealogical research" by an archivist but includes several of Cappon's works that he acknowledges "did not show him at his best" and more than one article on the technical minutiae of archival practice published in library journals. One also wishes that Cox had incorporated one or two of Cappon's early annual reports described in the introduction, which would have provided a valuable prologue to Cappon's development as an archivist and a scholar. Readers may also be disappointed that Cox or his publisher relegated many of his liveliest and most informative observations to the footnotes at the back of the book.

Of course, it is always easy for a reviewer to question an editor's selection of material, a process rendered more likely in this case because Cox does not explain his criteria beyond saying that he picked out those essays that in his opinion were "of most interest to North American archivists." Such questions as a rule, however, represent a judgment of the volume the reviewer expected or wanted the author to write. It is far more appropriate to judge a book by the criteria the author set for himself, one Cox has successfully met. As he hoped, he has produced a volume that will be an essential addition to any academic or professional library, and has helped bring Cappon back into the archival canon. Surely most archival educators will want to add at least one of these essays to their syllabi, probably Cappon's delightful

and provocative 1951 keynote SAA address, "The Archival Profession and the Society of American Archivists."

If this work is as widely read as it should be, Richard Cox will have also helped prepare the ground for the mature analytical studies in archival theory that both he and Cappon have called for, no small accomplishment and one that merits approval.

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Managing Preservation for Libraries and Archives: Current Practice and Future Developments. Edited by John Feather. Aldershot, England: Ashgate Publishing, 2004. Index, 173 pp. Hardcover, $94.95/£47.50.

Preservation of and access to information has become increasingly important and complicated. Paradoxical problems of shrinking budgets and expanding digital programs make the jobs of preservation administrators and archivists an exceptional challenge. Advances in traditional and non-traditional preservation techniques are exciting, while advances in digital technology burden the field with more formats, software, and hardware, with no end in sight.

Managing Preservation for Libraries and Archives: Current Practice and Future Developments succeeds in giving the reader a synopsis of recent developments in the field in a collection of essays that tackle both traditional and new problems facing libraries and archives. The first chapter gives a quick overview of preservation ideals, obstacles, and strategies and summarizes key preservation principles such as artifactual versus informational value, causes of damage (internal and external), and the importance of having preservation policies. The introduction reminds us that, even though the landscape of information delivery and the methods and best practices of preservation have evolved, our goals and missions are still the same.

The first few chapters take on the difficult job of synthesizing the issues associated with digitization. The first task is defining the digital dilemma—the diverse types of collections, the resources needed to preserve them, problems with technol-

ogy and obsolescence, and organizational challenges. The author asks us to ponder if we can really expect digital information to survive in institutions without the resources for proper preservation. This segues nicely to the next chapters on selection for digital preservation and long-term storage issues. The last half of the book explains new advances in the preservation of more traditional formats (paper and sound recordings) and contains web and print resources on preservation management. Some of the "new advances" are not so new, e.g., mass deacidification. Still, the book provides the reader with a useful overview of past and present research on each subject in manageable, understandable doses.

As implied by the title, the book presumes the reader has a basic understanding of preservation, yet beginners can also benefit from it. The chapters are well-written, the headings and subheadings make it easy to navigate, and each chapter ends with a list of references for further reading. If you are behind in your reading, this book is a good summary of recent literature and research and a good complement to the many "how-to" guides to preservation management.

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Protecting Your Library's Digital Sources: The Essential Guide to Planning and Preservation. By Miriam B. Kahn. Chicago: American Library Association, 2004. Index, bibliography. 104 pp. Softcover, $40.00.

The author who brought us the invaluable instruction guide for writing a disaster plan, *Disaster Response and Planning for Libraries*, 2nd Edition (ALA, 2003), and a preservation professional with broad experience in writing, teaching, and consulting in the preservation management field, Miriam B. Kahn offers another guide that no librarian or archivist concerned with safeguarding his or her institutions' digital resources should be without. Kahn has written a concise and readable guide to help smaller libraries and archives in particular plan and respond to

digital disasters by physically and intellectually safeguarding their resources, hardware, software applications, and data for the future.

The volume is organized into two sections and nine chapters of narrative text, concluding with a tenth chapter that provides twenty-nine invaluable checklists to help practitioners put Kahn's recommendations into practice (for example, the essential components of a basic computer response plan). The book concludes with a current bibliography, a useful index, an appendix of contact information for organizations involved with the preservation of electronic records, and a second appendix of companies that protect or help cope with the loss of digital materials. Her use of case studies and real-world examples helps illustrate recommended strategies.

While many institutions have developed disaster plans to safeguard their print collections, Kahn shares her dismay that preparedness levels to safeguard digital resources, like circulation records, websites, online exhibits, all of which have become essential in providing services, still vary greatly. Kahn suggests that working with digital materials requires the same type of proactive advance planning as audio-visual materials, which are equally vulnerable to the passage of time and changes in technology.

The first section of this volume looks primarily at short-term solutions for protecting data, including backup procedures, the importance of an up-to-date computer disaster response plan that includes an inventory of all hardware, software and data, a priority list for data recovery, and the importance of cooperation and coordination among the individual members of the institution-wide disaster team. While this volume concentrates on protecting the software and data-side of disaster response, it does provide some useful advice on disaster response to recover or replace hardware, including such areas as recovery procedures, insurance coverage, and recovery of those coveted backups like magnetic tape, optical disks, and diskettes.

