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Review of Digital Preservation in Libraries: Preparing for a Sustainable Future

By Jeremy Myntti and Jessalyn Zoom, eds. Chicago: American Library Association, 2019. 392 pp. Softcover. \$84.99. ISBN 978-0-8389-1713-8

In *Digital Preservation in Libraries: Preparing for a Sustainable Future*, editors Jeremy Myntti, head of digital library services at the University of Utah's J. Willard Marriott Library, and Jessalyn Zoom, head of the History and Military Sciences Section in the Acquisitions and Bibliographic Access Directorate at the Library of Congress, state that their goal is to "provide useful insights into why digital preservation in libraries is so important and to help readers understand the importance of key concepts in this field" (ix). While the volume does an admirable job of presenting key concepts and stressing the importance of digital preservation for library professionals, its real strength lies in a persistent focus on the challenging, and somewhat elusive, quest for sustainability in digital preservation work. Myntti and Zoom have created a guide to both the high stakes for collections and institutions in achieving sustainability in digital preservation programs and to the current challenges of institutionalizing the policies, practices, and investments that are so necessary for this work to succeed. Contributors to the volume offer strategies, tools, insights, and lessons learned on their own bumpy roads to sustainable digital preservation. Archivists may find some essays more relevant to their work than others, but, on the whole, the book offers thought-provoking essays for archivists considering strategies and policies to move their own digital preservation programs away from what Edith Halvarsson et al. (2019) refer to as the "project cycle" and towards long-term viability.

Myntti and Zoom divide the volume into six parts. Part One defines key terms and provides a historical overview of digital preservation in libraries. Part Two explores approaches and strategies to digital preservation, with a focus on the importance of clearly articulated institutional policy as a key to sustainable programs. Part Three consists of two institutional case studies, both from academic libraries. Part Four provides case studies of digital preservation for specific material types, including eBooks and mobile devices. Part Five looks at how institutions have found collaboration an essential, though sometimes challenging element of building sustainability. And Part Six explores copyright and digital preservation in libraries. Myntti and Zoom organize the volume to lead the reader from general principles to specific institutional strategies and lessons learned.

Part One, dedicated to definitions, history, and theories, opens with Erin Baucom's valuable and readable history of digital preservation, which hits the essential chronological milestones in the digital preservation field since 1994. Ross

Spencer, in his “Digital Preservation as a Thought Experiment,” tries to demystify digital preservation and its jargon. Spencer encourages librarians and archivists to “pull apart” technical concepts and jargon in order to more effectively engage with preservation in their own institutions and provides some tips for doing so.

Part Two focuses on the essential role that strategy and policy must play in sustainable digital preservation and is, appropriately, one of the more developed parts of the volume. Christine Madsen and Megan Hurst answer the question of where to start building a digital preservation program by providing a quite useful framework for clarifying the difference between strategies, policies, and procedures. In “Sustaining the Digital Investment: A Review of Digital Preservation Strategies,” Rosy Jan reminds us that digital preservation is defined as the ability to sustain the accessibility, understandability, and usability of digital objects and that this ability is a product of a series of management policies and activities, including a strong mission, a viable economic model, and a clear legal rights strategy. Jan reminds the reader that the absence of any of these makes long-term digital preservation challenging. Camilla Tubbs and Angela Fang Wang offer a case study of how the University of California Hastings Law Library tackled the difficult and critical management questions of digital preservation by incorporating institutional repository and digital preservation plans into a traditional collection development policy. Angela Fritz’s essay on evaluating digital preservation systems is full of practical tips but also offers an excellent review of the history of digital preservation systems and standards. Somaya Langley makes a persuasive case that strategies for managing digital content must be more holistic to ensure that the responsibility for managing this content does not “slip into the gaps between disciplines” (94). Langley advocates for a collaborative digital stewardship approach to the management of digital content and provides a rich discussion of the development of the approach to digital stewardship at Cambridge University.

Parts Three and Four are dedicated to case studies, first of specific implementations of digital preservation programs at two academic institutions and, second, of digital preservation of specific material types. The case studies of the digital preservation programs at Miami University Library and at the J. Willard Marriott Library at the University of Utah both address the lessons learned from the planning and implementation of local digital preservation programs. Among the issues addressed by each essay are program assessment, the creation of policy frameworks, the selection of digital preservation systems, and creation and implementation of workflows. Tawnya Mosier Keller and Jeremy Myntti of the University of Utah include a particularly interesting discussion of the development of a Digital Preservation Appraisal/Selection Guide as part of their digital preservation program implementation. Among the case studies of material types in Part Four are one on the preservation of e-books, one on the ingest of a digitized collection of photographs, and one on the preservation of content from mobile devices. The latter case study, “Mobile Device Data Preservation for Cultural Heritage Institutions,” by Amanda May, might be of special interest to archivists anticipating preservation challenges looming on the horizon. May does an admirable job of highlighting the

real challenges of forensically preserving born-mobile files and offers some guidance to archivists who are increasingly likely to encounter these files in their own institutions.

Part Five is dedicated to collaborative efforts in digital preservation. It consists of four essays documenting how institutions have built and leveraged relationships in efforts to create more sustainable digital preservation programs. Specific collaborations are detailed as is a more general history of community approaches to digital preservation. Aaron Trehub et al. describe the attempts at digital preservation through community-based networks built around the open-source LOCKSS (Lots of Copies Keep Stuff Safe) software application, which is part of the Stanford University Libraries Digital Library Systems and Services group. This essay discusses distributed digital preservation (DDP) generally and the functions and operations of specific Community LOCKSS Networks (CLNs), including the MetaArchive Cooperative, the Alabama Digital Preservation Network, the Council of Prairie and Pacific University Libraries, the Public Knowledge Project, and Indiana Digital Preservation. In “Could Collaborative Research between Two Major Libraries Help Consolidate Digital Preservation and Break the “Project Cycle”?, Edith Halvarsson et al. offer an analysis of the Digital Preservation at Oxford and Cambridge (DPOC) project at Oxford University’s Bodleian Libraries and Cambridge University Library. This collaboration was launched with the aim of creating a business case for moving beyond project funding and securing ongoing and sustainable funding for digital preservation. The essay’s discussion of DPOC’s use of a maturity model to provide a framework for communicating about the development of a digital preservation program is particularly noteworthy as is the authors’ observation that the broader the institutional investment in digital preservation the less likely the work is to get stuck in a project cycle. The final two essays in Part Five, an analysis of the work of the Academic Preservation Trust Consortium by R.F. (Chip) German and Kara M. McClurken and a survey of the work of the Digital Preservation Network (DPN) by Moriah Neils Caruso et al., offer insights into why and how collaborative digital preservation might provide a more stable foundation for long-term sustainability.

Part Six of the volume addresses issues relating to copyright and digital preservation. Sara R. Benson’s essay reviews the complex topic of copyright and digitization of materials in academic libraries and makes the case for standardized rights statements for digital collections. Carla S. Myers provides a useful overview of copyright law and guidance for librarians and archivists trying to ensure that their institutional policies and practices comply with the law.

All in all, *Digital Preservation in Libraries: Preparing for a Sustainable Future* is a valuable contribution to the literature on digital preservation. The strengths of the volume are in its organization, breadth of contributions, and relentless focus on sustainability in digital preservation. The volume could be further strengthened by a more robust editorial presence, including a more developed introduction, a conclusion, and the elimination of some content repetition between essays. Archivists should, however, find much of value in the volume’s individual contributions and in

its focus on digital preservation strategy and policy as a key to building sustainable programs.

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