
Book Reviews

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New Directions for Special Collections: An Anthology of Practice. Edited by Lynne M. Thomas and Beth M. Whittaker. Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited, 2017. \$85.00 softcover (ISBN 978-1-4408-4290-0).

In this follow-up to *Special Collections 2.0: New Technologies for Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Archival Collections*, Thomas and Whittaker present a collection of twenty-one essays from an array of authors on the future of special collections work, with an emphasis on the changing nature of the field. In the introduction, the editors describe their mission of creating a compendium of resources that can apply to the work of both librarians and archivists: “We regret the disconnect between our organizations and our cultures, and hoped to help bridge this by intentionally seeking both perspectives in this book” (ix). This text offers practical advice on various aspects of special collections—from acquisition and appraisal, to reference and instruction, to donor relations, to open access and copyright—and can serve as a handy go-to guide for anyone working in a special collections repository.

In the first chapter, Griffin responds to Traister’s 1986 article “The Rare Book Librarian’s Day” with a run-down of her own daily work as an academic special collections librarian plus the work of six interviewees from different types of institutions, describing the challenges that so many librarians and archivists face: keeping up with incoming correspondence through a variety of channels, filling in for absent staff members, responding to facilities-related crises, attending meetings, and managing student workers, all while providing robust public services. She explains that while Traister wrote his paper from the perspective of a librarian working in a well-funded Ivy League institution, many librarians deal with the difficulty of maintaining daily operations on a limited budget. Traister describes his work as “talking to people,” and Griffin likens hers to “making sure the wheels don’t fall off” (3). Griffin concludes with a discussion of the breadth of special collections librarianship, and reassures the underfunded librarian or archivist that so many of us are in the same boat.

In “Teaching with Special Collections: Alliances between Cultural Heritage Professionals,” Maryanski describes the benefits of collaboration between librarians and museum educators, using the New York Historical Society as a case study. According to Maryanski, librarians can learn new skills from the museum education field regarding scaling and organizing their work, particularly pertaining to class visits. Maryanski explains that librarians can borrow

museum educators’ methods of knowledge management by freely sharing information amongst all staff. Another useful tactic is creating class outlines or templates that can be easily adapted for a range of different classes, saving time and frustration when preparing a lesson. The key takeaways from this chapter are that communication is essential between librarians and museum educators at all levels and that ultimately we are working toward the same goal of benefiting the students. The majority of the benefits described in this chapter were one-directional, flowing from the museum educator to the librarian, and this reviewer would have liked to have learned more about what librarians have to offer their museum colleagues.

“Documenting Ferguson: Collecting Current Events in Archives” is one of the book’s most topical and culturally relevant chapters. It is written by four staff members from Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri who helped create a system for preserving local and national material documenting the police killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, and the community’s response. The authors explain that the news of Brown’s death was shared via social media before it was on cable news outlets, and that protests and meetings were also organized on social media. Their project, Documenting Ferguson, addressed the unique issue of preserving the documentation of events as they unfold, rather than long after the fact. Documenting Ferguson involved an online platform using Omeka and Archive-It that enabled community members to contribute materials to the project and included a LibGuide that could assist with high school lesson planning. Their experience could behoove those doing real-time collecting of other current events.

Williams offers concrete advice on donor relations in “Success with Donors: Practical Approaches That Work for All.” She opens by emphasizing the importance of listening to donors, and tells the story of a donor who would not allow access to a space in her home. After initial frustration, Williams realized that the donor was embarrassed by the messy appearance of the space, and they were ultimately able to make an arrangement after getting to know each other better. By practicing active listening and forging personal connections, librarians and archivists can improve their relationships with donors and streamline the donation process.

Finally, Briston’s chapter “Open Access and Copyright in Archives and Special Collections” is helpful for the librarian or archivist seeking straightforward information on rights issues. Open access and copyright are relevant for

every special collections repository, and Briston offers valuable information. She uses clear language to define open access and copyright, and delves into questions related to the Library and Archives exception in the US Copyright Act, fair use, orphan works, and works in the public domain. Her section on tools and workflows is particularly useful, as it describes openly available documentation of digitization projects and best practices regarding rights issues. Many special collections librarians or archivists could use these tools in their own repositories.

