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## Review of *The Ethical Archivist* by Elena S. Danielson

W. Bede Mitchell

Georgia Southern University, [wbmitch@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:wbmitch@georgiasouthern.edu)

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later book, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*. These two foundational essays set the stage for the volume's other articles covering printing's impact on the practices of textual production and reception, including Paul F. Grendler's account of the Roman Inquisition's repressive influence on the Venetian printing industry; Jean-Francois Gilmont's discussion of the technical constraints that printing imposed on "the book" and how these restrictions affected the development of new reading practices in the early sixteenth century; Andrew Pettegree's and Matthew Hall's eye-opening reassessment of the Protestant Reformation's impact on the development and spread of printing; Roger Chartier's description of the competing, yet sometimes cooperative, cultures of reading/writing and orality during the Renaissance, and how these different methods of expression represented different modalities of performance necessitating different forms of reception; Paul Saenger's fascinating look at how, in contrast to the presentation of manuscript text, typography and the layout of printed text fundamentally changed the way readers interacted with their books; and Lisa Jardine and Anthony Grafton's insightful analysis of how one particular sixteenth-century reader interpreted and used his copy of Livy's history in his own social, literary, and political dealings. Volume II concludes with David Cressy's article on the nonliterary fetishistic use of books as symbolic objects of talismanic power; even for the illiterate, Cressy argues, books embodied knowledge and authority.

As informative and wide-ranging as the contents of these two volumes may be, in the end they can only be a representative sample of the many different approaches to book history that scholars have undertaken over the past several decades. The editors of each respective volume are to be praised for executing well a very difficult job. They have conveniently assembled in one place many of the most influential — and in some cases extremely

hard to find — articles in the field, while at the same time limiting their selections to a manageable size and quantity. — Eric J. Johnson, *The Ohio State University*.

**Elena S. Danielson.** *The Ethical Archivist*. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2010. 440p. alk. paper, \$49.00 (ISBN 978-1-931666-34-2). LC2010-026680.

In 2003, the Society of American Archivists published *Ethics and the Archival Profession* by Karen Benedict. The bulk of her very useful monograph consists of forty fictionalized case studies that represent challenging situations often encountered by archivists. Benedict is frequently cited in Elena Danielson's new book; however, although Danielson also employs case studies, these two works are not interchangeable. Benedict's case studies are aimed at providing groups such as classroom students and workshop attendees with vehicles for developing a deeper understanding of professional archivists' ethical responsibilities through analytical group discussions. By contrast, Danielson offers extended consideration of the processes and principles that archivists should follow in making ethical judgments, using real-life cases to show how rarely such decisions are simple and straightforward. While Benedict suggests solutions to her case studies (being careful to emphasize there may be alternative solutions as good or better), Danielson is more inclined to limit her prescriptions to steps that archivists might take to avoid the dilemmas under consideration or at least to minimize the difficulties that may ensue. The reader cannot help but come away from both books impressed with how deeply entangled is the archival profession in ethical dilemmas.

After a lengthy introduction in which the author provides an historical and conceptual background, Danielson examines in her first chapter the deontological and teleological approaches to ethical thinking, with emphasis on their shortcomings when not used together. Throughout

the rest of the book, she illustrates these weaknesses effectively while applying the insights gained from both approaches. She is invariably thorough, sensible, and sensitive when analyzing ethical challenges that can arise when acquiring or deaccessioning materials, providing equitable access, protecting the privacy of patrons and donors, authenticating materials, and determining the circumstances in which displaced archives should be relocated. In addition, her writing is clear, engaging, and imbued with a devotion to her professional values. No doubt her many years of experience have tempered idealism with realism, but not to the point of cynicism. When she convincingly demonstrates at many junctures that establishing "a standard of integrity that inspires confidence in the documentary record" is neither easy nor safe, Danielson goes on to argue eloquently why ensuring such integrity is what the archivist profession should be about.

While the author takes pains to distinguish between the ethical challenges that are unique to archivists as opposed to librarians or historians, members of the latter disciplines will find as much value here as will archivists. It is difficult to imagine a better written or more thorough and thoughtful work on such thorny issues. "Masterpiece" is an appropriate description.—*W. Bede Mitchell, Georgia Southern University.*

**Don Etherington.** *Bookbinding & Conservation: A Sixty-Year Odyssey of Art and Craft.* New Castle, Del.: Oak Knoll Press, 2010. 156p. \$49.95 (ISBN 9781584562771). LC2010-007366.

At first blush, Etherington's book appears threadbare for a memoir. It is neither a behind-the-scenes tell-all nor an in-depth treatise on bookbinding. In John MacKrell's introduction to a gallery of the author's design bindings, Etherington is characterized as "much too unassuming to call attention to this wonderful work." Likewise, an unassuming tone permeates this autobiography, and so it is perhaps

too easy to classify it as the simple story of a craftsman. The craftsman was also an artist; and, while the narrative does nothing to advance this fact, the fifty or so full-color plates of his design bindings convey it with eloquence.

Etherington mentions many famous book people in passing, and often one wants a bit more in terms of lore and gossip, but that is neither his style nor his purpose. It is less about name-dropping and more about an acknowledgement of people who have been friends and influences along the way, and the impressive career he was able to construct with their help. In terms of binding history, the account of his early years is most valuable. This is expressed in the Foreword by Bernard Middleton, initially one of Etherington's examiners (as an apprentice) and later a close friend and colleague:

"Don's detailed account of his early experiences in London as an indentured apprentice in the trade bindery industry is a valuable record of a bygone age which few can now recall. For many who have graduated from a two-year college course with its short hours, long holidays, and usually fairly lax controls, this account of tight discipline and work of a repetitive nature, maintained over a seven-year term, will give pause for thought. It may be contended that such a regimen produces blinkered craftsmen with narrow outlooks, and this has indeed been the result in many cases. However, it also often produces people who work deftly and efficiently, which is very important in this extremely labor-intensive craft."

You know someone has had a long career when chapter one of his memoir is entitled "the first thirty years." He was not a one-track obsessive, however. Not only did Etherington pursue bookbinding at a young age (14), he was also an amateur boxer, a ballroom dancer, and an expert on the rifle range. At times, Etherington admits, during his seven-year apprenticeship at Harrison & Sons, "the work became monotonous and repetitive. At one point, I was one of three men who made