Promoting Access to Historic Book Structures: A Case Study of the Lord Collection

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PLEASE NOTE: Some aspects of this project were impacted by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The following report represents the range of research, imaging and documentation, scientific analysis, and conservation treatment that was possible in the time allowed. Where appropriate, recommendations for potential additional research, imaging and documentation, scientific analysis, and/or treatment are included.
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1. ABSTRACT

This project is focused on improving access to the John C. Lord Collection by creating an accessible and adaptable digital catalogue to facilitate use. The 23 volumes in the collection span four centuries and include many different binding structures. Several of the volumes are in bindings contemporary with the text. In 2015 the collection was placed on long-term deposit at the Buffalo State Art Conservation Department from the Buffalo History Museum. The collection has served as a study collection for book conservation students and as a result, the department has generated a large collection of electronic documentation of the collection. Data relating to the collection is stored on the department server but is not easily searchable. If unaddressed, deficiencies in the current system can lead to dissociation of collection records from the items. This project gathered all previously collected data, reports, and studies relating to the collection and created an adaptable finding aid and workflow to facilitate use of the collection.

2. INTRODUCTION

In 2018 I was able to attend the two-week LIGATUS summer school in Athens Greece where I studied the history of European bookbinding under Nicholas Pickwoad and was introduced to the process of recording bookbinding structure using linked data with Dr. Athanasios Velios. Dr. Velios introduced me to the concept of linked data and the ways in which it can be applied to conservation and the history of bookbinding. The textual component of books has long been a rich field of study but historically bindings are often overlooked or completely discarded in favor of saving the textblock. Research focused on the structural elements of bindings as opposed to decorative elements has become more prevalent in recent decades but that research is often geographically siloed. Using linked data to catalogue and disseminate bookbinding descriptions and research has the potential to allow researchers from all over the world to benefit from each other’s scholarship and grow our collective understanding of historic bookbinding.

I had been looking for a project to apply the concepts introduced in Dr. Velios’ course and in my second year of graduate school, an opportunity presented itself. As part of the library and archives conservation curriculum at the SUNY Buffalo State Garman Art Conservation Department students are encouraged to hone their examination and description skills by performing a technical study of a work of art on paper, manuscript document, or historic book structure. For my technical study, I chose a book from the Dr. John Chase Lord Collection. Specifically, I chose to look at a copy of “Aurelii Augustini opuscula plurima” in a beautiful binding with wooden boards covered in heavily tooled alum tawed skin. The text was printed in 1491 making it an incunable, a book printed in Europe within the first 50 years of the invention of printing with moveable type. I proposed using my technical study as a pilot project to explore the creation of a linked data binding description with the goal of expanding the practice to eventually include descriptions of all of the books in the Lord Collection.

With this goal in mind, I started to prepare the collection for a large bookbinding survey and tried to teach myself about hierarchical data structuring. Over the course of the year, I slowly and sadly realized that I would not be able to complete the project as originally envisioned. I learned important lessons about project management, feasibility, responsible file stewardship, data organization, and how to think about access in a more nuanced way. Ultimately, I was able to increase access to the book collection and streamline the process to encourage future scholarship. In what follows, I will use the technical study that...
originally inspired me as a case study to show how my project and thinking process changed over the course of the year.

3. **PROJECT PRESENTATION**

3.1 **History of the Lord Collection**

Dr. John Chase Lord was a prominent Buffalo Presbyterian minister and lawyer. Upon his death in 1877 he bequeathed his extensive private library to the City of Buffalo. The library consists of approximately 10,000 volumes covering a broad range of subjects (Fess 1995). In 1886 the New York State Senate approved a bill that authorized the city of Buffalo to accept the library which they placed in the care of the Buffalo Historical Society (The Buffalo Commercial 1886). In the intervening years the Buffalo Historical Society has undergone a few name changes, in 2012 the name was changed to the Buffalo History Museum and will be referred to as such for the rest of the paper (Fetouh 2012). Dr. Lord’s library was described by the press at the time as “probably one of the best collections in this country of manuscript books ante-dating the era of printing” (Morning Express 1887). According to the same account, the collection contained over 200 books that were over 300 years old at the time of the newspaper’s publication. The collection, which reflects the eclectic tastes of a man who journalist Margaret Fess described as “one of Buffalo’s most colorful characters” (1955), is an important piece of Buffalo history.

The Buffalo History Museum's provenance file for the books contains three newspaper articles referencing the collection and not much more information. Cynthia Van Ness, Director of Library and Archives for the Buffalo History Museum was able to provide information about the current location of the books and how twenty-three volumes from the collection ended up at the Garman Art Conservation department. The books that made up Dr. Lord’s library are now housed in four locations. A portion is physically housed in the library at the Buffalo History Museum, the majority are in the museum’s storage facility, and approximately 1,000 volumes have been on indefinite loan to the Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural site since 1971 where they are used to fill the bookshelves in a period room (Van Ness pers. comm.).
In 2014 the possible transfer of twenty-three volumes from the Buffalo History Museum to long-term deposit at the Buffalo State Art Conservation department was proposed. At the time, the books were housed in a locked storage area in the Buffalo History Museum and were not being used by patrons. The books did not serve the museum’s mission to document people, places, things, or events of the Buffalo area. In 2012 professor of paper conservation Judith Walsh contacted Cynthia Van Ness to find projects for book conservation students. Over the next two years, three students studied and treated books from the Lord Collection. Following those student projects, Van Ness and Walsh discussed placing the twenty-three books on indefinite loan to the art conservation department where they would help fulfill the program’s mission to teach book history and conservation. For her graduate master’s project, book conservation student Abigail Merritt facilitated the loan by designing and carrying out a thorough condition survey of the twenty-three volumes including photographic documentation and a phased conservation plan (Merritt 2015). The twenty-three volumes were transferred to the Buffalo State Art Conservation department and are now housed in the Book Conservation Lab where they are referred to internally as ‘The Lord Collection’.

Figure 3. The Lord Collection as it is currently housed in the Garman Art Conservation Department at SUNY Buffalo State. Photo Kathryn Kenney

The books in the collection are an invaluable resource for students of book conservation. There are twenty-three books; eight are manuscript and fifteen are printed. They represent seven countries of origin and multiple centuries of bookbinding traditions. A third of the collection dates to the 15th century and there has been very minimal, if any, intervention to the binding structures. These volumes provide an opportunity for students to closely examine and analyze book structure and materials. Having the books on long-term deposit with the Buffalo State conservation Department presents an opportunity for students to learn from past projects and build on each other’s research. In her masters’ project, Abigail Merritt created a self-guided lecture on book structures and a FileMaker Pro database of her survey information to facilitate use of the collection (Merritt 2015). Since 2014 eight students of book conservation have researched one or more books in the collection. When I began my technical study in 2020, I was excited to add myself to the list of students who have benefited from this opportunity.
The significance of the Lord Collection for book conservation students is readily apparent. My previous studies into the history of bookbinding led me to immediately see the potential of the collection for scholarship outside of the conservation department at Buffalo State College. The collection provides unaltered examples of early bookbinding that could be of interest to bookbinding historians. The collection includes eight incunables, and scholarly interest in these examples of early printing cannot be overstated. The Consortium for European Research Libraries facilitates multiple databases dedicated to incunables including the Incunabula Short Title Catalogue (ISTC) which provides repository information for incunables and the Material Evidence in Incunabula (MEI) Project that collects copy-specific information for incunables. The ISTC lists the volumes held at the Buffalo State Art Conservation Department, but the MEI doesn’t contain any information on the volumes. When embarking on my technical study, I chose one of the incunables in the collection with the goal of contributing binding information to the MEI.

