the title has its roots within the field of librarianship itself. Status anxiety, the endless debate over labels, the desire to re-gender (or, perhaps more accurately, de-gender) librarianship all contribute to the steady devaluation and wearing away (i.e. erosion) of attributes traditionally associated with women. Harris makes a compelling argument that it is just these female attributes, under siege and eroding, that set librarianship apart, that give it a unique character.

Harris's most significant contribution to the debate over the meaning of professionalism may well be her call to librarians to understand the value of women's work and female-intensive occupations on their own terms, not as some lesser version of "real" work, i.e., the work done by men. According to Harris, this new understanding would entail, among other things, "a (re)commitment to service (based on a female rather than a male model)" and an explicit commitment to "embrace a feminist analysis" of librarianship. While fully supportive of the demand to apply feminist analyses to female-intensive occupations and having no quarrel with Harris's insistence that we break away from masculinist definitions of value, I find in her argument for a return to some sort of female principle a certain essentialist flavor that some may feel is divisive. In light of the overall persuasiveness of Harris's argument, however, this is a relatively minor point. What a pleasure it is to view librarianship through such a clear feminist lens.—*Ellen Broidy, University of California, Irvine.*

Advances in Preservation and Access, vol. 1 (1992). Eds. Barbara Buckner Higginbotham and Mary E. Jackson. Westport, Conn.: Meckler, 1992. 297p. $55 per year (ISBN 0–88736–787–9, ISSN 1063–2263).

This annual, which complements two others in Meckler's recent Volumes in Library Administration and Practice, is an important and useful enterprise. At first glance, however, the prospect of another series, even on so important a topic as preservation, may dismay librarians

with overburdened serials budgets. That a substantial number of contributions to this collection have already appeared elsewhere only heightens skepticism. Seven of the nineteen essays were either published as articles, condensed from reports to the Commission on Preservation and Access (CPA), delivered as papers whose content had already been expanded in a book, or issued as policies by the American Library Association (ALA) or the Society of American Archivists (SAA). They are available from these sources at minimal cost.

That said, the present collection is nonetheless a valuable one. Librarians of all sorts have a great need for information about preservation and access but limited ways of getting it. In their short introduction the editors justify a new annual on the grounds that the enormous preservation challenge facing librarians and archivists in the next decades will be characterized by numerous choices and changes and that the series of volumes will serve to share promising strategies, communicate new ideas, and discuss timely issues.

The first issue brings together useful information about the background, current concerns and future directions of the preservation movement. The quality of the contributions is in general quite high. The focus is broad enough and the information solid and up-to-date enough to enlighten both veterans in and newcomers to the field. Indeed, given the general dearth of adequate education about preservation in library schools, this volume could well function as a basic text, so well does it cover the central issues from history to future technologies, from brittle books to archives.

Most of the contributors to this first collection have long experience and national standing in the field. Their reports fall into six sections, each briefly introduced. Eight essays in two sections review the origins of preservation in the nineteenth century and its development into a coordinated movement in the twentieth. Although the essays in this section overlap quite a bit, together the authors assemble from several organiza-

tional perspectives a satisfying picture of the fruitful collaboration between the Council on Library Resources (CLR), its offspring the Commission on Preservation and Access, whose function as a catalyst Patricia Battin describes, the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), the American Library Association (ALA), and the Research Libraries Group (RLG), on whose cooperative microfilming projects Patricia McClung reports. The National Endowment for the Humanities' Office of Preservation has helped implement their collaborative projects by funding the national brittle book program detailed by George Farr.

In the section "Agendas for Administration," four essays deal with preservation education, the place of preservation in library organization and budget formation, environmental issues, and selection for preservation. Deanna Marcus reviews the CPA's Task Force's work on education and stresses that preservation is an attitude rather than a mere set of skills that will be required for new librarians. Paul Fasana and John Baker present issues to be considered when introducing or expanding preservation activities—noting that "no area of library organization is untouched by preservation"—and give practical suggestions and bibliographic references for preservation planning.

In "Options and Opportunities," four articles discuss innovative techniques: microfilming for archives and manuscripts (Janet Gertz), technical considerations in choosing mass deacidification processes (Peter Sparks), digital imaging (Anne Kenney and Lynne Personius), and the complementarity of preservation and conservation (Karen Motylewski and Mary Elizabeth Ruwell). The report on the Cornell digital imaging project by Kenney and Personius is especially detailed and interesting, for this technology has the potential to redefine preservation formatting and to revolutionize access to materials and the library's role in providing it. Their balanced approach does not gloss over the drawbacks of this infant technology, which itself has a short shelf life and needs periodic refreshing. They

stress, as does Sparks for mass deacidification, the importance of library involvement in the development of standards and procedures and the need for caution in using new technologies.

