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## Review of Archival Accessioning

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## Review of *Archival Accessioning*

By Audra Eagle Yun. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2021. 170 pp. Softcover. \$97.00. ISBN: 978-1-945246-56-2

This modern-day volume on the decades-old practice of accessioning archival collections provides a straightforward description of the elements of accessioning. The text is clearly written and helps make the never-ending work of accessioning in archives not seem so overwhelming and completely doable. Accessioning processes for both physical and electronic records are provided. The book consists of two sections. Part I (Introduction and Chapters 1-4) is entirely authored by Yun and describes major concepts and best practices for accessioning. Part II (Chapters 5-14) focuses on perspectives and exercises in accessioning and implementing best practices. Each chapter in Part II is written by a different archivist and provides different perspectives on accessioning. This book provides the archivist the tools needed to develop and maintain a successful accessioning program for their repository.

The Introduction of the book provides a clear overview of what topics each chapter will cover. Yun describes her background and her journey to becoming an archivist that is helpful to know and provides context before proceeding to the first chapter. Yun serves as the Head of Special Collections and Archives and as the University Archivist at the University of California, Irvine.

Each chapter concludes with a Notes section that provides additional sources to further learn about the specific topic covered in the chapter. This reviewer transitioned to the ebook format of the book to easily access the URLs provided for the sources. Reading the volume in ebook format was also beneficial for quickly accessing the websites provided in the Bibliography.

The Bibliography is extensive and provides great sources to further explore the topic of accessioning in archives. The “About the Authors” section provides biographies of the authors of the chapters in Part II, and it is helpful to learn of their backgrounds and current positions. The thorough Index makes it easy for the reviewer to look back at specific topics after an initial read of the volume.

Part I discusses topics such as the benefits of providing access to accessioned but unprocessed collections to researchers. This helps researchers understand the differences between accessioned and fully arranged and described collections. Accessioning forms the basis for all archival practices, and why this is a fundamental responsibility of archivists is stressed throughout Part I. Accessioning also exists in order to establish administrative, intellectual, and physical control of all holdings in an archives.

Part II of the book provides sample workflows, templates, and accession records. Each chapter is written by an archivist that shares their adventures, experiences, lessons learned, and perspectives on accessioning processes. Authors include archivists in academic archives and/or special collections, city archivists, digital curators, media conservators, digital archivists, and OCLC program officers. Examples of accessioning different types of collections, such as family and personal papers, institutional records, government records including local, state, federal and those of recognized sovereign nations, legacy media and other audiovisual materials, and electronic records are provided.

Another useful element in Part II is the Scenarios provided throughout it that are very relatable. Appendix A provides checklists and templates to aid with accessioning. Figures given throughout the book, such as the “Considerations for Accessioning” and “PBCore Description Document” figures, provide additional context. The essential role the descriptive standard *Describing Archives: A Content Standard* (DACs) plays in accessioning is also described. Developing a retrospective accessioning plan and establishing three areas of control of a collection are also described. Part II concludes with a chapter on reappraisal and deaccessioning, practices not always taken into account when conducting accessions.

Overall, the book examines physical and descriptive aspects of accessioning practices, as well as primary steps and objectives of accessioning. The steps of completing an accession are clearly defined. The specific fields needed for a complete accession record are also clearly described. Especially useful topics include the components of an accession record and components of an effective accessioning workflow that describes its four basic components: intake, receipt, record of transfer, and creation of accession record. Throughout the book, the practical examples provided are incredibly helpful and easily applied to everyday accessioning issues.

*Archival Accessioning* is highly recommended for a new archivist starting a new position whose responsibilities will undoubtedly include accessioning. This volume is also an essential review for the more experienced archivist. As an academic archivist who is currently trying to keep up with timely accessions (goal of within 48 hours of acquisition) as numerous collections come to the archives at once, this book provided time-saving resources on streamlining the process. Reading this volume breathes fresh air into the ever-present task of accessioning and certainly makes this reviewer feel reinvigorated in keeping up with this essential responsibility as an archivist.

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