3.2 Organization

In the fall of 2020, continued in-person access to the conservation department was not guaranteed due to the ongoing global COVID-19 pandemic. Due to this uncertainty, I began my technical study by performing a full suite of imaging on my chosen book so that if we lost access to the department, I could continue my research remotely using the images I captured. These images and accompanying descriptions are in Appendix 9.2.

After imaging, I began searching the department server to find any files related to the projects carried out by previous students. If I needed to continue my project from home, by gathering all previous student scholarship, I would have a significant amount of book structure data to work with even if I could not access the volumes themselves. My goal was to convert all of the previously captured data to a more easily searchable format such as XML. XML, or Extensible Markup Language, is a set of rules for encoding structured information that is both human-readable and machine-readable (World Wide Web Consortium). My original plan was to gather all the previously captured data, use that to fill out a preliminary binding schema using XML, and then check all the information and fill in gaps by performing my own binding survey. In my original project proposal, I assumed that gathering all the existing data would be an easy task.

3.2.1 Previous Organizational Structure

Files relating to projects carried out within the art conservation department are stored on designated university servers. There is one server dedicated to the department’s archival files and another for active files related to ongoing projects or course materials that are frequently accessed by students and faculty. There are physical files in the administrative office for every item in the department. Every item that enters the department for treatment, study, or deposit is assigned a six-digit identification number, referred to internally as the item’s Conservation Services or CNS number. Files on the server are named following a standardized format beginning with the CNS number. All digital project files are stored in a folder named for the student who worked on the item; these student files are organized by graduation year. This organizational structure was instituted by the department in 2006. An example of the organizational structure for student active student files can be seen in Figure 4.
The system was designed to organize student files. As a record of student activities that often relate to the one-time treatment of individual items, this system is sufficient, but the process becomes difficult when dealing with a collection of items or items studied or conserved by multiple students. There is the additional complication that the Lord Collection is on long term deposit at Buffalo State College but is owned by the Buffalo History Museum. Should the museum decide to retrieve the collection, gathering all the accompanying files would present a challenge.

The history of student involvement with the Lord Collection began with former professor of paper conservation Judith Walsh and has been continued by current professor of paper conservation Theresa J. Smith. The electronic archives are not searchable meaning that in order for students to find files related to conservation and technical studies of Lord Collection volumes they must consult professor Smith’s handwritten records to learn the name of the student who worked with each individual item, and then determine the graduation year of that student in order to find the appropriate files. There are numerous additional Lord Collection materials stored in lab specific folders elsewhere on the active files server. This organizational system makes gathering information on the collection difficult and time consuming.

My technical study book illustrates a deficiency in this system. From reading her thesis, I knew that Merritt had photographed the volume. I wanted to consult these images to monitor the condition of the volume to see if there had been any noticeable changes since the images were taken. I knew that Merritt graduated in 2016, but when I checked her archived student record, I was unable to find a record for my
volume, CNS 147224. Merritt did not perform any treatment on this specific volume, so she did not generate item specific documentation meaning there was no folder for CNS 147224 in her files. All of the images related to CNS 147224 were in the folder for her thesis. I had to navigate a pathway seven folders deep to find the images that I was looking for. This was only possible because I knew exactly what I was looking for and I had an idea of where to look. It is not difficult to imagine a scenario in which a student is unable to find the files that they are looking for.

After scouring the server in search of all related Lord Collection files, I checked the physical files in the department office. It is department policy to print two physical copies of all examination and treatment related documents for an object upon completion of a project: one copy for the client, and one copy for the physical department archives. I assumed that this would be a way to make sure that I had found all of the files from the digital archives. I began by checking the folder for my technical study volume. Having just finished reviewing the digital files, I knew that Abigail had photographed the volume and written an initial examination report following transfer to the department. To my surprise, the folder only contained the one-page transfer form. I checked the rest of the folders associated with Lord Collection materials and found the same thing. Three of the physical files were absent. The missing folders corresponded to the three CNS numbers treated as thesis projects by students prior to the transfer of the books to the department for long-term storage. Thus, these files were archived after the students graduated.

3.2.2 Proposed Organizational Changes for Electronic Records

A complete restructuring of the archiving system is impractical, and far beyond the scope of what can be accomplished in a year. The current system is functional for most projects carried out in the department. I proposed changes and outlined a workflow to help address the cases that do not neatly fit into the established system. These proposed changes will make previously captured data easy to find and access and will establish a protocol to ensure ongoing compliance.

Finding aids are organizing tools often employed by libraries and archives. They contain detailed information pertaining to a specific collection within a larger archive and help researchers find the items they are looking for within a collection. I took the idea of a finding aid and designed an Excel spreadsheet to help students more quickly see what information exists on the server and to track the location of all files related to the Lord Collection. All data pertaining to the collection was gathered from the server, physical files in the department office, as well as notes and email correspondence to track file information from previous student technical studies and conservation interventions. A spreadsheet created in Microsoft Excel was chosen as the format for the finding aid because the collection is and will continue to be actively used by students. As students finish projects in the future, the finding aid will need to be continually updated. Excel was chosen because most students are already familiar with the functionality and the spreadsheet allows users to manipulate data and sort entries easily using a multitude of different queries. The Lord Collection Finding Aid is in Appendix 9.3. Because the finding aid is a living document that will continually need to be updated to include future student work, detailed instructions for updating the document and organizing the server folder for the Lord Collection were written and have been included in Appendix 9.4.

To facilitate student use of the physical collection, I created a binder that will live in the cabinet with the Lord Collection volumes. The binder contains a history of and introduction to the Lord Collection, the concordance created by Abigail Merritt, detailed instruction guides for updating the finding aid, careful
handling instructions, and a physical copy of Abigail’s primer on analyzing book structures. Hopefully having introductory materials readily at hand will help students, especially those new to the study of bookbinding analysis, more easily interact with the collection. A copy of the table of contents and the documents included in the physical binder can be found in Appendix 9.5.

3.2.3 Proposed Organizational Changes for Physical Records

The physical object files in the department office serve an important role as a backup system for documentation and a tool to help prevent dissociation. The object file is often the first place a student will check when they are assigned a new project. Ideally, the files contain all of the pertinent intake information and serve as a physical reminder that the associated object is in the department.

Anne Hoehn, the administrative assistant for the art conservation department, retrieved the physical files relating to Lord Collection items from the archives and returned them to the department office. Because some volumes were treated prior to the transfer, the Lord Collection books have non-sequential CNS numbers. This makes searching the physical files cumbersome. Anne will rearrange the physical files and create a separate section specifically for the Lord Collection files. Anne and I are working together to print hard copies of all electronic documentation related to the Lord Collection volumes to populate the folders. This will bring us into compliance with departmental guidelines, AIC recommended practices and will help prevent dissociation of materials. Additionally, should the Buffalo History Museum ever request the books back, these file organization steps will make that process more efficient.

3.2.4 Preservation of Documentation

The AIC Code of Ethics outlines the principles that guide conservators as stewards of cultural heritage preservation. The guidelines for practice highlight the importance of preserving documentation (AIC Code of Ethics section 18). The AIC Guide to Digital Photography and Conservation Documentation provides a more comprehensive list of the recommended practices for storage and backup of electronic records, and strongly recommends maintaining a hard-copy backup in addition to electronic documentation (Frey et. al 2017). Departmental policy on conservation documentation was written with these guidelines in mind.

