pioneer in the new genre of electronic serials. By now, as directories of e-serials quickly show, librarians have more electronic communication forums than any other profession. The lesson to be learned is that electronic serials, even when physically unprepossessing and produced on shoestring budgets, can be highly visible and powerful.

Almost anyone with an idea, commitment, and spare time, at an institution with network connections and a half-friendly computer center, can start an e-list or newsletter or even a journal, and possibly should. The networks so far are subsidized. It is an excellent time to experiment, to find out what the community needs and wants, to learn what the community supports over time and in what form. Eventually, all these publications will be more sophisticated, more commonplace, less of a novelty. While they will undoubtedly be "better," it will be hard to match the early days' excitement we still feel as we log on to our e-mail and LISTSERV, or the Mailer Daemon bring us the next issue of our current favorites, of which *NSPI* is most certainly one.—*Ann Okerson, Association of Research Libraries, Washington, D.C.*

DePew, John N. *A Library, Media and Preservation Handbook.* Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-Clio, 1991. 441 p. (ISBN 0-87436-543-0). LC 91-16501.

The national concern for preserving the intellectual content of great research collections impinges increasingly on the jobs, time, and attention of librarians who are not preservation specialists. For these professionals, as well as for those in smaller institutions, this is a useful and interesting book.

It is generally successful in terms of its stated aims of bringing together a portion of the vast literature of the past two decades on the conservation and preservation of library materials and of making it available to those who have little knowledge of preservation. It is, then, designed as an introduction "to the basic environmental controls, materials, processes and techniques . . . required to house and preserve library materials."

The organization and range of topics treated make it clear that DePew understands preservation in the broadest possible sense, that preventive measures from climate control to disaster preparedness are as important as salvage activities, and that nonprint media merit the same consideration as paper. The handbook is divided into nine sections covering paper and papermaking; the environment; care and handling of library materials; binding and in-house repair; acid paper and brittle books; photographic, audio, and magnetic media; surveys of buildings and collections; disaster preparedness and recovery; and preservation services, suppliers, and educational opportunities. Ten appendices supply further details, specifications, sample forms and surveys, and techniques. Because the language of preservation is complex and technical, a short glossary is provided, and a more complete glossary is planned as a companion volume. The reference bibliography at the end of each section is a useful tool.

The handbook falls short, however, of being a definitive, all-purpose summary of the state of preservation knowledge. For example, because of limitations on space, DePew deliberately excludes discussion of the administration and organization of preservation activities, referring readers to the Association of Research Libraries' *Preservation Organization and Staffing*, SPEC Kit 160 (Washington, D.C., 1990) and works by noted librarians in the field.

In addition, other omissions and a troubling lack of balance among the issues considered and the level of detail in their treatment detract from the book's value. The author's criteria for treating certain topics at length, while only summarizing others, are not articulated. The book begins, for instance, with a very, perhaps unnecessarily, detailed section (forty pages) on paper and papermaking. Highly interesting for the nonspecialist, it leads one to expect a similar level of attention to the treatment of paper. Several aspects of this treatment are discussed, with more attention given to deacidification (fifteen pages), a tech-

nology neither fully evolved nor widely used, at least on a large scale, than to preservation microfilming (eleven pages), photocopying (three pages), and digital techniques (two pages).

In the case of microfilming, this brevity seems problematic for a major preservation tool that is widely used in research libraries. The section on preservation microfilming concentrates on the selection of materials suitable for filming, bibliographic control, and the place of microfilm in the array of preservation options. These considerations are drawn from Nancy Gwinn's *Preservation Microfilming: A Guide for Librarians and Archivists* (1987) and various RLG publications. The section on types of film is very brief, and given the level of technical detail elsewhere, one would expect a fuller discussion about the nature of silver halide, diazo, and vesicular film, and the reasons why the latter two are unsuitable for archival film copies. Nor is the glossary helpful here in noting the expected longevity of these types of film, and nowhere does the caveat appear that the different sorts of film should never be stored together.

A more serious shortcoming is the author's failure to convey the urgency of the brittle book problem. Likewise, he ignores the efforts of such entities as the Commission on Preservation and Access and the Council on Library Resources to craft a national agenda for preserving the intellectual content of an estimated twelve million unique titles in the nation's research collections. The Commission is mentioned, but nowhere are its activities summarized. DePew mentions the Library of Congress's goal of deacidifying one million books annually over twenty years but not the National Endowment for the Humanities's Brittle Book Program, a twenty-year plan projecting the preservation microfilming of three million brittle books and serials.

There is no discussion of the resulting large-scale, federally funded preservation microfilming projects that are increasingly a feature of research libraries' preservation activities. A look at the range of individual projects and efforts by various consortia with their various administrative possibilities might have provided a useful backdrop to De Pew's detailed discussion of numerous preservation techniques. As it develops, the field of preservation is moving beyond a concern for techniques alone to a conscious focus on strategy, and this shift should receive some attention in a handbook that claims to survey the literature.

The omission of this aspect of the national perspective is mirrored in a series of omissions in detail. The list of preservation services neglects some major funding agencies like the National Library of Medicine, and prominent microfilmers like Research Publications and Micrographic Systems of Connecticut, both of which do contract work for major preservation projects. In spite of detailed treatment of the deacidification process, the book does not include Akzo Chemicals, the firm that holds the patent on the DEZ process favored by the Library of Congress.

In sum, the handbook is a highly detailed discussion of certain preservation techniques without serious consideration of the institutional and national context in which those techniques are deployed. This flaw makes this work, while generally informative, less than a fully satisfying overview for college and research librarians.—Susanne F. Roberts, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut.

Desktop Publishing in the University. Ed. by Joan N. Burstyn. Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse Univ. Pr., 1991. 137p. paper, $12.95 (ISBN 0-8156-8116-X). LC 91-8759.

Two and a half years ago, Syracuse University and the Association of University Presses sponsored a conference on "The Impact of Desktop Publishing on University Life." At the time, this was a topic fraught with exciting possibilities and hopes, but also questions, doubts, and even fears. The same atmosphere of uncertainty surrounds the topic today. Only the terminology has changed: the almost quaint-sounding phrase *desktop publishing* has been replaced by terms