

Review of *Moving Image and Sound Collections for Archivists*

By Anthony Cocciolo. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2017. 218 pp.

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Anthony Cocciolo's *Moving Image and Sound Collections for Archivists* is written as a manual for every archivist who encounters audiovisual assets amongst their repository's holdings. Cocciolo created this work with the traditional archivist in mind who does not work regularly with audiovisual materials and gets anxious by handling these unfamiliar and oftentimes confounding information carriers. Within the book's intro, Cocciolo opines that "Professional archivists are not trained to work with audiovisual materials, and given the abundance of moving image and sound materials created in the middle of the 20th century, and the ease with these materials are made concurrently, all archivists should possess some familiarity with audiovisual formats and know when to ask for help with complex issues." This statement in essence forms the thesis of the work resulting in a manual that is useful to both the traditional paper-based as well as the veteran audiovisual archivist.

With *Moving Image and Sound Collections for Archivists*, Cocciolo has filled the gap in professional archival literature, typically written for audiovisual archivists working in well-funded institutions. This work is unique as Cocciolo's target audience is the lone arranger ensconced in a small, resource-constrained institution. The archivist who panics at the sight of a 1/4 inch audiotape, reel of 16mm motion picture film, or other unfamiliar audiovisual asset, and needs to know exactly what that bizarre thing sprawled out on their desk is and how they can responsibly steward it.

Anthony Cocciolo is the Dean of the School of Information at Pratt Institute and throughout the text he draws upon his professional archival experience and background in computer science to convey professional best practices, positing the ideal solution to some of the biggest quandaries posed by working with audiovisual carriers. Depositing digitized preservation files from an analog audio carrier into a trusted digital repository as recommended in Chapter 4 "Digital Preservation of Digitized and Born-Digital Content", is just one example providing readers with a sound map towards responsible stewardship. However, the author is very pragmatic in his approach and offers numerous low cost, and more often, no-cost DIY options to archivists at cash strapped repositories – providing a line of code to download a website for archiving from Chapter 11 "Complex Media" is a particular favorite. Cocciolo draws upon case studies from his time teaching a class at Pratt to illustrate examples of theories, supplementing these with examples given from well-respected professionals from the archives field. This approach results in a text that is firmly rooted in real world solutions to abstract quandaries useful at every stage in an archives professional's career.

The book is logically divided into two parts. The first part comprises six chapters, providing general archival practices that draw on traditional paper-based archival theory concepts. Essentially these chapters follow the same structure, beginning with a brief overview of the concept, followed by how the varying theories apply to the stewardship of audiovisual carriers, and ending with case studies that exemplify how the theories are applied by professionals. In the first chapter "Appraisal and Reappraisal," Cocciolo writes that "A notable issue with appraisal, as it is discussed in the archives literature, is that most of it does not apply particularly well to audiovisual records." (pg.11) Due to this gap, the author calls upon the professional to expand its conceptualization to accommodate for the unusual demands

that audiovisual records present from storage of analog carrier, to description, to storage of reformatted digital copies. This statement resounds particularly strongly with anyone who has managed a large scale digitization project of a format like ¼ inch audiotape and the investment posed both in terms of personnel time and storage costs. The suggestions made by Cocciolo aids archivists in making better informed decisions about what materials to accession and reformat.

The second part of the book—comprises five chapters and provides guidance for media formats—audio, motion picture film, analog video, digital video, and complex media specifically. Parallel to the first part, these chapters are logically structured starting with a brief history of the format, followed by a description of its technical dimensions and storage considerations, and ending with an overview of commonly encountered and less popular formats. Each chapter provides detailed specifics for preservation formatting including encoding specs and file wrappers.

Cocciolo's writes in an approachable, almost conversational style and covers dense concepts and oftentimes complex technical aspects in a clear and concise manner providing a comprehensive roadmap for professionals. Professional organizations, websites, and consortia are cited throughout as a reference for more complex issues that fall outside the scope of the work. A preference for open source tools dominates, furthering the development of a supportive and mutually beneficial audiovisual centered archival community. An abundance of color figures, illustrations, graphs, endnotes, and glossary of terms also act as a handy reference point and effectively enhance the work.

Cocciolo opines in the book's epilogue that we live in challenging times for archives: facing increasing quantities of moving image and sound records in desperate need of stewardship in institutions that are woefully underfunded. This predicament jeopardizes the profession's mission of preservation of and access to our collective audiovisual heritage. While *Moving Image and Sound Collections for Archivists* does not fully address the myriad of nuanced and complex issues that face archivists stewarding audiovisual materials, it does inspire paper-based archivists to take action towards effective stewardship, while serving as an essential on-hand reference for the seasoned audiovisual archivist as well. Highly recommended.