The importance of a robust organizational system cannot be overstated. As conservators, we are trained to assess threats to cultural heritage collections. Our goal is to prevent deterioration when it is possible and treat them when it is not. In the 1990’s the Canadian Conservation Institute outlined the 10 Agents of Deterioration to define the primary driving factors of deterioration (CCI 2017). The first nine agents generally receive most of our focus in graduate school and in our careers, but the tenth agent, Dissociation, is equally important. According to CCI, Dissociation is defined as ‘the natural tendency for ordered systems to fall apart over time’ and the result of dissociation is ‘loss of objects, or object related data, or the ability to retrieve or associate objects and data’ (Waller and Cate 2019). The most effective controls to prevent dissociation are at the policy and procedural level. Although the risk of dissociation receives the least amount of attention in the average conservator’s career, according to CCI ‘where appropriate and adequate policies and procedures are not instituted and respected, dissociation will likely be the greatest risk to a collection’ (Waller and Cato 2019). It is the responsibility of the conservator to maintain and preserve our documentation with the same amount of care taken to preserve the objects.
themselves. Regular upkeep of electronic documentation is the best way to prevent loss and dissociation over time.

4. RESULTS AND CONCLUSION
Almost immediately upon starting my project, I realized that creating open-access to the collection would be a long-term process well beyond the scope of a one-year research project. I thought that gathering all the previously captured data would be a quick process, but in performing that task, I encountered a deficiency in our departmental electronic documentation archiving policy. The current procedure is not sufficient to prevent the risk of dissociation when working with a collection of items. Despite my strong personal desire to make Lord Collection information broadly accessible beyond SUNY Buffalo State, I focused my attention on making existing data and collection information easily accessible to students within the department.

Professor Jiuan Jiuan Chen worked with me to determine the optimal way to organize the electronic files on the server to facilitate student access while still adhering to departmental archiving practices. Through conversations with Professor Chen, I gained a deeper understanding of electronic documentation practices at the university. In general, student interaction with documentation archiving is limited to the physical files in the office and the electronic student files on the server. Through this project, I was introduced to the complicated system of multiple backups that is usually beyond the scope of student involvement. I have always been interested in the maintenance and preservation of electronic documentation, and this project was a welcome opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of how those concepts are practiced at an institutional level.

This project highlights one deficiency in the current system but it is not the only one. The archive server for electronic documentation is a static record that is not searchable. Other students have encountered problems when retreating objects that have been previously treated by the department. If the client does not retain or bring in detailed records, accessing the files related to previous treatment is dependent upon the memory of individuals present in the department at the time of the first treatment. As faculty members retire, this institutional memory is no longer accessible. As an added complication, if the object was treated prior to the 2006 institution of the current organizational system for electronic documentation, the treatment documentation exists in physical form as slides or film negatives in the physical department archives. These archives do not have a finding aid, making access to the correct file completely dependent on institutional memory of which student treated an object. Conservation students in the program have always kept detailed records, but the current system presents an increased risk of dissociation of the records. A searchable records management database like those used by cultural heritage institutions to maintain collection records would be a solution to these problems but would require a large investment of resources. It would also require significant staff time to migrate years of existing electronic documentation.

The finding aid that I created for electronic documentation on the server provides a solution to address one deficiency of the current system. The finding aid has been tested by other students and their feedback has been positive. Updating the physical files in the department office to meet departmental archiving standards is a positive step to prevent dissociation. While researching student projects with the Lord Collection, I was able to read Abigail Merritt’s thesis and engage with the fantastic resources she created to aid student use of the books. I hope that having a physical binder containing useful information placed in the Lord Collection storage area will make physical use of the collection easier and that the workflow outlining my procedural recommendations will ensure that digital archiving continues to be an active practice.
The way that I conceptualize access has become more nuanced. At the outset of the project, I had the goal of complete open access. I envisioned a book binding scholar in Europe consulting the linked data binding survey produced at SUNY Buffalo State that they had discovered through an entry in the Material Evidence in Incunabula database creating a global community of scholars building on each other’s work. I still think that is a possible eventuality and I am excited for that prospect, but I have come to judge the success of my projects through the idea of spheres of access. When I began my project, data on the Lord Collection was technically accessible to students and faculty in the art conservation department but that access was difficult and hindered by a system with some deficiencies. Now, accessing electronic and physical documentation of the Lord Collection is a much simpler process for faculty and students.

5. FUTURE WORK

5.1 FileMaker Pro Database Migration

The FileMaker Pro database that Abigail Merritt created as part of her thesis project needs to be migrated to a different format. The survey contains a large amount of detailed information in a format that no longer meets good archiving practices. The university no longer supports FileMaker Pro. The department maintains one license for the software on a computer in the department that allows students to continue to access the survey data, but that model is unsustainable. According to the AIC Guide to Digital Photography and Conservation Documentation “digital archiving is an active process’ and ‘formats must be migrated to ensure survival” (Frey et. al 2017, p.97). I exported the data as an XML file and an Excel spreadsheet and placed a copy of each format on the department server in the folder for the Lord Collection. This ensures that there is a copy of the information that will remain accessible without a FileMaker Pro license but is not a perfect solution. I contacted Hope Dunbar, a Special Collections Archivist at SUNY Buffalo State for guidance on best practices. She provided a few suggestions, but the best solution is not straightforward and will require additional work that I will not be able to complete prior to the end of the semester. I strongly encourage the department to continue consulting with university archivists to determine a plan for data migration in the very near future.

5.2 Linked Data Project

Although I was unable to perform a linked data binding survey, I strongly feel that the Lord Collection is an ideal candidate for a future linked data project. A linked survey of binding information would be beneficial to both an external and internal audience. The volumes themselves would be of interest to bookbinding scholars. Providing volume specific binding information on the incunables in the collection to the Material Evidence of Incunabula database would make the Lord Collection accessible to researchers around the world and would provide students at Buffalo State the opportunity to contribute to a global scholarly community. Internally, a thorough binding catalogue will aid in the use of the collection by allowing students to find examples applicable to their area of interest without overhandling the volumes. Minimizing handling will help prevent damage and improve the long-term preservation of the collection.

Creating a survey schema would provide students an opportunity to engage with the concept of linked data and practice a real-world application of the concept while in graduate school. Linked data allows for the publication of data in a format that is both machine and human readable as well as linked to external resources to allow for enhanced searchability and discoverability. It is a way of formatting data that is
very different to how we usually think about our work as conservators. When I was first introduced to the concept, I was overwhelmed. In my experience that is not an uncommon reaction. Conservators are often practical learners, and it was through examples and practice that I gained a degree of familiarity with the concepts and began to see the immense potential of linked data for conservators.

In the Buffalo State program, book conservation students are encouraged to perform a technical study. This requires close examination of the features of an individual binding. This would be an ideal opportunity to practice engaging with a linked data survey. My original project proposal included using the XML schema created for the St. Catherine’s Monastery Printed Books Assessment (Ligatus 2007) and linking the data to the LIGATUS Language of Bindings Thesaurus and the CIDOC-CRM following the procedures I learned in the workshop with Dr. Velios. My plan was to complete the survey for my technical study volume and then create a set of instructions for future students to complete the survey for other books in the collection. In conversation with Dr. Velios and Kristen St. John, members of the Linked Conservation Data group, I realized that it would not be appropriate to re-use the St. Catherine’s project schema. Data modelling has come a long way in the decade since that schema was developed and it would present multiple challenges to reuse the schema. Dr. Velios suggested writing a short XML schema to address specific binding questions.

