

---

# Book Reviews

Elyssa M. Gould

***Cataloging and Managing Film and Video Collections: A Guide to Using RDA and MARC 21.*** By Colin Higgins. Chicago: ALA Editions, 2015. 225 p. \$85.00 paperback (ISBN: 978-0-8389-1299-7).

The change in cataloging standards to Resource Description and Access (RDA) has had most catalogers stocking up on physical and digital resources to aid in the interpretation and implementation of this new standard. Higgins's contribution to these resources, *Cataloging and Managing Film and Video Collections: A Guide to Using RDA and MARC 21*, aims beyond RDA guideline interpretation and MARC field help by seeking to fill gaps in knowledge of film creation and distribution. His premise is that for catalogers to successfully describe and provide access to film and video collections, the cataloger must understand the various rolls of filmmakers, means of film distribution, and technical aspects of film and video formats. The book also covers aspects of film and video collection management, which support Higgins's comprehensive approach to the topic.

The book is organized into nine chapters. The chapters that contain cataloging instruction include RDA guideline references and inline examples of the MARC fields that help solidify the bibliographic instruction explained within the context of the chapter content. Each chapter concludes with a list of references. There is also a section at the end of the chapters of resources that expand on the topics covered in the text, including resources on film, cataloging, and collection development. Sample MARC records for film and television recordings in DVD and Blu-Ray formats are included in an appendix, and an additional appendix explains the symbols found on disc surfaces and their cases. An index is also included. The organization of the chapters is arranged based on the author's holistic approach to understanding video cataloging and management. This means that although the guide covers RDA elements encoded in MARC fields, it is not arranged by MARC field order.

The first chapter covers a brief history of film and film formats. It is in this chapter that Higgins introduces the video formats present in most library collections. Several formats for videos have emerged over the years, from U-Matic to Blu-ray, and the author covers the history of each and explains the technology behind them.

Chapters 2 through 4 contain the bulk of the descriptive cataloging instruction with the focus on DVD and Blu-Ray disc formats. These chapters explain the rolls of individuals involved in making films, from the producer to the dolly grip, as well as the corporate entities involved in

the production and distribution of films, the artistic and intellectual content in films, and the technical features of DVD and Blu-Ray discs. These are the chapters where the cataloger learns how to make decisions on data to include in the bibliographic record, and the author does a good job of relating the filmmaking content to the record creation.

There is a separate chapter devoted to material produced on television. This chapter includes a brief history of television, popular formats of television on optical discs, and the cataloging instruction that differs from the material covered in the previous chapters. The next two chapters look at past formats and cataloging standards. Recognizing that library collections may include non-DVD or Blu-Ray formats, chapter 6 provides instruction for cataloging films in older or unusual formats. Chapter 7 is a very brief chapter on MARC 21 and AACR2 cataloging instruction that can be used to help edit copy cataloging records in AACR2 or to create original records for libraries that have not yet implemented RDA.

Management of the film collections is addressed in chapter 8. This chapter provides resources for purchase decisions, classification of film collections, storage and handling of different formats, and some of the issues and legalities of owning, copying, and making film collections available to patrons. Chapter 9 looks to the future of DVD and Blu-ray discs in the wake of streaming media, the collection management issues in providing streaming services to library patrons, and cataloging instruction of streaming video and the respective MARC encoding for this format.

Throughout the text, Higgins's approach to the topic supports his initial argument that a lack of understanding of films leads to inadequate description and access. *Cataloging and Managing Film and Video Collections* contains the content to fill in the gaps in understanding films and knowledge in providing descriptive cataloging using RDA guidelines in a MARC environment. This knowledge translates well to creating better bibliographic records that will help patrons access library video collections. However, the organization of the book as a cataloging how-to guide may not be as accessible as other resources, and full MARC record examples for different video content is lacking. Additionally, the collection management content fails to address in any real detail the issues of copyright and reproduction at a time when many libraries are concerned with the preservation of their VHS collections.

These omissions aside, as an obvious film lover (his blogs include *Libraries at the Movies*), Higgins produces

sound content and enough passion and film references to make this a good read for anyone who wants to learn about all that goes into, and onto, the video being added to the library collection. This short and approachable text could also be easily incorporated as reading material for cataloging courses.—*Lucy Ingrey (lji1@humboldt.edu), Humboldt State University, Arcata, California*

***Preserving Our Heritage: Perspectives from Antiquity to the Digital Age.*** Edited by Michèle Valerie Cloonan. Chicago: ALA Neal-Schuman, 2015. 736 p. \$98.00 softcover (ISBN: 978-1-55570-937-2).

