conservation/preservation specialists are valid, they are also somewhat shortsighted. For example, I wondered why "More Product, Less Process" (MPLP), a minimal processing trend initially described and advocated by Greene and Meissner in an *American Archivist* article, was not cited.[2] Its absence may be due in part to the British-centric nature of *Preparing Collections for Digitization*, since MPLP's traction is primarily in the United States. I sense, however, that MPLP was avoided because it contrasts so starkly with the authors' justification of conservation. Digital preservation also is notably absent from this book. The authors are cognizant of the need to consider digital preservation as an aspect of the long-term sustainability of any digitization project or program, because "preservation benefits of online access will only last as long as the digital images are available for online users" (12). Yet they do not address digital preservation solutions, instead devoting several pages to a defense of microfilm as a preservation medium. *Preparing Collections for Digitization* provides more detail about the specifics of preparing paper-based materials for scanning than other available resources, but readers looking for specific information about other aspects of digitization will be disappointed.—*Rachel I. Howard (rachel.howard@louisville.edu), University of Louisville, Louisville, Kentucky.*

References

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2. Mark A. Greene and Dennis Meissner, "More Product, Less Process: Revamping Traditional Archival Processing," *American Archivist* 68, no. 2 (2005): 208–63.

Digital Media: Technological and Social Challenges of the Interactive World. Edited by Megan A. Winget and William Aspray. Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow, 2011. 237p. $55 paper (ISBN 978-0-0108-8196-9).

Essays included in this volume are revised and peer-reviewed versions of conference papers presented at a 2009 invitation-only workshop on digital media held at the School of Information at the University of Texas at Austin. Participants were drawn from a number of disciplines, including information studies, fine arts, communication, technology, and history, so that a variety of views could be voiced. While this approach undoubtedly worked well for a conference, it falls short for a scholarly monograph. Although brimming with ideas and differing perspectives on its very broad topic, this work, loosely organized into four sections, is too unfocused and uneven. This is unsurprising given the amount of ground it tries to cover. A narrower scope, or a more deliberate and systematic overview of the subject, would likely have made for a more compelling book.

Part 1, "Preserving Digital Media," opens with an essay by Lowood exploring the complexities associated with attempts to preserve video games and virtual worlds. How does one, for example, determine which versions of Id Software's Doom—the landmark first-person shooter game originally released as shareware in 1993—are worthy of preservation? Doom allowed players to make modifications, such as creating new levels or creating different games (one of the more famous modifications was based on the movie *Aliens*). Many of these modifications were almost as popular as the official releases of the game. In addition, Lowood argues that projects that focus mainly on preserving software are inadequate because documentation essential to understanding virtual worlds is generally not found in those worlds. Thus a visitor to Sony's online game EverQuest now will find no record of candlelight vigils held inside the game by players in the hours and days following the September 11 attacks. These vigils, of possible interest to scholars studying online communities, are documented elsewhere, largely through forum postings. I found this to be one of the strongest contributions to the collection. This section also contains an essay by Winget that looks at three personal collections of video game-related materials, including a library of 711 books from the Origin Systems' game Ultima Online, and a chapter by Kraus that argues for the creation of a humanities center to guide intellectual property public policy, while also examining the role that piracy can play in preservation.

Part 2, "Describing Documents," is not as focused on metadata issues as I expected. Marshall's essay, which would have been at home in the previous section, looks at the problem of determining the authoritative copy of a given digital artifact when multiple copies are routinely saved, edited, described, published, and annotated. She offers, as an example, the case of an animated music video made by an art student in Taiwan for a song by one of her favorite bands. Over time, ten copies of the video, including variant versions, accumulate on various sites, some posted by the artist and others by the band, each with different metadata and public comments. How should these differing versions, tags, descriptions and comments be reconciled,

aggregated and preserved, if at all? The other essay in this section is by Feinberg, and it serves as a reminder to be aware of and, to a point, accepting of the biases inherent in all classification schemes.

Part 3, "The Personal Nature of Digital Media," begins with a chapter by De Kosnik that calls for humanities scholars to adopt what she terms the "personal theory" method of writing, a combination of first-person narrative and theoretical arguments (140). This style, she argues, is better-suited for an age when personal sharing on the web seems somewhat ubiquitous. She links this method to works by Plato, Descartes, and Thoreau, and gives examples of how she feels it has been successfully employed more recently in publications such as Howe's *My Emily Dickinson* and Hayles's *Writing Machines*.[1] Despite agreeing with the author on the possible benefits of making academic writing more accessible, I found this to be one of the less compelling contributions to the collection. This section's other essay is by Aspray. It examines two reports on technological literacy—one prepared in 1999 and one published in 2006—to look at the ways in which perceptions about needed technology skills change over time, not only because of technological innovation, but also because people's expectations about the purpose of technology evolves.

The book's final part, "Interactions between Technology and Culture," contains a chapter by Pennycook on the impact of technology on how music is created and consumed, covering among other topics the use of musical notation programs, such as Sibelius and Finale, the evolution of portable music players, and how programs like Apple's GarageBand have reduced the learning curve for novices to create music. The book closes with a fine but unfortunately brief essay by Balsamo highlighting examples of research efforts in the burgeoning field of digital humanities.

The editors of *Digital Media* say that it is suitable for use as a graduate textbook. That seems fair; although I found their quality uneven, individual chapters will certainly be of interest to many readers, particularly students starting to explore these concepts in library and information science courses. The book as a whole, however, may prove too unwieldy and unfocused to appeal to a wider audience. Practitioners looking for depth on some of these important topics, such as digital preservation and metadata, will not be well served by this volume.—*Bill Walsh (wwalsh@gsu.edu), Georgia State University, Atlanta, Georgia.*

Reference

1. Susan Howe, *My Emily Dickinson* (Berkeley, Calif.: North Atlantic, 1985); N. Katherine Hayles, *Writing Machines* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2002).