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Review of *Many Happy Returns: Advocacy and the Development of Archives*

By Larry J. Hackman, ed. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2011. 424 pp. Soft cover. $56.00. ISBN 1-931666-37-7

At times it feels like we are inundated by news of federal funding cuts, job losses, and repository closures. Naturally, many of these stories also feature pleas by those in the cultural heritage realm to increase awareness of the vitality, importance, and use for the materials we know are precious and prized.

Many Happy Returns: Advocacy and the Development of Archives, edited by Larry J. Hackman, provides readers with case studies from a good mix of repository types, collections, parent organizations, and users, as well as a range of archivists' own experiences with advocacy efforts. The intent of the book, as plainly stated by Hackman in his introductory chapters, is to offer archivists practical ways to effect change within their own organizations, what he calls "applied advocacy." He asks readers to separate *this* form of advocacy, which focuses on program development and infrastructure, from public relations or promotional marketing; recognizing that these are often intertwined, he says that this book intends to stress the role advocacy can play in the long-term development of an archives or archival collections. From this pragmatic stance, the book includes a very helpful "Additional Readings" chapter at the end, which draws on practical archives-based resources and literature from related disciplines such as libraries or museums; however, also included are useful resources from fields such as arts-oriented non-profits, political marketing, education, and history.

When I began this book, I did so from my professional vantage point working as a reference and instruction archivist at a university archives, not as an administrator, and assumed that the case studies for college and university libraries or those related to promotional efforts would be the most interesting or meaningful chapters. Predictably, I wasn't disappointed by those written by Francis Blouin, Jr. or Richard Cox and spent time thinking about ways I could incorporate their experiences into my work. However, I was also reading this book from my perspective as the past-president of the Northwest Archivists, Inc., ending a three year commitment to presiding over a professional organization that supports members with a large geographic footprint and dwindling resources; simply put, after finishing this book I wished I had it three years earlier for consultation and guidance through my terms. I particularly enjoyed the chapters by Gregory Sanford and Bruce Dearstyne, which detailed the reestablishment of the Vermont State Archives as a core institution and transforming of the New York local governance program.

At the same time, the variety of repositories and stories in this book allowed me a glimpse into the practices in unfamiliar repositories or regions. I appreciated reading about the personal connections and community engagement detailed by Ellen Craine and Donna McCrea, Elizabeth Adkins and Karen Benedict, and Kate Theimer; each of their chapters provided concrete examples of how important it is to link local communities to their local history. Finally, the chapters by Barbara Haws, Giordana Mecagni, and Norton Owen provided wonderful examples of ways institutions developed from or in tandem with the users, becoming an organic and natural outgrowth of their needs.

Overall, I found this book to be quite useful and enlightening. However, despite its presentation as a practical primer, I found myself lost in the details of the forty page introduction, unsure how to anchor these early prescriptive recommendations in practice or apply it to my own concerns. I was also initially uneasy with what seemed to be implicit suggestions that a successful advocate needed to follow Hackman's recommendations for advocating in opposition to internal administration or organizational hierarchies. Finally, I was bothered with the chapter immediately following the case studies, "What the Case Studies Tell Us," which slanted toward a criticism of those repositories that didn't follow Hackman's prescription for advocacy even though they weren't *actually* test cases for Hackman's suggestions. However, for the most part, the case studies *themselves* show how a commitment to relationships and patience with nurturing trust within a community is often an excellent form of advocacy.

This is a book to be used irrespective of funding for cultural heritage collections; the lessons are concrete and can enrich our work promoting archives in a multitude of ways. Turn to this book for a wealth of ideas and inspiration, great examples from an assortment of archivists and archives, and practice-based recommendations for garnering support from internal and external supporters.

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