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Review: Developing and Maintaining Practical Archives

Pam Hackbart-Dean

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Developing and Maintaining Practical Archives. 3rd edition. By Gregory S. Hunter (Chicago: ALA Neal-Schuman, 2020. xvi +302 pp.)

Gregory S. Hunter's *Developing and Maintaining Practical Archives*, is part of the "A How-To-Do-It Manual" series from the American Library Association. His third edition (the first was published in 1996 and the second in 2003) provides a revised and updated guide to the theory and practice of archival work in every area of archival responsibility. The chapters are arranged by the activities essential for the development and management of an active archives program.

The first chapter provides an overview of archives and manuscripts, including basic definitions, a brief history archives and manuscript collecting, and a discussion on the differences between libraries and archives. Chapter 2, "Surveys," considers planning and implementing surveys to be the essential activities required in starting any archives. This includes commencing a survey of records maintained within one's organization or institution, as well as a survey of individual record types. Outlined in Chapter 3, "Starting an Archival Program," are the structural elements, such as written policies and determining the physical location of your archives, vital for the establishment of an enduring archival program.

Hunter states that "selection and appraisal are at the heart of archival work" (p. 53) in Chapter 4, "Selection and Appraisal." This section reviews how to assess the value of records and the different practices used for selection and appraisal by archivists in different countries. Chapter 5, "Acquisitions and Accessioning," reviews how archives acquire collections, policies and documentation required, as well as facilitating legal and physical control of archival records.

Chapter 6 concentrates on arrangement. It discusses minimal processing, offers workflow suggestions, and notes different approaches to arranging a collection. "Description" (Chapter 7) argues that "without adequate description, even the most historically valuable and best-arranged collection will remain unused and, hence, worthless from a research perspective" (p. 109). To facilitate successful archival description, Hunter highlights categories of finding aids, provides additional More Product Less Process ideas, and reviews descriptive standards, such as Encoded Archival Description (EAD) and Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DACS).

Chapter 8 discusses preservation. It offers guidance on managing storage space and dealing with the special challenges posed by rare books, maps, architectural records, artifacts, audiovisual materials, and digital records. For the latter, this chapter provides a helpful "Ten-Step Approach for Managing Digital Archives" with limited budgets that encourages partnering with others in your organization.

Chapter 9, on security and disaster planning, offers prevention checklists for water and fire disasters. Chapter 10, "Access, Reference, Outreach, and Advocacy" considers the "dual archival responsibility—preservation and access—" that we must balance in our active archival programs. He goes over copyright, privacy, and archival ethics, as well as policy and procedures related to reference work. For outreach, Hunter promotes a proactive public relations program

that goes beyond exhibits and programming. He urges archival administrators to advocate for their program, use Web 2.0 tools, and teach with primary sources.

The last two chapters focus on leadership, management, and the archival profession. Of note, Hunter includes an overview in Chapter 12 of the “Core Value of Archivists” and the “Code of Ethics for Archivists” from 2012. But readers should know that this code was revised after this edition was published in August 2020.

This updated edition offers more than the first and second. It adds a discussion on community archives, diversity, and inclusion. It also focuses more strongly on digital records. Instead of relegating digital records to a standalone chapter, it discusses how those records fit into the basic functions of archival practice throughout the book. It does the same thing with audiovisual materials.

Like the prior editions, this edition provides a good introduction to the basics of archival history, theory, and practice. It pairs nicely with more in-depth publications that expand on the themes Hunter identifies in each chapter. Written in a conversational tone that even includes archival humor, *Developing and Maintaining Practical Archives* is a clear, comprehensive, and useful reference source. Although the target audience for this manual are early career archivists or those new to the profession, this resource should be on the shelves of every practical archives.

Pam Hackbart-Dean, CA
University of Illinois Chicago