

# Technicalities™

Information Forum for the Technical Services Professional

## Serially Speaking .....

### When a Journal Isn't a Journal – Patrons, Catalogs, and Monographic Series

By Laura Kane McElfresh

As those readers who have made it through all the way to the end of my articles may know, I started out my career in the library as a cataloger of serials and electronic resources, but am now also a liaison librarian to my university's department of mathematics and computer science and our dance program. This month's tale begins (as so many things do) with a request from my patrons, and will end up (as so many

things do) having repercussions throughout the cataloging unit.

A few weeks ago, I received an e-mail from Professor A in the department of mathematics and computer science requesting that the library purchase *The Book of Involutions*. While filling out my Gobi Express form to get the ordering process kicked off, I noticed that the YBP description had this book listed as #44 in the American Mathematical Society Colloquium Publications series. I double-checked our OPAC and, sure enough, there was a serial record for *American Mathematical Society Colloquium Publications*, and we had almost all the volumes, including #44. I was able to send a happy message to the professor saying that we had the book he wanted, but larger issues lurked beneath the surface.

About a day after sending my "found it!" message to Professor A, I received an e-mail from a mathematics graduate student expressing concern that *The Book of Involutions* – a "weighty tome," as he described it – had been listed in the catalog as a bound journal volume and could be checked out for a mere four days, as opposed to the semester-long, checkout period graduate students enjoy

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## Dollars and Sense....

### A Plea for Universal Metadata Literacy

By Sheila S. Intner

#### Introduction

As we look toward a new year in the third millennium and start closing in on the 2010s, we can feel good about the progress librarians have made in building digital libraries.

From a handful of experimental projects of uncertain reliability and value in the 1990s, the list of digital libraries has grown to include respectable numbers of projects containing scholarly and popular resources, and the genre has become important enough to attract some of the biggest players in the commercial world. Digital libraries are now all around us, waiting to be accessed and used by everyone and anyone from post-doctoral researchers to school kids,

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Sheila S. Intner

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## Book Reviews .....

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in one centralized location. This seems straightforward, but can be a nightmare to organize and maintain in an ever-changing environment characterized by an expanding number of resources.

One topic discussed in this book is what impact usage statistics have on managing electronic resources. Robert Molyneux offers insight on compiling and analyzing user statistics. His paper includes some helpful graphs and other visuals, which provide a more direct and clear idea for electronic data interchange and the acquisition process. Jennifer Weintraub discusses a slightly different perspective regarding usage stats and writes about how Yale University Library has been utilizing the usage statistics and what impact this has on ERM.

Another interesting topic, addressed by Paula D. Watson, deals with the current thinking on shared repositories. Space is often an issue for libraries, and now they face a new dilemma since many newly acquired resources are electronic and seem more vulnerable. Watson goes on to discuss JSTOR and some of the costs associated with doing a shared repository. Her view on where shared repositories may be headed is interesting.

Reading about the negative side of a process can be interesting. Norm Medeiros may have hit the nail on the head when he titled his paper, *House of Horrors: Exorcising Electronic Resources*, considering the ever-changing environment that surrounds electronic resources. Norm says that there needs to be an agreeable set of standardized license terms, and that libraries must develop processes that help them manage electronic resources in efficient and realistic ways.

Dan Tonkery also addresses some of the not-so-pleasant issues that are often a part of electronic resources. His paper is on the three A's of ERM – aggravation, agitation, and aggregation. The paper provides a good overall background to those who do not know much

about ERM but also points out some potentially sticky areas that one may want to consider in dealing with electronic resources.

Anyone who is familiar with electronic resource management probably has heard of Timothy Jewell. In his paper “Electronic Resource Management Systems: What Should They Do?,” Jewell provides background information on Digital Library Federation member practices, which have prompted efforts to establish clearer guidelines and mechanisms for those tackling electronic resource management. The paper covers a life cycle-based view of ERM and gives advice on selecting an ERM that is best suited for their library. The paper includes screenshots that help illustrate Jewell’s points.

Although I have only touched on some of the papers compiled in this book, this does not discredit the others, which contribute to the general overview of electronic resources and provide beneficial information for selecting an ERM. All the papers provide insight regarding issues to consider after a library decides which ERM to use. The papers in this book would benefit librarians who are exploring ERM and those who are struggling with how best to utilize their current operation.

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**Calvi, Elise, Yvonne Carignan, Liz Dube, and Whitney Pape.** *The Preservation Manager's Guide to Cost Analysis.* Chicago: American Library Association, 2006. 58 pages. ISBN 0-8389-8365-0 \$47 soft cover (\$42 for ALA members)

In four short chapters plus an annotated bibliography and endnotes, this slim publication introduces the uses of cost analysis and offers a step-by-step structured model of the process. The

four authors briefly discuss the role of cost analysis in preservation, and outline a methodology for conducting a cost analysis.

The main chapter identifies and calculates costs associated with preservation activities. Most helpful are the formulas. For instance, when determining the prorated cost of a piece of equipment, most people think in terms of how much it costs, rather than the amount that should be allocated to the equipment when it is shared among several projects or day-to-day uses. The authors’ formula divides the total equipment cost by the quantity of items produced during its life span (which needs to be determined similar to depreciation on federal income tax forms) to obtain the unit cost of the equipment.

