

Advancing Preservation for Archives and Manuscripts. Archival Fundamentals Series III, Vol. 5. By Elizabeth Joffrion and Michèle V. Cloonen. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2020. 226 pp. Softcover. \$69.00. \$49.00 for SAA members.

Advancing Preservation for Archives and Manuscripts is the fifth of seven volumes in the Archival Fundamentals Series III, a series designed to “provide the core knowledge needed by archivists to work effectively with records/archives and papers/manuscripts—both analog and digital—in the twenty-first century.”¹ This edition of the series seeks to update core archival principles and practices, especially with regard to digital materials. Joffrion and Cloonen’s volume “addresses digital challenges and focuses on such current issues as risk management, ethical considerations, and sustainability” (p. ix) as they pertain to preservation.

The book’s 11 chapters are divided into three sections: “Preservation Frameworks,” “Implementing and Managing a Preservation Program,” and “The Ethics and Moral Implications of Contemporary Preservation Practices.” The first section explains that this text is not meant to replace *Preserving Archives and Manuscripts* (Archival Fundamental Series II) by Mary Lynn Ritzenthaler. Rather, the aim of the book is to complement Ritzenthaler’s writing by including

Digital records, improved (and more rapid) access to records, the relationship between appraisal and preservation, risk management, sustainable preservation, the role of social networking and community archiving on preservation, and a consideration of who has the right to preserve and who decides *what* will be preserved. (p. 1)

With that in mind, this section explains the history, principles, and context for preserving both analog and digital collections and provides theory and background for how the field of preservation has evolved over the past several decades. This section creates a foundation and understanding of preservation that will be an important educational resource for students, but may be less applicable to practitioners looking for practical guidance.

Section 2, “Implementing and Managing a Preservation Program,” presents concrete instruction for establishing and administering a preservation program. The authors provide descriptions of common formats, their preservation needs, and best practices for working with each format. This section provides the most practical information for dealing with the various types of materials in archival collections and serves as a day-to-day resource for developing preservation strategies in archival repositories. In chapter 8, the imposing topic of risk management is addressed, describing assessment and mitigation along with the usual methods of disaster planning and response. Furnishing information for assessing potential risks to both analog and digital collections speaks to the twenty-first-century archives and the need for ways to evaluate the risks to a variety of materials.

In the final section, “The Ethics and Moral Implications of Contemporary Preservation Practices,” the authors discuss the history and development of sustainable preservation. Archives and archivists must contend with the challenges of climate change, which

necessitates a preservation program focusing on “preservation strategies that balance effectiveness, cost, and environmental impact” (p. 145). Along with sustainable preservation, chapter 10 asks readers to contemplate the power archivists have to develop and shape the context for cultural memory. The largest sections in this chapter address community archives and Native American materials. The authors’ use of the word “institutions” to describe community archives could cause readers to think of these archival collections in terms of formally established brick-and-mortar archives, which may be confusing to those new to the idea of community archives. That being said, the section does express that the preservation needs of these types of archives are often far greater than those of traditional archives. Ultimately, “documenting society on equitable and inclusive terms requires that archivists build trusting and respectful relationships with many constituencies” (p. 160).

The end of the book contains three appendices providing examples of collection development preservation and digital preservation policies. These examples provide a quality reference point for those starting a preservation program from scratch. The index includes people, organizations, and preservation terms that make it easy to reference specific information within the book.

Advancing Preservation for Archives and Manuscripts aggregates information and standards from a variety of sources to provide one resource to guide archivists as they work to preserve analog and digital materials. This book gathers standards and best practices from the most recent research on the topic of preservation as evidenced in the 29-page bibliography at the back. Integrating digital preservation throughout the book provides a comprehensive and useful text for preserving modern archival collections. As a part of the Archival Fundamentals Series III, this text will aptly fit into the preservation curriculum of graduate programs across the country, as well as serve as a reference work for archivists who are new to preservation practices.

Jennifer Motszko, MA, MLIS
 Head of Archives
 University of Wisconsin–Whitewater

NOTE

1. Christopher J. Prom, “Announcing SAA’s Archival Fundamentals Series III,” Society of American Archivists, last modified January 25, 2019, <https://www2.archivists.org/news/2014/announcing-saas-archival-fundamentals-series-iii>.