I had planned to write a short schema myself with instructions for future students to practice expanding the code, but time and budgetary constraints complicated that plan. As I continued my research into linked data and responsible archiving practices, I determined that it would be irresponsible to generate a body of new data without first ensuring the long-term preservation and access of existing data. If a student in the future is interested in pursuing a linked data project using the Lord Collection, they are now easily able to access the history of student projects to help formulate an appropriate survey schema. In Appendix 9.6 I have included a short bibliography as an introduction to linked data and I strongly encourage future students to explore this fascinating and burgeoning field.

6. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special thanks go to faculty advisors Theresa J. Smith and Anne Hillam for their support and guidance throughout the project. Jiuan Jiuan Chen provided advice on file storage and server organization. Athanasios Velios and Kristen St. John generously provided their support and assistance with questions related to linked data. Dr. Velios kindly answered technical questions. Cynthia Van Ness helped research the history of John C. Lord and his library and the Buffalo History Museum generously approved the long-term deposit of the Lord Collection at the SUNY Buffalo State Art Conservation Department. Thank you to all the students who have previously worked on the Lord Collection, specifically Abigail Merritt whose master's project and survey of the collection are important resources for understanding the Lord Collection at Buffalo State. Financial support was provided by Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the Buffalo State College Tuition Grant. Thank you to the Art Conservation Department faculty and staff and the students of the Classes of 2021, 2022, and 2023. Finally, I would like to thank my partner, Adam Shapiro. This research project was carried out during a global pandemic that challenged all of us and drastically changed how we approach our day-to-day activities. Without the patience, friendship, and support of everyone in the art conservation department this project would not have been possible.
7. REFERENCES


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https://www.ligatus.org.uk/stcatherines/node/1052.


https://doi.org/10.1093/library/s6-17.3.209.


8. AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT

Kathryn Kenney graduated from Wellesley College with a Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology in 2013. She is currently a student at Buffalo State College pursuing a Master of Arts in Art Conservation and Certificate of Advanced Studies and expects to graduate in 2022. She has previously worked as a conservation technician at the Wellesley College Library and the Weissman Preservation Center. She will spend her third year at the Library of Congress.
Appendix 9. Preventative Conservation

As part of her Masters’ paper, Abigail Merritt (Class of 2016) provided recommendations for environmental conditions for storage of the Lord Collection volumes. Her recommendations can be found in Appendix 1 of her paper1. In addition to her excellent recommendations, I suggest routine preventative maintenance steps.

1) Many of the four-flap boxes created to protect the volumes from light exposure and dust have become damaged. The cardstock used to create the boxes is not sufficient to support the weight of the books through repeated use. In the electronic finding aid, I have recommended modifications for specific boxes that present specific handling challenges. Additionally, all of the boxes should be assessed and replaced as needed.
2) Careful and minimal handling is important for the long-term preservation of fragile volumes. Routine maintenance and consultation of electronic documentation will help prevent damage due to overhandling. When the volumes need to be consulted, I have provided careful handling instructions to mitigate potential damage through use.
3) Completion of all recommended procedural changes to the electronic and physical files for the Lord Collection is a large step to prevent dissociation, but it is important to perform routine maintenance of archival records. I recommend that the electronic documentation and physical files be checked yearly for compliance.
4) The books are housed in boxes in a closed cabinet, but the cabinet is located in an active lab space and still susceptible to the accumulation of dust. Routine cleaning is recommended to prevent dust which is hygroscopic, abrasive, and presents a risk to the collection.

1 A physical copy of Abigail Merritt’s thesis is in the department library. An electronic copy is located on the archive (smb://bscfiles01/art-con2/ARCHIVES/CLASS_OF-2016/Merritt_Abigail/Merritt_695)
# BOOK EXAMINATION REPORT

**OWNER/AGENT**
- Buffalo History Museum

**OWNER’S ID NR.**
- N/A

**DATE RECEIVED**
- October 7, 2014

**EXAMINER**
- Kathryn Kenney

**FACULTY SUPERVISOR(S)**
- Anne Hillam and Theresa J. Smith

**DATE OF REPORT**
- April 12, 2021

**AUTHOR(S)/EDITOR(S)/OTHER**
- Augustine, Saint Bishop of Hippo.; Martin Flach; Possidius, Saint

**TITLE (“”) or DESCRIPTION**
- “Aurelii Augustini opuscula plurima”

**DATE/PERIOD OF PUBLICATION**
- 1491

**PLACE OF PUBLICATION**
- Strasbourg

**PUBLISHER/MANUFACTURER**
- Impensis et op[er]a Martini Flach

**EDITION**
- Printed

**TEXTBLOCK**
- Relief in black ink

**DIMENSIONS (H x W x D, inches)**
- 10 13/16 x 7 ¾ x 1

**PAPER TYPE/QUALITY**
- Handmade, antique laid, moderately thick, moderately textured (3) (Lunning and Perkins, 1996)

**ESTIMATED ORIGINAL COLOR**
- Cream (2)

**PRESENT COLOR**
- Cream (2) to Beige (1)

**ENDPAPER TYPE/QUALITY**
- Handmade, antique laid, Cream (3) to Beige (1), moderately textured (1) endpapers watermark bull’s head with six-pointed star

**INSCRIPTIONS/IDENTIFYING MARKS**
- Manuscript inscriptions on endsheet (written in brown ink)
- Paper label on upper spine manuscript (written in brown ink) “Augustin(?) operamu(?)a.”
- Manuscript inscription on lower spine applied directly on covering material (written in red ink) “1491”
- Bookplate on left board pastedown (printed in black ink) “The Dr. John C. Lord Library Property of the City of Buffalo”
- Paper label on left board pastedown (printed in black ink) “093 8 Works of St. Augustine (including his most celebrated “Confessions”) printed at Strassburg in 1491”
- Numerous manuscript inscriptions throughout text (written in brown and red ink)
- Illumination in gold, blue, green, and purple

**WATERMARK/IDENTIFYING MARKS**
- One watermark identified

**SEWING STRUCTURE/LEAF ATTACHMENT**
- Three split alum tawed supports, sewn all along

**ENDBANDS/HEADBANDS**
- A single core integral sewing support near the head and tail
**EDGE TREATMENT**

**SPINE LININGS**
Small black stamp at the head of the textblock
Transverse parchment linings, visible evidence of manuscript on the linings indicating the use of parchment waste

**ATTACHMENTS/INSERTS/ETC.**
Insert containing short biography of author tipped to the right board pastedown under the Lord Collection bookplate

**BINDING**

**DIMENSIONS (H x W x D)**
11 ¼ x 8 x 2 5/16

**COVERING MATERIAL**
Alum-tawed pigskin

**COLOR**
Mottled gray/tan/dark yellow, originally light cream

**METHOD OF BOARD ATTACHMENT**
Laced on with three sewing supports

**DECORATIVE TECHNIQUES**
Blind tooling on left and right board faces and spine, two tooled brass clasps on fore-edge

**ENCLOSURE(S)**
Four-flap enclosure
I. DESCRIPTION

• GENERAL REMARKS
This book is composed of a collection of letters written by St. Augustine of Hippo. According to the Incunabula Shorttitle Catalogue (ISTC), copies of ‘Opuscula plurima’ can be found in 129 holding institutions. This copy was printed in Strassburg by Martini Flach. The binding characteristics fit with those characteristic of German gothic bindings, a structure that was common in Europe from the 14th to 17th centuries. Binding elements exhibited by this volume and associated with German gothic structures as described by J.A. Szirmai (1999) include thick wooden quarter-sawn boards that extend beyond the edges of the textblock to create a square, slightly rounded board shaping to create a smooth transition across the shoulder, blind tooled alum tawed pigskin covering material, and blind tool metal clasps.