In the second section, Kahn expresses concern with long-term preservation and access to material in digital libraries and archives, and includes a discussion of options for copying ("refreshing"), migration, reformatting, and converting, as well as the less-explored option of emulation. In this section, the author makes a special plea for project plans that include long-term stor-

age, staffing, and expertise, with greatest emphasis on the importance of overall budgeting for future storage. In Kahn's view, the challenge lies in the misperception that when we create backup storage we preserve data, both physically and intellectually, in perpetuity, or that file formats like JPEG, TIFF, ASCII, or even PDF promise standards that will allow access to data forever. Unfortunately, file formats are inherently unreliable, and without any planning, our successors in the field will face obsolete data formats, to say nothing of the hardware that surely in less than a few decades can only be recovered at a local dump. Kahn suggests several ways that libraries and archives can protect the intellectual content of digital projects so that it may be accessed and identified in the future. Finally, Kahn cautions in her discussion on copyright issues that no institution can avoid an investigation of copyright law that might have an impact on any planned or sustained digital collection.

Kahn concludes the narrative of Section Two with an encouraging discussion of the international effort for the long-term retention of digital resources, by describing the initiatives and work of over a dozen national and international organizations that are working diligently to develop interoperable metadata standards, foster the exchange of information and collaboration, provide guidance and education, and conduct research in the area of digital preservation and access. Chapter Ten concludes this volume and provides twenty-nine checklists including, formulating a computer disaster response plan, keeping track of information about digital resources, and making important decisions about the future retention and accessibility of your digital resources.

Protecting Your Library's Digital Sources is highly recommended reading for its assessment of the pertinent issues and practical guidelines it provides for all those concerned with safeguarding the digital sources at their institution.

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Preservation and Conservation for Libraries and Archives. By Nelly Balloffet and Jenny Hille. Chicago: American Library Association, 2005. 214 pp. $125.00.

Written for personnel at all levels in any type of library, *Preservation and Conservation for Libraries and Archives* is an outgrowth of many years' worth of workshop handouts developed by the authors as they taught preservation and conservation techniques to library staff, volunteers, students, and private collectors. Divided into six sections and five appendices, the book serves as a basic guide to the preservation of active collections, and, as such, will be of interest to anyone involved in collection management at any level.

A detailed table of contents provides quick access to specific information within the various sections. This information is also repeated at the beginning of each section, eliminating the need to flip back and forth between the preliminary pages and the text when seeking information on a specific topic. Good use of white space and headings further facilitates scanning the text for answers. Photographs and line drawings enhance the text.

Section One: The Basics of Preservation addresses such diverse topics as the physical environment, disaster planning, and storage methods. The discussion of environmental factors includes information not only on how to preserve collections under optimum conditions, but also measures that can be taken to mitigate the negative impact of conditions imposed by aging buildings and HVAC systems. The authors offer practical suggestions for managing relative humidity and lighting and for teaching patrons and staff to handle materials properly. They also provide tips for dealing with common problems such as water leakage, HVAC system failure, and small-scale mold outbreaks. Concluding Section One is a summary of basic preservation measures and an excellent discussion of things *not* to do.

Section Two addresses the matter of having a proper workspace in which to undertake preservation activities. The authors recommend having a secure area dedicated solely to preservation activities, and providing advice as to plumbing access, flooring, furnishings, lighting, environmental factors, storage of materials awaiting processing, and equipment.

In Section Three, the authors address basic preservation techniques, such as selecting items for placement in storage con-

tainers or enclosures, working with particular types of materials other than books, and making simple enclosures. The narrative includes format-specific advice for protecting commonly held items such as large maps, and less common materials such as glass negatives and lantern slides.

Section Four deals with paper types and basic paper repair techniques. The authors provide tips on adhesives, tools, and methods of repairing a range of problems such as edge tears, holes, torn book pages, and damaged fold-out maps. This leads naturally into Section Five, which speaks to book conservation techniques. A review of bookbinding structure and terminology progresses into a discussion of proper book handling, including cleaning, packing, and moving books. Information on supplies and equipment one would need for repairing books follows. Easy-to-follow, illustrated instructions for executing a variety of basic book repairs comprise the bulk of Section Five. The directions are sufficiently detailed for those not trained in book conservation to use to good effect on materials which do not warrant the expense of sending to a specialist, and progress from the fairly simple to the more complicated. The wealth of information provided in this section alone justifies the price of the book for any library that attempts to do its own repairs on circulating materials.

The final section deals with exhibits of materials, and addresses factors of exhibit design that impinge on the conservation of the displayed materials. The authors address legal issues such as security and insurance, as well as conservation concerns such as proper mounting, framing, and other display-related matters. As with the previous sections, this one is extensively illustrated and very practical.

Five appendices complete the book. The authors could easily expand Appendix A into a full section, as it deals with the care of photographs. Advice given covers everything from unframing to types of damage and guidelines for proper display. Appendix B provides a list of suppliers, conservation binders, and salvage companies with whom the authors have had experience. Appendix C provides a list of organizations that can provide help and referrals, while Appendix D is a glossary, and Appendix E is a partially annotated bibliography. The book concludes with an index which gives page references to both the body of the text and the terms listed in the glossary.

Printed on acid-free paper and sturdily bound, *Preservation and Conservation for Libraries and Archives* deserves a place in any library—especially those that lack trained conservation personnel.

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