The relative novelty and special nature of preservation concerns for the archival world merit a separate section. It includes R.J. Cox's discussion of the evolution of American archivists' understanding of "preservation" from merely sheltering material from harm to ensuring the longevity of their content. Paul Conway presents the Society of American Archivists' new national strategy for archival preservation.

The final section, "Progress and Unmet Challenges," is an excellent bibliographic overview by Susan Swartzberg and Robert Schnare of preservation programs and issues for the 1990s.

Most of the papers are linked together by one or more of the themes articulated in Barbara Higginbotham's introduction. They stress the importance of building on the past and encouraging public awareness in order to secure funding. They review the many faces of cooperation without glossing over the conflicts of local and national priorities. They lay out the expanding range of choices available and the factors that determine decisions, while maintaining a cautious approach to new technologies, which have preservation problems of their own. The importance of access and its critical link to preservation emerges from a number of the essays, as does the pervasiveness of preservation concerns in every aspect of library operations.

The preservation problem has the potential to overwhelm, especially if archival and other nonprint materials are considered. In its variety of approaches to this vast challenge, the collection of essays here offers a valuable vade mecum: librarians and archivists must be willing to explore and pursue all possible preservation avenues, to undertake manageable pieces and partial solutions, and to compromise.

It remains to be seen whether future volumes in the series can sustain the high quality and interest of this one. For

one thing, eight of the contributions (one-third of the book's length) concern the history of the preservation movement. Will there be enough significant "advances" to fill a volume annually? The series will fulfill its potential for usefulness only if the editors can get contributions from articulate experts and if they can maintain the fine balance between useful practical information and theoretical considerations.—*Susanne F. Roberts, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut.*

Electronic Documents. Oxford: Learned Information (U.S. distribution: Medford, N.J.: Learned Information), 1992– . $179 per year for 12 issues of the journal and an accompanying newsletter. (ISSN 0965–2035).

Each issue of *Electronic Documents* reports at length on a single subject, and contains briefer articles on other topics. Issues are written by the editor, Peter Hyams, and one or two other authors. They consult the secondary literature (and provide brief bibliographies), but most of the information comes from the vendors' literature and from interviews with both vendors and users. In one issue the editor describes his procedure: "[W]e offer no pretence to test, let alone to recommend products. Instead, we . . . learn where [product vendors] 'come from' and whom they aim to please, [and] hear/see what they offer, especially the key features." A review is expected to make a recommendation, but otherwise this does not seem a bad procedure to follow.

Despite their similar structure, there was considerable variation among the three issues I examined. Perhaps the most interesting was entitled "Hypertext in Action," an excellent introduction to hypertext for the layperson, well written and illustrated. It conveyed the excitement many people feel about this topic, but also addressed the amount of thought and effort required to produce a product that offers any real advantages over a well-designed "regular" text. The general presentation was accompanied by references to specific hypertext authoring

systems and accounts of hypertext in use. Criteria for choosing hypertext software were followed by descriptions of some currently available products.

A second issue, "Producing CD-ROMs," placed much more emphasis on technical issues, as might be expected, but was also devoted to text preparation and the issues of emerging standards for tagging text (SGML). The third issue, "Recognizing Characters," contained less explanatory material than the others. The outlines of the topic had been covered earlier in the year in an issue on "Reading Typefaces (OCR)," and this issue, after describing some additional user experience, concentrated on descriptions of specific higher volume, more complex, and higher priced systems.

Reader surveys have already caused some changes in format and are also used to determine topics to be covered. Recent and coming issues discuss such themes as image capture and handling, workflow, on-demand documents, multimedia, document storage and transport, and publishing and the networks, a topic that has been neglected in most of the publishing trade journals. The newsletters accompanying each issue draw heavily on announcements from vendors, but significant events from government and research are also noted.

The key feature of *Electronic Documents* is its solid introductions to the issues involved in the production of electronic documents. The reader will not understand information theory or be able to take apart a CD server after reading an issue, but will be able to evaluate production options. The reader will also know reasons not to put data into hypertext or on a CD-ROM, but will not know why a given software program should be avoided.

The primary audience for this journal seems to be managers who will be interviewing vendors and making decisions about production systems. Librarians and end users of electronic documents can learn a great deal from this journal, not only about techniques but also about the economic decisions publishers are making, but the editors are not aiming at them. This