• TEXT BLOCK
The textblock is composed of handmade, antique laid paper. There are soft undulations in the textblock, particularly within the printed area (see image A17N and A20N). There is rubrication present on the pages and initialing on the front leaves. The pastedowns and endsheets are also handmade, antique laid paper. The endsheet contains a watermark of a bull’s head with eyes, rounded nostrils, and a line extending between the horns topped with a six-pointed star was imaged using beta radiography (see image A35XR). The textblock has been ploughed smooth.

• BINDING
The binding dimensions are 11 ¼ x 8 x 2 5/16 inches. The wooden boards are bound in full in alum-tawed pigskin (see images A1N and A9N). The board was not sampled for identification, but common types of wood used in Gothic style bindings from this time are oak, beech, or poplar. Boards are square on head, tail, and foredge and slightly beveled towards spine. There is no back-cornering. The right board is very flat, the left board is slightly cupped. The planarity of the boards indicates that the wood was most likely quarter sawn. Quarter sawn boards experience even shrinkage which prevents them from cupping. The boards have been laced onto the textblock over the board edges and through the board face (see images A33XR and A34XR).

The covers are blind tooled with various lines, flowers, leaves, circles. The tooling design on the front and back boards is identical (see images A1N and A9N). There is a small border of small leaf tooling along the head of the spine. The turn-ins irregular and range from ¼” to 1”. The turn-ins have not been pared. The head cap has not been shaped and has a lower profile than boards. The cap at the tail is missing. The spine was tied up after covering resulting in indentations caused by a twisted cord on each side of the sewing supports and across the middle of the double supports.

The binding has two brass foredge clasps with catchplates on left board. The top catch plate is 15/16” x 1 7/16” and located 2” from head of book. The lower catch plate is 1” x 1 7/16” and positioned 2 ¼” from tail. The catchplates are stamped with two separate designs and they have each been attached to the upper face of the left board with three nails. One nail is missing from the top catchplate making it slightly loose. The catchplates are folded over edge of board. The leather straps are still attached to the right board. The attachment plate located at the head of the book measures 15/16” x 1 ¼”. A quarter-inch of metal is bent around to form a hook. The attachment plate is stamped with the same two tool designs as the catch plate. The attachment plate is attached to the leather strap by two nails and is sandwiched between two pieces of metal. The attachment plate located near the tail of the volume has the same measurements and design. A section of board is carved away so strap can sit flush with right board. The covering material extends over the strap and is attached to the boards with two small metal plates and three nails to anchor the straps in place (see image A9N).

• SEWING STRUCTURE/LEAF ATTACHMENT
The sewing stations have been created by cutting v-shaped channels into the gatherings. This is consistent with Szirmai’s description of typical methods used in Gothic bindings (Szirmai 1999). The 4
sewing stations in the center of the textblock have been sewn on are double vegetable fiber cords. Near the head and tail there is a sewing station with a single vegetable fiber sewing support. One single support is positioned 9/16” from the head of the textblock and the other is positioned 7/16” from the tail; both were sewn integrally with the four double supports. Two-ply S-twist vegetable fiber threads were used. Damage to the tail of the spine has made one support visible, from this damage it is possible to see that the sewing was packed around the sewing supports (see image A31N). The thread is path continues between each sewing hole throughout the textblock indicating that the textblock was sewn all-along and not abbreviated.

- **ENDBANDS/HEADBANDS**
  There are no endbands.

- **EDGE TREATMENTS**
  The edges have been ploughed smooth, marks from the tool used can be seen on the head and tail of the textblock (see image A26N). At the head of the textblock there is a circular stamp that was impressed with a hot tool (see image A26N). Ink stains on the foredge obscure the stamp in the normal light image, details can be seen more clearly under infrared illumination (see image A29IR).

- **ENDSHEETS**
  The endsheets and pastedowns are composed of handmade antique laid paper.

- **SPINE LININGS**
  Transverse spine linings of parchment manuscript waste are visible in gaps between gatherings and at the tail of the spine where the covering material is missing. These linings extend onto the board beneath the pastedowns.

- **ATTACHMENTS/INSERTS**
  A bookplate relief printed in black ink reading “The Dr. John C Lord Library Property of the City of Buffalo” is attached to the right board pastedown. Under the bookplate, a 3” x 5” label “Works of St. Augustine (including his most celebrated “Confessions”)” relief printed in black ink on machine made wove paper has been tacked to the pastedown (see image A17N).

**II. CONDITION**

- **Summary:** The main concern is continued damage to the binding during handling. The paper label on spine is embrittled and lifting, small fragments have broken off since Abigail Merritt imaged the volume in 2015 when the Lord Collection was transferred to Buffalo State College. The parchment near the spine is lifting and torn, posing a handling risk that could lead to further loss along the spine. As Merritt noted in her original treatment proposal, the clasps are at risk of scraping the textblock during handling.

- **TEXT BLOCK**
  The textblock is in good condition. There is extensive brown staining on the edges of the textblock but the staining is historic and should be left as evidence of use.
• **BINDING**
The covering material is discolored and there is a minor loss at the tail of the spine exposing the textblock and a single sewing support. Two coatings have been applied to the spine and extend onto the upper and lower board faces. The coatings fluoresce differently when viewed under ultra-violet radiation; one coating exhibits a white ultra-violet induced visible fluorescence, the other appears orange (see images A3UVA and A11UVA). One coating luminesces under infrared luminescence indicating a natural resin varnish (see image A6IR and A14IR).

• **SEWING STRUCTURE/LEAF ATTACHMENT**
The sewing is in good condition.

• **ENDBANDS/HEADBANDS**
N/A

• **EDGE TREATMENTS**
There is significant brown staining on the edges of the textblock. This staining is historic and should be left as evidence of use.

• **SPINE LININGS**
The spine linings are intact and attached.

• **ATTACHMENTS/INSERTS**
The bookplate and printed label attached to the left board are in good condition.

### III. PREVIOUS TREATMENT

The coatings on the spine were most likely applied to improve the binding’s appearance or protect the parchment. The binding is housed in a four-flap enclosure constructed in 2015.

### IV. BIBLIOGRAPHY

*Incunabula Shorttitle Catalogue (ISTC).* [https://data.cerl.org/istc/ia01221000](https://data.cerl.org/istc/ia01221000).