Weighing in at a significant three and a half pounds of not quite Bible-thin permanent paper, *Preserving Our Heritage* is the long-awaited anthology of fundamental preservation literature curated by Michèle V. Cloonan, Simmons College Professor and Editor-in-Chief of the journal *Preservation, Digital Technology, and Culture*. The impressive tome chronicles preservation through the earliest evidence of its conceptualization in historical works to examinations of the philosophical underpinnings of pressing contemporary issues such as risk management in times of both natural hazards and social unrest; the challenges of managing time-based media and digital materials; government policy in the area of preservation; ethics; the intersection of conservation, multiculturalism, and globalization; and sustainability.

*Preserving Our Heritage* includes three new pieces (Karen F. Gracy's "Preservation in a Time of Transition: Redefining the Stewardship of Time-Based Media in the Digital Age;" Ellen Cunningham-Kruppa, "Exploring Cultural Policy at Humanities Texas;" and Rebecca Meyer et al., "Sustainability: A Review"), hard-to-find conference papers such as Paul N. Banks's "A Library is Not a Museum," and author-contributed post-scripts to their earlier pieces (Nicholas Pickwood's 1994 "Distinguishing Between the Good and Bad Repair of Books" and Anne J. Gilliland's 2000 "Enduring Paradigm, New Opportunities: The Value of the Archival Perspective in the Digital Environment"). As valuable as the collected works are, they are ably supplemented by Cloonan's introductions to each chapter, which weave the purpose, context, and relationship of one article to the next, and her notes, brimming with citations for further exploration and innovative works published too recently to be included in this volume.

Working from suggestions gathered from the field and with an Advisory Board whose members represent the fields of librarianship, archives, museum studies, and historic preservation, Cloonan has compiled a truly interdisciplinary work on cultural heritage preservation. The breadth of the collection is nowhere more obvious than in the book's longest section, "Chapter 3: Preservation in Context," which examines preservation practices and philosophies in each of the field's four settings. As a librarian and administrator of

the Preservation Statistics Survey (a project with a goal to document and share the preservation activities of all cultural heritage institutions), I found the readings on areas outside of my natural library habitat and in the context of archives, museums, and historic/architectural preservation fascinating, imparting a better understanding of the activities, values, and challenges of these diverse settings.

While the entire anthology was a delicious if strenuous read for my mid-career, overtaxed-by-multi-tasking intellect, "Chapter 11: Sustainability" did the most to impart new understandings about that currently ubiquitous buzzword. Particularly, the selection "Sustainability: A Review" by Rebecca Mayer, Shannon Struble, and Phyllis Catsikis is an accessible, practical exploration of the three aspects of sustainability—environmental, economic, and social—known as "The Triple Bottom Line" (637). Of late, grant programs, program planning documents and policies, as well as job descriptions tout the jargon of "sustainability;" I expect that this chapter will be a highly cited, effective clarification for our field.

Comparisons between *Preserving Our Heritage* and Banks and Pilette's *Preservation: Issues and Planning* will surely come to mind; whereas the goal of *Preserving Our Heritage* is to examine preservation with attentive respect to each of the four cultural heritage settings (libraries, archives, museums, and the built environment), *Preservation: Issues and Planning* focused primarily on preservation in libraries and archives.<sup>1</sup> In the Preface, Banks and Pilette cite the popular aphorism that preservation is a "technical problem in search of managerial solutions;" while their anthology was far from a how-to manual, with its attention to practical issues (environment, emergency preparedness, conservation, etc.), *Preservation: Issues and Planning* was far more in the weeds of the daily work of a preservation practitioner than the steeped philosophical tone of *Preserving Our Heritage*. And whereas the focus on practical considerations in *Preservation: Issues and Planning* meant that some of the content was outdated not long after its publication date (the move from set environmental standards to localized, sustainable approaches; the epic decline of library binding in the wake of electronic journal access; the shift from microfilming to digital reformatting), *Preserving Our Heritage* offers a self-awareness that, though the selected works present "seminal thinking" on issues fundamental to the field, particularly in "Chapter 7: Frameworks for Digital Preservation," new terminology may "emerge by the time the ink in this volume has dried" (379,381). Indeed, while five of the eight pieces included in the "Frameworks for Digital Preservation" chapter were published in the 1990's, it is a nod to the foresight of early leaders like Paul Conway. In his 1996 essay "Preservation in the Digital World" (excerpted in this section), Conway envisioned "applying fundamental preservation concepts, derived from the best present practices of paper