edition of *An Ounce of Prevention* is its focus on the planning process. While lacking glamour, the process of disaster planning is fundamental to effective preservation management, and the development of a disaster plan is just one of many preservation strategies which will be informed by this process.

Ala Rekrut
Provincial Archives of Manitoba

RAD Revealed: A Basic Primer on the Rules for Archival Description. WENDY M. DUFF and MARLENE VAN BALLEGOOIE. Ottawa: Canadian Council of Archives, 2001. 133 p. ISBN 0-929115-29-5.

I would like to think that environment does not play directly on literary results, particularly when it comes to book reviews, but reading this key archival resource in the hazy days of a hot prairie summer brought an immediate echo of "good eats, cool treats!" (to paraphrase a well known Canadian summertime advertisement). This succinctly describes a manual hitting the informational spot. *RAD Revealed* provides both sustenance in the form of good, boiled-down *RAD* and cool delights in the form of lead-in questions/chapter summaries that indicate that the *RAD*-smart archivists, who wrote this manual, were empathetically capable of placing themselves in the spot of the *RAD* trainee. Informative but not heavy, this slim tome can easily form the base curriculum of a *RAD* workshop, or several, with the examples turned into overheads, a "summaries contest" with the results revealed in the style of the "Jeopardy" game show, if desired, or a co-ordinated group flip to the *RAD* rules provided in the sidebars. Like a well-planned Dairy Queen Blizzard, the possibilities are relatively endless.

There are a number of glad things about the book. First, it is streamlined, professional, and unsentimental like a manual worth its salt ought to be. There are a number of refreshing "no's": no clip-art, no talk-down, and no sense of an automatic plug that leaves the user as a single, technical, unthinking component of the *RAD* process. There is no looking back to how far we have come in ten years – after all this is *RAD Revealed*, not *Brideshead Revisited* – no emotional exasperation at what might have held us back; no sense of watching history lurch toward some repetition of madness, as we try, try, try to grasp what this is about once and for all. Rather, this is animated *RAD*, with strong action verbs in its purpose statement – *to facilitate* understanding, *to discuss*, *to clarify*, and *to explain RAD*, its underlying principles, terms and uses – but it is not a *RAD* replacement. Mission accomplished in an Evelyn Waughian sort of way: no wasted words, no sugar coating.

A tacit thread of professionalism binds the reader of this manual, present in the assumption that there is an archival setting that has made *RAD* its own;

that the *RAD* interactor-archivist has acquired good familiarity with the general *Rules for Archival Description*. Institutional responsibility is refreshingly underlined. It is up to the repository to determine the way in which *RAD* will be used in its descriptive processes; optional rules should be decided as a matter of institutional policy, and be applied "either always or never"; and regarding physical descriptions such as extent, an institution choosing not to buy the physical extent list provided in *RAD* may have its own specific material designations, provided it is established by policy. As the manual implicitly states, *RAD* is a descriptive standards tool, but it also strongly acknowledges the role of professional judgement.

The manual unfolds as one thinks it ought: with the foundation of *RAD* and how description builds upon the solid work of accessioning, research, and arrangement. A brisk walk through *RAD* and its separate parts follows, which covers *RAD*'s special media chapters, the nine major areas of a *RAD* description, and such anticipatory data as finding the right *RAD* rule with a minimum of pain. All of this happens in fifteen straightforward chapters, some as short as three pages, which really requires a bit of dash and organization to carry off well, but it's there. Simple sidebars give corresponding rules as topics progress; there are relevant footnotes at the end of key chapters, with a fifty-four item bibliography to conclude the publication.

RAD instruction always requires examples to work, and the authors included a number of *RAD* descriptions complementing the content of the manual. Whether the examples should have been interspersed throughout the book or kept as an appendix is open to question. These are full examples that show a range of description, and matching them to chapter specifics could have engendered superfluous commentary and clarification. Perhaps they would have become prescriptive instead of illustrative? At any rate, the examples can be used creatively as needed in an instructional setting, and are, after all, only examples. So in the long run, let's leave the examples where the authors placed them.

How does *RAD Revealed* compare to other *RAD* primers? The question is one to be begged, not from the viewpoint of *RAD Revealed* but from the perspective of other early primers, which addressed an earlier and much different archival field. We build on previous technologies and improve them, and *RAD Revealed* clearly benefits from, and rests on, the foundations of those early *RAD* primers. The current questions, summaries, and highlights, such as the history of the fonds, reflect the advancement of theory, practical inquiry, and other head-scratching in the decade-long struggle for standardized archival description. This latest volume must be accorded its proper due as the most up-to-date address of the subject that has not only caught the flow, but also taken the viable instructional lead. Others, such as the primer of Jeff O'Brien in Saskatchewan, surely deserve the recognition due a *RAD* pioneer publica-

tion, a medal for taking the scare out of *RAD* (as a 1970s archivist, I can safely say that) and a plus for readability.

Some minor sadnesses of the book – and there are some – is that it is void of humour, from cover to cover. This is a serious *RAD* manual. I tried hard to find some humour, even imagining for a minute that there might be something funny about the Mary Bell fonds description, the records of a neuroanatomist-histology technician-pathologist with a specialty in brain vascular morphometry, whose records "also make reference to ballet in Halifax during the 1950s." The *RAD* examples, which so help to give flesh to the manual, are decidedly Eastern in flavour and frankly, rather stark. What about adding a farm foreclosure fonds from Success, Saskatchewan or the Andrew Norelius fonds (the Klondike gold-seeker who missed the gold-rush but caught the salmon rush and made just enough money to take a boat home to Insanti, Minnesota in the summer of '99)? Alright, they don't have to be funny, they just have to come out of real Canadian history from coast to coast, top to bottom.

Other things? Nothing major, just small glitches, like calling the one and only appendix, Appendix A (when there isn't a B), and the use of that strange phrase that always made my old history professor wince – "time period?" An annotated bibliography might have been useful. And a last one: this primer costs to print, so we can understand it costing thirty dollars, but perhaps there can be a good break for bulk purchase so that groups can truly benefit?

The efforts of the authors and their assistant, Lori Eddy, in the creation of what may well become a *RAD* classic, is to be commended. A definite "must" for the archivist's shelf and the Outreacher's travel pack.

Kathlyn Szalasznyj
Saskatchewan Council for Archives and Archivists

Encoded Archival Description on the Internet. DANIEL V. PITTI and WENDY M. DUFF, eds. Binghampton, NY: Haworth Information Press, 2001. 241 p. ISBN 0-7890-1398-3. Co-published simultaneously as *Journal of Internet Cataloging*, Volume 4, Numbers 3/4 (2001).

The evolution of the Encoded Archival Description (EAD) standard has been one of the most important developments in archival practice in recent years. With increasing international acceptance, and now international participation in its further development, EAD has become an important tool for making archival descriptions available on the Internet, and also the basis of renewed development of, and interest in, descriptive standards in general.

Encoded Archival Description on the Internet is an interesting collection of essays ranging from theory to case studies to future possibilities. Starting with