2. Barbara L. Craig, *Archival Appraisal: Theory and Practice* (Munich: K. G. Saur, 2004); Frank Boles, *Selecting and Appraising Archives and Manuscripts,* Archival Fundamentals Series II (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005).

Internet and Personal Computing Fads. By Mary Ann Bell, Mary Ann Berry, and James L. Van Roekel. New York: Haworth, 2004. 210p. $15.95 softbound (ISBN 0-7890-1772-5); $39.95 hardbound (ISBN 0-7890-1771-7).

I have seldom had a more difficult book to review. If every book has its reader, I struggled mightily to define the intended audience for this one. To deal with the format first, the authors provide a one- to two-page encyclopedia-type article for slightly more than one hundred terms. They do not provide a succinct dictionary definition but rather introduce each term through an extended, chatty discussion. Most often, the authors provide at least one anecdote or amusing fact about the topic. Where appropriate, they give the history and possible future developments in the area under discussion. Each entry then concludes with a brief bibliography, from both print and online sources, of two to five references. As could be expected with a 2004 publication date, the most recent entries appeared in 2003. Quite a few are from much older resources, although this is often appropriate for the many historical topics in the volume. The authors provide very few cross-references, though the twelve-page index provides access to terms embedded in the individual articles.

The "grabber" title does not help very much in clarifying the book's purpose. The authors describe much more than fads, including a broad range of computer and Internet terms. While some are indeed fads ("Nanny Cams" or recent developments such as "Wearable Computing Devices"), the authors also include history ("ENIAC," "History of Computer Hardware," and "Gopher") and general concepts, such as "Mac versus PC," "Technophobia," and "Copyright." The authors do not explain how and why they selected the terms that they did. I could have easily picked a completely different set of one hundred terms for another volume with the same title.

The authors do not help very much in the introduction, where they state that this book "could be useful in high school and academic libraries, public libraries, and for general use by readers wanting to become more familiar with fads, trends, and events relating to computers and the Internet and the language used to describe them" (xiii). As far as libraries, my question would be: "Useful for what?" With the randomness of the entries, I doubt that the volume would have much use as a reference work, though the encyclopedic format suggests this possibility. To get a quick definition, I would instead use an Internet source, such as the Netdictionary (www.netdictionary.com), or one of the many print dictionaries in this area. Another problem for reference use is that many of the entries are already dated. In fact, some of the best entries are the historical ones,

although their subject matter certainly does not usually fall into the category of fads. For many of the same reasons, I see little possibility of scholarly use and do not expect to find this title high in the citation counts.

In my quest for the book's essence, the Library of Congress cataloging turned out to be quite helpful. The cataloger did not consider it as a "dictionary" of any sort and put "Fads" way down the list as the fourth subject heading. Instead, the cataloger chose three general subject headings (Information society, Internet—Social aspects, and Microcomputers) to describe its contents. The classification was also social science both in the Library of Congress Classification (HM) and the Dewey Decimal Classification (303) rather than computer science.

One final piece of evidence was the price. At $15.95 for the softcover edition, Haworth is targeting the general reader directly, as the quote above stated, as titles for the library market are normally much more expensive.

As Sherlock Holmes solving the mystery, I finally concluded that what we have here is an excellent bathroom book—that is, an entertaining book meant to be read a few self-contained pages at a time. (Amazingly, I was not able to find a definition of bathroom book, but see Amazon.com for numerous examples.) The authors have compiled more than one hundred entertaining short essays that range from the very specific ("Emoticons") to the very general ("Privacy") and everything in-between. Each entry or essay stands alone so that entries can be read nonsequentially, as the alphabetical order provides no intrinsic value. The focus on amusing facts rather than succinct definitions then makes sense as a way to engage the reader to come back for one more entry or two the next time nature calls.

Even within this limited context, the authors could have been a bit more careful. The entries on "Computer Simulation" and "Virtual Reality" cover the same concept with no cross-reference between them. I also have a hard time understanding why bots would be configured for tasks such as "irradiating [computer] viruses" (13). I hope that the intended term was "eradicate," as I certainly do not want to encounter a radioactive computer virus on my desktop.

I hope that I have not been too harsh. I liked the book and enjoyed reading it on my recent vacation. I do not believe, however, that it is a serious scholarly work. Go ahead and buy it for recreational reading. It costs less than many trashy novels and may provide even more entertainment with a bit of serious knowledge thrown in.—*Robert P. Holley (aa3805@wayne.edu), Wayne State University, Detroit, Mich.*

Digital Libraries: Policy, Planning and Practice. Eds. Judith Andrews and Derek Law. Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2004. 263p. $89.95 hardbound (ISBN 0-7546-3448-5).

Digital Libraries consists of contributions from a variety of digital library researchers and practitioners, with