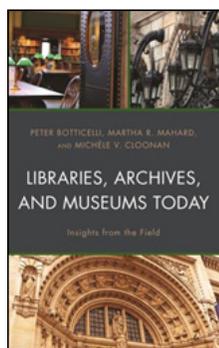


## Book Reviews



**Peter Botticelli, Martha R. Mahard, and Michèle V. Cloonan.** *Libraries, Archives, and Museums Today: Insights from the Field*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2019. 169p. Paper, \$33.00 (ISBN 978-1-5381-2555-7).



*Libraries, Archives, and Museums Today: Insights from the Field* aims to help students and working professionals in libraries, archives, and museums (LAMs) examine and solve the challenges faced in related professional disciplines through the shared experiences of institutional case studies. The book was written with a variety of readers in mind including archivists, librarians, museum professionals, graduate students, and staff employed in cultural heritage contexts. The authors have expertise in digital assets management, archives appraisal, and cultural heritage preservation management. They have also collaborated on a wide assortment of projects over the years with many of the institutions represented in this volume.

The authors published the volume to showcase how LAMs collaborate with each other, provide innovative services and programs for users, and integrate new technologies to improve access to information. The authors demonstrate that many of the institutions examined are united in the essential work of collecting, preserving, and facilitating access to the materials they own, house, and manage. These institutions have developed successful strategic partnerships resulting in creative planning, innovation, and leadership. Some institutions, the authors point out, have faced adversity or have not been successful. The volume provides readers, especially academic librarians, with a survey of the current trends of libraries, archives, museums, and other cultural heritage institutions. The book showcases these institutions and provides snapshots of how they function in constantly evolving environments. The volume also provides readers with a contemporary understanding and appreciation for what makes cultural institutions successful while also spotlighting examples of when they face transition and sometimes fail.

The volume is built around case studies from 14 institutions interlaced with semistructured interviews of more than 50 people. The case studies and interviews provide empirical examples of real-world contexts and use a variety of source documentation in the forms of emails and administrative policies, archival records such as meeting minutes, interviews, direct observation, and physical artifacts, and publications including journal and newspaper articles and websites. For the authors, the case studies provide examples that capture the complex nature of organizational narratives without forcing each individual institution into a standard categorization. They point out the case studies are not representative of all LAMs and confirm the studies are exploratory and leave room for future scholarship. For the authors, it is essential the case studies address the ongoing challenges institutions face addressing digital access while still maintaining their historic roles as repositories of collected information and material culture.

Institutional convergence is an additional practice explored in the book. The authors insist these intersections spotlight the commonalities between LAMs rather than accentuate their dif-

ferences. This is demonstrated through several vignettes of organizations less likely to create institutional silos while being more attuned to enhancing collaborative engagement with each other. Ultimately, by examining a selection of institutions, the authors affirm the volume will showcase examples of cross-disciplinary success as well as spotlight the impediments that may limit or negatively affect any intended collaborations.

The volume is composed of five sections. Part I examines the digital strategies of smaller institutions that seek to be innovative with limited budgetary and technological resources. The case studies in this section include the American Antiquarian Society, The History Project, Historic New England, and The Maine Memory Network. Part II investigates collaboration within and across institutions including the American Archive of Public Broadcasting, the Cornell University Library Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, the Museum of Modern Art, and the Boston Public Library. Part III includes two international LAMs and focuses on the strategic uses of resources by The Victoria and Albert Museum and The National Library of Australia. These institutions in the U.K. and Australia have employed creative approaches to resources to fund and sustain new and innovative programming.

Part IV spotlights several institutions in transition that have made cuts in staffing and resources or have closed permanently. The chapter includes the anonymous Leviathan Library and Archives at the Jackman Museum of Modern Art, the American Textile History Museum, and the Phillips Library of the Peabody Essex Museum. Finally, Part V considers one case study on the politics of housing and managing culturally sensitive materials at the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at Harvard University. The volume also includes two appendices: Appendix A identifies the questions from the interviews used to support the methodology for the volume, while Appendix B lists the individuals involved with the interview process representing the various institutions showcased in the volume. The book also includes a bibliography for readers who wish to further examine the themes of the book or learn more about the institutions and individuals that were part of the study.

