

Developing and Maintaining Practical Archives: A How-To-Do-It Manual. 3rd ed. By Gregory S. Hunter. Chicago: ALA Neal-Schuman, 2020. 302 pp. Softcover. \$85.00.

Born out of author Gregory S. Hunter's frustration as a young professor at being unable to identify a one-volume foundational text for use in the classroom that adequately summarizes American archival theory and practice, *Developing and Maintaining Practical Archives: A How-To-Do-It Manual* was first published in 1996. To this third edition, Hunter brings an additional 25 years of experiences, expertise, and insight to an ever-evolving profession. Hunter is a professor at Long Island University's Palmer School of Library and Information Science where he has taught for more than three decades. The founding president of the Academy of Certified Archivists, Hunter was the principal archivist and records manager on the team that built the Electronic Records Archives (ERA) for the National Archives and Records Administration and also served as editor of *American Archivist* for six years.

While Hunter admits that this third edition of *Developing and Maintaining Practical Archives* is long overdue, it is largely informed, to the benefit of its readers, by his aforementioned professional experiences. The second edition was published in 2003 and was awarded the Society of American Archivists' 2004 Walter Gifford Leland Award, which "encourages and rewards writing of superior excellence and usefulness in the field of archival history, theory, or practice" (p. xv). Key improvements to the third edition include extensive discussions of community archives and the predominant issues and trends in the archival profession at large, including diversity, inclusion, and social justice. Additionally, the third edition emphasizes digital and audiovisual records—no longer an afterthought—and situates them alongside analog records by weaving elements of curation, preservation, and access of digital records throughout the text.

Hunter organizes the book into 12 chapters beginning with a basic introduction to archives and manuscripts. He introduces the three primary tenets of the archival mission—identification, preservation, and use of records of enduring value—early in the text and calls back to them frequently. This approach proves useful in appreciating how the fundamental archival principles shape and are shaped by every other archival function. The first page of each chapter includes an outline of topics discussed within that further reinforces that this text is intended to be a manual, a tool to be used frequently even after the initial reading. In an effort to make archival theory less abstract, Hunter provides hypothetical yet realistic scenarios based on the archives program at North Fork University, a fictitious institution located in New England. As such, Hunter strikes a good balance between theory and practice. Hunter also includes block quotes from current news articles related to archives, further emphasizing to readers the relevance of archival work and practice. To this end, readers will find *Developing and Maintaining Practical Archives* to be an accessible text that is neither overly conceptual nor lacking in practical guidance. The author's sense of humor, something not typically found in archival texts, is sprinkled throughout. Archivists who are also pop culture aficionados will surely appreciate Hunter's references to the Star Trek and Star Wars franchises, as well as to the film *The Net*.

In chapter 2, “Surveys: Identifying Records on All Media,” and chapter 3, “Starting an Institutional or Community Archives,” Hunter provides suggestions, based in archival theory, on where and how to start when developing an archives program. While most archivists will find themselves working in an established program, these chapters are integral to understanding the origins of their own institutions. Given the emergence in recent years of community archives and cross-institutional partnerships, Hunter’s recommendations here support efforts toward diversifying the historical record as well as adopting a reparative archives approach. However, readers may be left wanting more practical guidance for remedying archival silences beyond a community archives scope.

The following eight chapters (chapters 4 through 11) are each dedicated to a primary archival function, guiding readers through the theory and practice of selection and appraisal, acquisitions and accessioning, arrangement, description, preservation, security and disaster planning, access and outreach, and leadership and management. In his discussion of archival description in chapter 7, Hunter rightly addresses a recent awareness that archival description shapes a collection and the way users interact with it in a myriad of ways. That said, readers will need to look elsewhere for a more detailed discussion of conscious editing of legacy description that emphasizes the iterative nature of this particular archival function. Chapter 8, “Preservation,” is particularly comprehensive and rich in its detailed and up-to-date guidance for properly stewarding digital and audiovisual records. The sections in this chapter concerning digital archives reinforce that this text is not just for novice archivists, but also for seasoned practitioners, of whom there are many, who have little experience in the digital realm. In the book’s penultimate chapter, “Leadership and Management,” Hunter, in his discussion of leading people in unpaid or temporary positions, such as volunteers, interns, and contractors, misses an opportunity to discuss the ethics and sustainability of precarious employment. Hunter ends the book with a chapter dedicated to the archival profession, its history, and its future. Citing past surveys, Hunter acknowledges that, despite years of efforts and aspirations toward a more diverse profession, the field remains woefully homogenous.

Hunter concludes *Developing and Maintaining a Practical Archives* by stating, “My hope is that this book will help provide you with the foundation for a successful career as a professional archivist” (p. 241). By touching on every function of the archives profession—in theory and in practical application—in a single manual, Hunter not only provides an essential introductory text for early-career practitioners, but also offers in this well-organized manual an approachable refresher for archivists in various stages of their careers. While Hunter could say more about emerging trends in the profession, such as ethical redescription, strategies for remedying archival silences, and the role of precarious labor in the field, he successfully addresses larger professional concerns of diversity, equity, inclusion, and social change. Furthermore, the added emphasis on digital and audiovisual records makes this text a one-stop-shop for archivists charged with stewarding and providing access to hybrid collections and various record formats.

Overall, in the 25 years since *Developing and Maintaining Practical Archives* was first published, Hunter has contributed greatly to the profession by reaching his initial goal

of writing a one-volume introduction to the theory and practice of archives. With its improvements over previous editions, readers will find this third edition in particular to be one of the most valuable and *practical* introductory texts to archives and manuscripts available.

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