While this anthology presents the voices of many different people in the library and archives fields at various stages in their careers, the majority of the authors are from colleges and universities. This reviewer would have liked more diversity amongst the types of institutions represented, such as community archives or other less traditional spaces. This book has much to offer, but will ultimately be most useful to those in academic environments.—*Jessica Holden (jessica.holden@umb.edu), University of Massachusetts Boston, Boston, Massachusetts*

The Subject Liaison's Survival Guide to Technical Services. By Krista Schmidt and Tim Carstens. Chicago: ALA Editions, an imprint of the American Library Association, 2017. 95 p. \$40.00 softcover (ISBN: 978-0-8389-1502-8); \$32.00 e-book (PDF: 978-0-8389-1532-5; ePub: 978-0-8389-1532-2; Kindle: 978-0-8389-1534-9).

What happens when an experienced subject liaison is teamed with a veteran technical services librarian? You get a slim but informative volume that details the fine points of technical services in a way that anyone can understand.

The Subject Liaison's Survival Guide to Technical Services is divided into chapters corresponding to different aspects of library technical services: "Collection Development," "Budgets and Budgeting," "Submitting Orders" (from the subject liaison's perspective), "Acquisitions Ordering" (what the technical services department does with those submitted orders), "Receiving and Processing," "Cataloging," and "Collections Maintenance." While the guide could be read in a single sitting, the way it is arranged also makes it useful as a reference tool. A subject liaison can consult each of the chapters as needed. Each chapter contains a section titled "Questions You Should Be Asking," which serves as a concise summary of the most important things subject liaisons will need to know during the course of their daily duties.

This book is the first of its kind to delve into the specifics of how technical services works from a subject liaison's perspective and how and where those two fields can overlap and intersect. The American Library Association's Reference and User Services Association (RUSA) has a webpage devoted to "Guidelines for Liaison Work in Managing Collections and Services."¹ A 2005 paper by Macaluso and Whitney Petruzzelli provides a toolkit for the library liaison.²

Both of these resources, however, are far broader in scope than *The Subject Liaison's Guide*, focusing more on patron interactions than relations with other library departments.

Chapter 2, "Budgets and Budgeting," is a great example of this guide's utility. The authors state, "We realize it's tempting to ignore budget issues and just focus on spending what you are allocated. However, liaisons are well served to learn as much as possible about how budgets are determined and structured because understanding the overall budget situation allows you, as a liaison, to operate strategically" (13). Perhaps because they recognize that this may be a tempting chapter to skip in favor of those more directly relevant to the daily workings of the job, this chapter contains several breakout sections detailing the most important highlights of the text, including a budgeting 101 primer, moving money from one fund type to another, and how to be a team player when there are budget cuts. A subject liaison could focus solely on the breakout text and gain a good, workable overview of how budgets work and how they can facilitate and work within the budget process. This artful blending of detailed main text with breakout boxes and chapter summaries makes this an easy book to navigate.

While there is a lot of information here, Schmidt and Carstens are mindful of not getting bogged down in details. The reader does not need to worry about being overloaded with minutiae that may not actually be useful in practice. For example, Chapter 6 "Cataloging" does not go into the finer points of ISBD punctuation, MARC fields, and non-filing indicators. Though these are important aspects of cataloging, they are less important to the work of the subject liaison and too much information of this type would clutter an otherwise clean and concise text. Instead, the authors focus on the differences between copy and original cataloging and what consequences each method has when it comes to processing and arrival-to-shelf time. The authors give a quick overview of basic cataloging terminology so that the subject liaison can speak and understand "cataloger-ese" when questions arise. And they focus on how the catalog can be enhanced, customized, and corrected when there are errors—all things a subject liaison will need to know to provide the best service to their patrons.

The Subject Liaison's Survival Guide to Technical Services does an excellent job of explaining the various aspects of technical services that a subject liaison with no technical services experience may not intuitively grasp. It works both as a guide to read during the first days on the job and also as a reference work to consult for a refresher course on a specific area as needed. The book is thorough and detailed while also being clear and concise, mindful of giving the reader a good understanding of the inner workings of technical services without overloading them with too many particulars. This book could be a useful tool for anyone who works with specific subject or special collections in