



# **Describing Archival Materials: The Use of the MARC AMC Format**

*Richard Smiraglia*

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Here is an informative new volume that celebrates the increasing use and influence of the MARC format for Archives and Manuscript Control (AMC). As the format and its companion, the online archival catalog, gain acceptance among archivists, several major issues evolve, including the adoption and adaptation of standards for archival control data and the acceptance of archival control techniques for use in library collections. This is an important volume for library cataloguers, who in order to make use of the archival control techniques embodied in the AMC format must be familiar with basic techniques of archival collections management, and archivists, who might need basic instruction in relevant library cataloging techniques. Describing Archival Materials presents the principles and techniques that describe the control of both textual and non-textual materials. Each chapter, where appropriate, contains examples of AMC records to illustrate various techniques. In examining control of textual materials, the authors:

- outline the requisite details of archival description, including the construction of finding aids and the representation of archival collections in catalogs according to the recognized standard, APPM
  - explain the concepts of intellectual responsibility and the basic concepts of choice and formulation of access points, derived directly from AACR2
  - provide an archival translation of basic indexing concepts such as subject analysis and indexing depth, all written within the context of LCSH
  - explore the concepts of authority control of both names and subjects
  - consider design issues that contributed to the construction of the format and focus on appropriate methods of content designation for archival descriptions
  - discuss the development of archival information systems, in particular focusing on archival management features and problems inherent in attempts to design systems that integrate archival and bibliographic records
- Three chapters also highlight archival control of nontextual materials--visual images (photographs and films), sound recordings, and cartographic materials.

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