The contributions of the volume hinge on the 14 case studies and supporting individual participant interviews of staff from the various institutions. The case studies provide readers with first-hand accounts of institutional collaborations, creative user engagement, and ongoing adaptations to the latest technologies providing access to information. Perhaps the most informative and useful case studies are from Part IV, which showcase the challenges professionals face when their LAMs are moved to another location or their doors are officially closed.

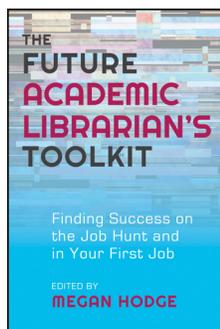
While the case studies succeed in introducing readers to important issues faced by LAMs, the volume would have been enhanced had the authors brought in a greater variety of institutions from more diverse geographical locations. Many of the chapters are set within the Northeastern United States, particularly the Boston to New York to Washington, D.C. corridor. The inclusion of more LAMs from outside the New England and Middle Atlantic regions would have provided readers located in other settings with examples that might relate more effectively with their geographical and user contexts.

The addition of institutions that celebrate and house collections that specifically spotlight the intersections of race, ethnicity, and gender would have also broadened the scope of the volume and provided readers with additional selections of organizations representing a wider variety of LAMs. In the volume, the inclusion of Boston's LGBT collections represented by The History Project is a fine example of what is a much broader array of LAMs throughout the United States and the world. As the authors note, the 14 case studies in this volume represent

starting points that provide readers with an initial foray into the issues and concerns LAM staff face. Additional scholarship can now follow by using this volume as a springboard for an even richer variety of case studies and interviews.

These considerations aside, the book will be of value for archivists, librarians, museum curators, and staff working in university and cultural heritage contexts. The volume will also be useful for graduate students taking courses in special collections or archives at schools of information and library science. The helpful case studies provide literary glimpses into how LAMs collaborate with each other, engage users, and use technology to improve access to information. Ultimately, the volume provides readers with “a fresh understanding and appreciation of what makes many cultural institutions successful” (xiv). —*Christopher J. Anderson, Yale University*

***The Future Academic Librarian's Toolkit: Finding Success on the Job Hunt and in Your First Job.*** Megan Hodge, ed. Chicago, IL: Association of College and Research Libraries, 2019. 318p. Paper, \$62.00 (ISBN 978-0-8389-8957-9). LC 2019-022297.



This book is divided into five sections, beginning with an orientation to academic librarianship and ending with the search for one's second professional position. The descriptive section titles tell the reader exactly what to expect from each part, and they deliver on their promises. Librarians or MLIS students short on time will benefit from the many “Try This” sections scattered throughout every chapter. These include short lists of action steps the reader can take.

Chapter 1, “An Introduction to Academic Librarianship” by J.E. Callas, is everything an aspiring librarian unfamiliar with academia would want or need to know. What is the mission of an academic library? Does institution size matter? How does a librarian earn tenure? Readers are urged not to skip this thoroughly informative chapter. No further chapters were needed for part I; this one does an excellent job of explaining academic librarianship.

Chapter 2, “Making Yourself Marketable for Academic Librarian Positions” by K. Sobel, begins the second section. The primary foci are planning your job search, gaining applied experience in an academic library, taking courses that will serve you well, and formatting a CV. Although the chapter wandered a bit far from its stated marketability goal when it delved into social media, the writing is informative and practical. Its tone is accessible and encouraging while not palliating the subject for the reader.

Chapter 3, “The Academic Job Search” by P.A. Mosley, gives excellent advice on how to prepare for an academic interview. Mosley describes pitfalls to avoid in the application process, such as using a generic cover letter, failing to provide references up front, or sticking to a one-page limit for a CV. A rich description of what to expect in an on-campus interview follows. This section is particularly important reading for potential interviewees, as it will guide them through a variety of common experiences from dinner to the presentation. Some of the most helpful guidance in this chapter is that which helps applicants navigate interpersonal landmines: for example, “avoid coming across as someone who will immediately change things or expressing disapproval for things that are not done in the way you were taught in library school” (61).

Expanding on the general job search information in the previous chapter, “Troubleshooting the Job Search” by R. Hodson, M. Sullivan, and K. Williams provides advice on how to