

Appraisal and Acquisition Strategies. Edited by Michael J. Shallcross and Christopher J. Prom. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2016. 196 pp. Softcover. \$29.99. \$24.00 for SAA Members.

Appraisal and Acquisition Strategies is part of SAA's *Trends in Archives Practice* series, which seeks to "feature brief, authoritative treatments written and edited by top-level professionals that fill significant gaps in archival literature" with special emphasis on practical management in the digital age (back cover). The volume includes three modules: module 14, "Appraising Digital Records" by Geof Huth; module 15, "Collecting Digital Manuscripts and Archives" by Megan Barnard and Gabriela Redwine; and module 16, "Accessioning Digital Archives" by Erin Faulder. While compiled into one volume, the modules are meant to stand alone.

Huth provides a conceptual connection between traditional, paper-based appraisal theory and practice with strategies for digital materials in module 14, "Appraising Digital Records." The module includes steps in the digital appraisal process, as well as an overview of technical appraisal steps. "After the Appraisal" describes the activities undertaken in the shift to acquisition tasks. In addition, Huth reminds readers that reappraisal and deaccessioning are critical components of collection management.

In module 15, Barnard and Redwine dive into collection development aspects of digital archives. They consider the importance of collection development policies that guide selection of materials, as well as the donor relationships critical to sustaining a strong collecting program. They note the importance of early contact with potential donors of electronic materials and the educational aspects needed to assist potential donors with actively maintaining materials easily lost due to neglect. A small section on appraisal is included, which provides a more technical description of appraisal activities than are described in module 14. The final section covers activities needed to document the acquisition as it moves into archival custody.

Module 16, "Accessioning Digital Archives," is by far the most technical module in the volume. Faulder covers the Open Archival Information System (OAIS) reference model, as well as the Producer-Archive Interface Methodology Abstract Standard (PAIMAS), both quite abstract conceptual models. Other key concepts defined include accessioning, integrity, authenticity, and significant properties. Faulder emphasizes the need for policies to guide decision-making, including collection development, appraisal, and digital preservation policies. The section on "Infrastructure and Resources" covers the staff, storage, and tools archivists must consider in developing a digital collection program. The final section, "Accessioning Digital Archives," steps through the process from appraisal to transfer and ingest.

In addition to the main content of each module, case studies and appendices of further readings, sample forms, and lists of tools and software pertinent to digital archives are included at the end of each module.

The authors of each module have strong experience in appraisal and acquisitions, with particular expertise in digital materials. Geof Huth is chief records officer of the New York State Unified Court System and former director of Government Records Services

at the New York State Archives where he managed the appraisal program, including digital appraisal. Megan Barnard is associate director of Acquisition and Administration at the University of Texas at Austin's Harry Ransom Center, and she contributed to the CLIR report *Born-Digital: Guidance for Donors, Dealers, and Archival Repositories*.¹ Gabriela Redwine, a digital archivist at Yale University's Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, coauthored the CLIR report and is also the author of *Personal Digital Archiving*,² a Digital Preservation Coalition Technology Watch Report. Erin Faulder is digital archivist at Cornell University Library's Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections and teaches several courses for SAA's Digital Archives Specialist (DAS) Certificate Program.

The volume is a useful reference for all archivists interested in learning more about acquiring and managing digital materials. The appendices of case studies, further readings, and tools are incredibly useful resources in the modules, within specific contexts. They help archivists new to digital materials see how their particular context might influence application; for example, a small university archives versus a large manuscript repository.

As a former special collections curator at a historical society, I appreciated the inclusion of challenges for practitioners in nongovernment or noninstitutional record repositories, such as those working in manuscript collections. These archivists may have very few early intervention opportunities with records creators or donors. As Huth notes, "Long-term relationships based on shared needs and interests are important to ensure the capture of records before they are lost," and with manuscript collections this may include "working with the creators of manuscript collections to teach them about the basics of personal digital archiving," which is a significant shift in acquisition activities for the repository that passively relies on donors to self-identify collections (p. 18).

Readers of all three modules will notice some overlap in their content. For example, each module touches on appraisal and collection development policies, with varying degrees of depth. This overlap helps "bookend" the modules, as well as providing the opportunity to read about different perspectives and tactics undertaken by the different professionals who authored the modules.

The modules included in the volume progress from least to most technical. Archivists hoping to pick up the book and immediately be able to apply concepts in their repositories may find the more technical modules quite overwhelming. Combining the volume or module(s) with an SAA Digital Archives Specialist (DAS) course would provide the opportunity to apply concepts described in the volume.

The volume's preface promises "limited reference to debates about the more theoretical aspects of archival work" (p. vi) and a focus on "practical management of archives and manuscript collections in the digital age" (p. v). Given this expectation, module 14 can tend toward the theoretical. The conceptual issues Huth describes help set the stage for thinking about the shift from tangible to digital materials, and this is important scaffolding; however, the author and editors could have more clearly set readers' expectations in the preface or the first few paragraphs of the module's introduction.

Overall, the modules provide much-needed information on how to think about and manage digital resources. The volume offers valuable information and further resources for archivists looking to dive into management of digital materials. The volume successfully meets the *Trends in Archival Practice* series' objectives of filling gaps with a modular approach to practical management of archives in the digital age. Pairing the volume and modules with hands-on learning opportunities will net the archivist significant expansion of his or her knowledge and skills related to appraisal and acquisition of digital materials.

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NOTES

1. Gabriela Redwine et al., *Born Digital: Guidance for Donors, Dealers, and Archival Repositories*, Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR), October 2013, <https://www.clir.org/pubs/reports/pub159>.
2. Gabriela Redwine, *Personal Digital Archiving*, Digital Preservation Coalition, DPC Technology Watch Report 15-01, December 2015, <http://dx.doi.org/10.7207/twr15-01>.