EXAMINATION REPORT—Analysis & Photography/Imaging

### PRE-TREATMENT PHOTOGRAPHS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>TECHNICAL NOTES</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1N</td>
<td>Left board, normal illumination, before treatment</td>
<td>Lighting approximates standard viewing conditions. A D700 Nikon, UV-Vis-IR modified camera was used with XNite CC1 filter.</td>
<td>Note the tooling pattern, the decorative clasps, and the discoloration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2RK</td>
<td>Left board, raking illumination, before treatment</td>
<td>The light was positioned at the left (top) at low angle to the surface of the subject in order to emphasize the surface topography.</td>
<td>The tooling pattern and abrasions are more clearly visible. Note the small area of insect grazing along the tail edge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3UVA</td>
<td>Left board, longwave ultraviolet (UVA) induced visible fluorescence</td>
<td>The subject was photographed in a darkened room while irradiated by a long wave ultraviolet lamp (blacklight). The ultraviolet radiation causes some materials in the subject to fluoresce (emit light). Camera filtration: X-Nite CC1 and Peca 918 + Kodak 2E</td>
<td>The overall bluish fluorescence is indicative of proteinaceous material. There are two spine coatings that can be seen as a brighter blue/white and orange fluorescence. The changes in fluorescence intensity corresponding to areas of staining are pronounced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A4RUVA</td>
<td>Left board, reflected longwave ultraviolet (UVA)</td>
<td>The subject was placed in front of a long wave ultraviolet lamp (blacklight). A camera with sensitivity to the invisible ultraviolet radiation was used to record how the ultraviolet was absorbed (area appears dark) or reflected (area appears light) by materials in the subject. This image can aid in differentiation or characterization of materials. Because the ultraviolet penetrates little beyond the surface, the visibility of anomalies in surface can also be enhanced. Camera filtration: X-Nite CC1 and B+W 403</td>
<td>Note the absorption of the spine coating, these areas appear dark. The areas of staining on the covering material are no longer clearly visible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A5FCUV</td>
<td>Left board, false-color ultraviolet</td>
<td>Using a computer, a standard color image of the subject was combined with a reflected long wave ultraviolet image. The colors in the resulting false-color photograph are determined by an area’s visible color as well as the extent to which it absorbs or reflects ultraviolet radiation. These false colors can be used to assist in identifying materials or in distinguishing different materials that are similar in appearance. Color channel substitution sequence: Green to Red Blue to Green UVA to Blue Camera- visible light UV-Vis-IR modified camera Nikon D700 was used. Camera filtration: X-Nite CC1 and B+W 403</td>
<td>Absorption of the spine coating is more visible when enhanced by the false color.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A6IR</td>
<td>Left board, reflected near infrared photograph</td>
<td>The subject was illuminated with incandescent lamps. A special camera, sensitive to the invisible near infrared radiation emitted by the bulb was used to record how the radiation penetrated the subject or was absorbed or reflected by the materials in the subject. Infrared radiation may penetrate overlying layers to reveal underlying information or may help to characterize materials or to distinguish different materials that are similar in appearance. Camera filtration: X-Nite 715</td>
<td>Note that the staining material is no longer visible, indicating that near infrared radiation was able to penetrate the material. The two spine coatings appear distinct. One coating is brighter, reflecting more radiation while the other coating is darker, absorbing more radiation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A7IRLUM</td>
<td>Left board, infrared luminescence</td>
<td>The subject was illuminated with an infrared free visible light source. The visible light energy is absorbed by some materials in the subject and released as invisible near infrared</td>
<td>Note the light luminescence of one of the spine coatings, this could indicate that it is possibly a type of resin varnish. The staining material is visible in this illumination, absorbing radiation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All conservation documentation should be retained with the artifact as part of its historical record. Documentation which the department provides complies with the principles set forth in the Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Practice of the American Institute for Conservation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spine Coating</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A14IR</td>
<td>Right board, reflected near infrared photograph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A15IRLUM</td>
<td>Right board, infrared luminescence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A16FCIR</td>
<td>Right board, false-color infrared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A17N</td>
<td>Inside left board pastedown, normal illumination, open to upper pastedown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A18IR</td>
<td>Inside left board pastedown, reflected near infrared, open to upper pastedown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A19IRLUM</td>
<td>Inside left board pastedown, infrared luminescence, open to upper pastedown</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**A8FCIR**

**Left board, false color infrared**

Using a computer, a standard color image of the subject was combined with a reflected near infrared image. The colors in the resulting false-color photograph are determined by an area’s visible color as well as by the extent to which it absorbs or reflects infrared radiation. These false colors can be used to assist in identifying materials or in distinguishing different materials that are similar in appearance.

**Color channel substitution sequence:**
- Green to Blue
- Red to Green
- IR to Red

Camera: visible light UV-Vis IR modified camera Nikon D700 was used.

**Camera Filtration:** X-Nite 715

**A9N**

**Right board, normal illumination, before treatment**

See A1N

Note the tooling pattern and areas of abrasion. Note there is additional dark staining on this board. The dark circles are evidence of insect grazing.

**A10RK**

**Right board, raking illumination, before treatment**

See A2RK

The tooling patterns and abrasions are more clearly visible. Note the insect grazing holes.

**A11UVA**

**Right board, longwave ultraviolet (UVA) induced visible fluorescence**

See A3UVA

The overall bluish fluorescence is indicative of proteinaceous material. The spine coatings can be seen as a brighter blue/white and orange fluorescence. Along the tail there is a noticeable drip of one of the spine coating with the blue/white fluorescence. The changes in fluorescence intensity corresponding to areas of staining are pronounced.

**A12RUVA**

**Right board, reflected longwave ultraviolet (UVA)**

See A4RUVA

Note the absorption of the spine coating, these areas appear dark. The areas of staining on the covering material are no longer clearly visible. The areas of abrasion are more pronounced, the exposed skin is reflecting more ultraviolet radiation.

**A13FCUV**

**Right board, false-color ultraviolet**

See A5FCUV

The absorption of the spine coating is more visible when enhanced by the false color.

**A14IR**

**Right board, reflected near infrared photograph**

See A6IR

Note that the staining material is no longer visible, indicating that near infrared radiation was able to penetrate the material. The two spine coatings appear distinct. One coating is brighter, reflecting more radiation while the other coating is darker, absorbing more radiation. The insect grazing holes appear as dark black circles.

**A15IRLUM**

**Right board, infrared luminescence**

See A7IRLUM

Note the light luminescence of one of the spine coatings, this could indicate that it is possibly a type of resin varnish. The staining material is visible in this illumination, absorbing radiation.

**A16FCIR**

**Right board, false-color infrared**

See A8FCIR

**A17N**

**Inside left board pastedown, normal illumination, open to upper pastedown**

See A1N

Note the areas of insect grazing along the pastedown and endsheet. There are numerous manuscript notations in black, brown, and red inks.

**A18IR**

**Inside left board pastedown, reflected near infrared, open to upper pastedown**

See A6IR

Under near infrared radiation, the red and brown inks are no longer visible indicating that the radiation is able to penetrate them. The black ink remains visible, indicating that it may be a carbon based black ink.