The authors also discuss how to calculate labor costs (simple labor rate method, and adjusted labor rate method – much more realistic in accounting for non-production time), suggest three ways to calculate how long it actually takes to do an activity rather than how long it should take, and show how to calculate indirect costs.

They provide two fictitious cost analysis examples designed for applying the methodology covered in the previous chapter. On page 37, table six (phase box costs for the in-house program) erroneously lists the wrong annual costs and cost per box for total labor costs. This is the only error in the text, but not the only typo in the book.

Writing by committee opens the door to inconsistencies and errors. In this case, a more careful proofreading for style and formatting would have caught the obvious mistakes. In the annotated bibliography, they misspell Robert Yamashita’s name and call Maria Bonn’s report from the Making of America IV Project “Making of American.” They inconsistently follow non-standard citation styles, such as when they omit Anne R. Kenney’s first name in her bibliographical entries with Oya Rieger and

Stephen Chapman (p. 49 and 50). The authors do the same thing with Shelby Sanett's second citation (p. 50). They also list the place but not publisher (Research Libraries Group) for the Kenney and Rieger book. Yet they correctly format other authors' multiple citations.

However, the most glaring instance of careless proofreading lies in the name of the publisher on both the cover and title page. The word library is omitted from the Association for Library Collections & Technical Services. One would hope that the authors or editor could at least get the publisher's name right. Setting aside the errors and typos, the information presented in this book offers the preservationist well thought out models for developing cost analyses for preservation projects. The formulas can be applied to other kinds of projects as well as any grant applications that require a breakdown of costs. In addition to the formulas, the authors offer ways to think about costs that may not have been considered.

Elise Calvi, Yvonne Carignan, and Whitney Pape are library preservation managers at the University of Delaware, University of Maryland, and Brown University, respectively. Liz Dube is the Conservator at the University of Notre Dame. Their combined expertise with preservation project management brings the weight of authority to this topic. They write clearly and succinctly, and have produced a highly readable book. It is only a shame that the venue for their valuable information lacks the high production standards that one would expect from preservationists.

One wonders why the preservation and reformatting section of the Association for Library Collections & Technical Services chose to produce this book as a softcover with perfect binding. The value of the book is to consult the formulas and re-read the examples to apply them to a similar situation. Heavy use will break the binding and loose pages will fall out. On the inside, the

layout offers ample white space for the tables but too much outer margin for the text. This could have easily been published as a journal article and for far less cost to the intended reader.

For those libraries that can afford this book, it is a highly recommended purchase. Not only will preservation departments benefit from its use, but anyone in an academic or public library who writes grants will learn a more precise method of calculating costs after reading this book.

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***Capturing Analog Sound for Digital Preservation: Report of a Roundtable Discussion of Best Practices for Transferring Analog Discs and Tapes. Commissioned for and sponsored by the National Recording Preservation Board of the Library of Congress. Council on Library and Information Resources and the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 2006. 37 pages. Appendices. \$20 (soft cover). Available for free at <http://www.clir.org/pubs/abstract/pub137abst.html>***

This report is the first of documents that investigate procedures to reformat sound on analog carriers to digital media or files. It is part of developing a national plan for preserving and assuring access to recorded material in analog formats. The study was conducted by audio experts in association with the National Recording Preservation Board, and sponsored by the Library of Congress. The U.S. Congress recognized the significance of this endeavor by passing the National Recording Preservation Act of 2000. As the report notes, "The ability to record and play the sounds that surround us – human voices, musical performances, the sounds of nature – has existed for little more than 125 years. Yet the body of recorded sound that has been produced since its inception in 1877

already constitutes one of the greatest creative, historical, and scientific legacies of the United States" (v).

*Capturing Analog Sounds for Digital Preservation* summarizes discussions and recommendations from a meeting of audio preservation engineers held in January 2004 to assess the current state of standards and best practices for capturing sound from analog discs and tapes. A companion report, dealing with key aspects of digital technologies will follow. This first report consists of two parts. Part one, written by Paul Kingsbury, contains an introduction ("The Preservation Challenge: Changing Technologies for Recorded Sounds," and "Addressing the Challenge of Preserving Our Audio Heritage") and a "Summary of Meeting Discussions." Issues addressed in the discussions include migration deterioration of original analog carriers, obtaining accurate transfers, best practices for digital conversion and a sampling standard, human touch verses automated transfer, creating metadata, and recommendations.

Recommendations address a variety of transfer practices. These include:

- developing core competencies in audio preservation engineering
- developing arrangements among smaller institutions that allow for cooperative buying of esoteric materials and supplies
- pursuing a research agenda for magnetic tape problems that focuses on a less destructive solution for hydrolysis than baking, relubrication of acetate tapes, abatement of print-through, and curing of cupping
- developing guidelines for use of automated transfer of analog audio to digital preservation copies
- developing a Web-based clearing-house for sharing information on how archives can develop digital preservation transfer programs
- doing further research into noncontact reading (i.e., nondestructive playback) of broken audio discs

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