**A19IRLUM**

**Inside left board pastedown, infrared luminescence, open to upper pastedown**

See A7IRLUM

When viewed under infrared luminescence, the topography under the pastedown is more clearly evident. The edges of the parchment turn-ins are visible. All three inks remain visible.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A20N</td>
<td>Inside left board, normal illumination, open to fly-leaf</td>
<td>See A1N Note the manuscript notations in brown ink on the endsheet as well as the evidence of inset grazing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A21IR</td>
<td>Inside left board, reflected near infrared, open to fly-leaf</td>
<td>See A6IR The brown ink manuscript notations are no longer clearly visible indicating that the infrared radiation is able to penetrate the material.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A22N</td>
<td>Inside left board, normal illumination, open to first page</td>
<td>See A1N Note the red manuscript notations throughout the text and the small illumination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A23UVA</td>
<td>Inside left board, longwave ultraviolet (UVA) induced visible fluorescence, open to first page</td>
<td>See A3UVA Note the offset staining from the illumination is more clearly visible under ultraviolet radiation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A24RUVA</td>
<td>Inside left board, reflected longwave ultraviolet (UVA), open to first page</td>
<td>See A4RUVA Note the red ink manuscript notations are no longer visible. The details of the illumination are no longer visible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A25IR</td>
<td>Inside left board, reflected near infrared, open to first page</td>
<td>See A6IR Note the area of loss along the tail of the spine. There is a faint notation applied in red ink directly to the covering material that reads ‘1491’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A26N</td>
<td>Spine, normal illumination, before treatment</td>
<td>See A1N Note the red ink manuscript notations applied in red ink and the overall discoloration caused by dirt collected on the textblock from long-term vertical storage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A26N</td>
<td>Foredge, normal illumination, before treatment</td>
<td>See A1N There is dark staining along the foredge that corresponds to the areas of staining on the boards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A26N</td>
<td>Head, normal illumination, before treatment</td>
<td>See A1N There is a small black stamp on the textblock and overall discoloration caused by dirt collected on the textblock from long-term vertical storage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A26N</td>
<td>Tail, normal illumination, before treatment</td>
<td>See A1N There is staining of the textblock and the edges of the boards are abraded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A27UVA</td>
<td>Spine, longwave ultraviolet (UVA) induced visible fluorescence</td>
<td>See A3UVA Note the spine coatings exhibiting a sienna/orange fluorescence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A28RUVA</td>
<td>Spine, reflected longwave ultraviolet (UVA)</td>
<td>See A4RUVA The spine inscriptions on both spine labels are no longer visible indicating that they are not reflecting ultraviolet radiation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A28RUVA</td>
<td>Foredge, reflected longwave ultraviolet (UVA)</td>
<td>See A4RUVA There are specular highlights on the metal clasps. The ink staining is still visible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A29IR</td>
<td>Spine, reflected near infrared photograph</td>
<td>See A6IR The red ink spine label is no longer visible indicating that the infrared radiation is able to penetrate the material. The black ink manuscript notation on the paper spine label is lightly visible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A29IR</td>
<td>Foredge, reflected near infrared photograph</td>
<td>See A6IR The staining on the textblock is no longer visible. This could indicate that the staining is caused by a carbon-based ink that does not typically absorb near infrared radiation. Note the decorative tooling on the metal clasps is clearly visible when viewed under these conditions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A29IR</td>
<td>Head, reflected near infrared photograph</td>
<td>See A6IR The staining on the textblock is no longer clearly visible. The stamp is still visible and more easily discernible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A29IR</td>
<td>Tail, reflected near infrared photograph</td>
<td>See A6IR The staining on the textblock is no longer visible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A30IRLUM</td>
<td>Spine, infrared luminescence</td>
<td>See A7IRLUM The black ink manuscript on the paper spine label is clearly visible. The red manuscript label near the tail is only lightly visible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A30IRLUM</td>
<td>Foredge, infrared luminescence</td>
<td>See A7IRLUM The staining of the textblock is pronounced indicating that the material is an absorbing infrared radiation. The metal clasps also appear dark indicating that they are absorbing infrared radiation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A31N</td>
<td>¾ Left board and spine view, normal illumination, before treatment</td>
<td>See A1N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A32N</td>
<td>¼ Right board and foredge view, normal illumination, before treatment</td>
<td>See A1N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| A33XR | X-radiograph | The subject was penetrated by a beam of x-rays and the extent of x-ray penetration was recorded on a digital imaging plate. Areas of the subject that are denser, thicker, and/or composed of materials that contain elements of higher atomic weight absorb more x-rays, diminishing penetration. They thus appear lighter in tone in the radiograph.  
**kV:** 15  
**mAS:** 1200  
**FFD:** 32 inches  
**Tube filtration:** None  
**Screens:** None  
**Film or imaging plate:** XL Blue 14 x 17 inches | The metal pins, catchplates, and clasps are clearly visible. The lacing pattern and double sewing supports are evident. The extent of insect damage to the boards is more easily seen. |
| A34XR_EdgeFilter | X-radiograph | See A33XR.  
Edge filtration applied in CarePoint software. | With edge filtration applied, some of the details are more clearly visible. |
| A35XR | Beta radiograph (watermark) | The subject was placed upon an imaging plate. A weakly radioactive small sheet of plastic containing Carbon 14 was placed on the subject over the area of interest. The low-energy beta particles emitted by the plate penetrate the paper as well as most inks and thin washes of color. Where the paper is thinner, such as in the lines of the watermark, the penetration is greater making the area appear darker in the radiograph.  
**Exposure time:** 70 minutes  
**Film or imaging plate:** Kodak Industrex Flex HR Digital Imaging Plate 2147 | The watermark in the endsheet can be seen clearly in the radiograph. The watermark is positioned under a large initial ‘O’ written in an ink that did not allow the emitted beta particles to penetrate. This is the brighter area in the image. The watermark was compared to other examples on the Wasserzeichen-Informationssystem website. Using the hierarchical description from the database, the watermark can be described as a bull’s head with a detached sign above and a rod consisting of one line. |
147224_A31N_focus-blended

147224_A32N_focus-blended
### Lord Collection Student Project History

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Class Year</th>
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<th>Book Model</th>
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<th>Box Modification Needed</th>
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<td></td>
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<td>Readhere paper label on spine, create protective sleeve for clasps to protect foredge</td>
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Appendix 9.4 Lord Collection Project Workflow

WORKFLOW FOR ARCHIVING LORD COLLECTION STUDENT PROJECTS

I. Name and organize all files and folders following the instructions outlined in Professor Jiuan Jiuan Chen’s file archiving workflow: 600/601-6-3 ‘File Archiving’.

II. Update Lord Collection Student Project History Document

- Find the excel document in the Lord Collection Folder on the bscfile01/art-con$ server (file name LordCollectionStudentProjectHistory).
- Find the row for the CNS number. Every project needs an individual row. There will be multiple rows for the same CNS number.
- Input pertinent information for the completed project.

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- File path refers to the specific location on the server. This can be found by opening the file and checking the information panel (as seen below)

[Image of file path information]

Screenshot from Jiuan Jiuan Chen
### Lord Collection Student Project History

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- If damage requiring treatment is noticed during the course of examination, place a note in the ‘Treatment Needed’ column. If the box requires a modification, place a note in the ‘Box Modification Needed’ column.
- Save the file and put the updated version back in the folder for the Lord Collection on the bscfile01/art-con$ server.

**III. Archive Lord Collection Student Project History Document**

- Inform Professor Jiuan Jiuan Chen once the LordCollectionStudentProjectHistory document has been updated on the bscfile01/art-con$ server. At the end of the year, she will move a copy of the updated document to the department’s archive server.

**IV. Populate physical folders**

- Print one copy of all files (Examination Report, Image Pages, Technical Study, etc.) and file in the department’s object file folder. All file folders for Lord Collection items should remain in the file cabinets in the department office, they should not be moved to the department archives.
# LORD COLLECTION PROJECT BINDER

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LORD COLLECTION HISTORY AND INTRODUCTION

Dr. John Chase Lord was a prominent Buffalo Presbyterian minister and lawyer. Upon his death in 1877 he bequeathed his extensive private library to the City of Buffalo. The library consists of approximately 10,000 volumes covering a broad range of subjects (Fess 1995). In 1886 the New York State Senate approved a bill that authorized the city of Buffalo to accept the library which they placed in the care of the Buffalo Historical Society (The Buffalo Commercial 1886). In the intervening years the Buffalo Historical Society has undergone a few name changes, in 2012 the name was changed to the Buffalo History Museum and will be referred to as such for the rest of the paper (Fetouh 2012). Dr. Lord’s library was described by the press at the time as “probably one of the best collections in this country of manuscript books ante-dating the era of printing” (Morning Express 1887). According to the same account, the collection contained over 200 books that were over 300 years old at the time of the newspaper’s publication. The collection, which reflects the eclectic tastes of a man who journalist Margaret Fess described as “one of Buffalo’s most colorful characters” (1955), is an important piece of Buffalo history.

The Buffalo History Museum's provenance file for the books contains three newspaper articles referencing the collection and not much more information. Cynthia Van Ness, Director of Library and Archives for the Buffalo History Museum was able to provide information about the current location of the books and how twenty-three volumes from the collection ended up at the Garman Art Conservation department. The books that made up Dr. Lord’s library are now housed in four locations. A portion is physically housed in the library at the Buffalo History Museum, the majority are in the museum’s storage facility, and approximately 1,000 volumes have been on indefinite loan to the Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural site since 1971 where they are used to fill the bookshelves in a period room (Van Ness pers. comm.).
In 2014 the possible transfer of twenty-three volumes from the Buffalo History Museum to long-term deposit at the Buffalo State Art Conservation department was proposed. At the time, the books were housed in a locked storage area in the Buffalo History Museum and were not being used by patrons. The books did not serve the museum’s mission to document people, places, things, or events of the Buffalo area. In 2012 professor of paper conservation Judith Walsh contacted Cynthia Van Ness to find projects for book conservation students. Over the next two years, three students studied and treated books from the Lord Collection. Following those student projects, Van Ness and Walsh discussed placing the twenty-three books on indefinite loan to the art conservation department where they would help fulfill the program’s mission to teach book history and conservation. For her graduate master’s project, book conservation student Abigail Merritt facilitated the loan by designing and carrying out a thorough condition survey of the twenty-three volumes including photographic documentation and a phased conservation plan (Merritt 2015). The twenty-three volumes were transferred to the Buffalo State Art Conservation department and are now housed in the Book Conservation Lab where they are referred to internally as ‘The Lord Collection’.

The books in the collection are an invaluable resource for students of book conservation. There are twenty-three books; eight are manuscript and fifteen are printed. They represent seven countries of origin and multiple centuries of bookbinding traditions. A third of the collection dates to the 15th century and there has been very minimal, if any, intervention to the binding structures. These volumes provide an opportunity for students to closely examine and analyze book structure and materials. Having the books on long-term deposit with the Buffalo State conservation Department presents an opportunity for students to learn from past projects and build on each other’s research. In her masters’ project, Abigail Merritt created a self-guided lecture on book structures and a FileMaker Pro database of her survey information to facilitate use of the collection (Merritt 2015). Since 2014 eight students of book conservation have...
researched one or more books in the collection. When I began my technical study in 2020, I was excited to add myself to the list of students who have benefited from this opportunity.

The significance of the Lord Collection for book conservation students is readily apparent. My previous studies into the history of bookbinding led me to immediately see the potential of the collection for scholarship outside of the conservation department at Buffalo State College. The collection provides unaltered examples of early bookbinding that could be of interest to bookbinding historians. The collection includes eight incunables, and scholarly interest in these examples of early printing cannot be overstated. The Consortium for European Research Libraries facilitates multiple databases dedicated to incunables including the Incunabula Short Title Catalogue (ISTC) which provides repository information for incunables and the Material Evidence in Incunabula (MEI) Project that collects copy-specific information for incunables. The ISTC lists the volumes held at the Buffalo State Art Conservation Department, but the MEI doesn’t contain any information on the volumes. When embarking on my technical study, I chose one of the incunables in the collection with the goal of contributing binding information to the MEI.
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<td>1661</td>
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<td>23</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1549</td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>01</td>
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<td>Jardim Carmelitano : historia chronologica, e geografica</td>
<td>1741</td>
<td>Lisbon</td>
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<td>Augsburg</td>
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WORKFLOW FOR ARCHIVING LORD COLLECTION STUDENT PROJECTS

I. Name and organize all files and folders following the instructions outlined in Professor Jiuan Jiuan Chen’s file archiving workflow: 600/601-6-3 ‘File Archiving’.

II. Update Lord Collection Student Project History Document

- Find the excel document in the Lord Collection Folder on the bscfile01/art-con$ server (file name LordCollectionStudentProjectHistory).
- Find the row for the CNS number. Every project needs an individual row. There will be multiple rows for the same CNS number.
- Input pertinent information for the completed project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CNS #</th>
<th>2015 Survey No.</th>
<th>File Path</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Class Year</th>
<th>Project Type</th>
<th>695 Project</th>
<th>Book Model</th>
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<th>Bac Modification Needed</th>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Readmore paper label on spine, create protective sleeve for claps to protect fudge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- File path refers to the specific location on the server. This can be found by opening the file and checking the information panel (as seen below).

![File information panel](image)

Screenshot from Jiuan Jiuan Chen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CNS #</th>
<th>2015 Survey No.</th>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7 49
• If damage requiring treatment is noticed during the course of examination, place a note in the ‘Treatment Needed’ column. If the box requires a modification, place a note in the ‘Box Modification Needed’ column.
• Save the file and put the updated version back in the folder for the Lord Collection on the bscfile01/art-con$ server.

III. Archive Lord Collection Student Project History Document
• Inform Professor Jiuan Jiuan Chen once the LordCollectionStudentProjectHistory document has been updated on the bscfile01/art-con$ server. At the end of the year, she will move a copy of the updated document to the department’s archive server.

IV. Populate physical folders
• Print one copy of all files (Examination Report, Image Pages, Technical Study, etc.) and file in the department’s object file folder. All file folders for Lord Collection items should remain in the file cabinets in the department office, they should not be moved to the department archives.
Careful Handling

How to Use Book Futons

Duke Libraries Conservation Lab created a short video tutorial on You Tube. Search Google for “How To Use A Book Futon” or go to the following URL.  http://tinyurl.com/7tn7w8n

Futons are best used in pairs, one supporting the front cover and one supporting the back cover. Roll the futons to the size needed to support the boards and text block. Use a futon as a cushion underneath the book to protect the book from sliding on the table.

The object of using futons is to support the book to relieve stress on the joints, covers and text block. As you read through the text, you will need to adjust the futons to support the changing shape of the book. A few ways to adjust your futons are shown below. In addition:

• Two futons can be rolled together to provide a bulkier support for a heavy book.
• Don’t feel obligated to roll the whole length; a partially rolled futon may be all you need to support a small book.
• A curtain weight can be carefully draped over the pages to keep them open. Try to drape the weight over the unprinted areas to protect any fragile printing or decorations.

Two futons, one futon at front and back

One futon to support front cover

One futon used as a cushion

One large futon rolled at each end
Careful Handling

Additional Resources

Duke University Libraries ‘How to Use a Book Futon in the Reading Room’, one minute video demonstrating how to use book futons to support fragile volumes
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8tyi86NE9sg

Harvard Library ‘Ten Tips for Reading Room Success’, interactive careful handling guidelines:
https://learn.library.harvard.edu/handle

Harvard Library ‘Handling Harvard’s Special Collections’, four minute video demonstrating careful handling of special collections materials
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UOv0SOQ8B68

Library of Congress ‘Care, Handling, and Storage of Books’,
https://www.loc.gov/preservation/care/books.html
Introduction to book structures
☞ A lecture to accompany the Lord Collection at Buffalo State College
by Abigail Merritt

The book as a physical object
A physical book may take many forms.

In this lecture we will examine the type of book on the right (a codex).

Parts of a book
First, some terms*:

Elements of a book structure
A few basic elements are found on most books of this type.
- leaves
- sewing and leaf attachment
- text block features
- covers and cover attachment
- decoration

These elements may vary in their arrangement or relationships, pattern, and materials. The relationships especially are closely tied to the sequential steps of bookbinding.

Leaves
A book leaf is two pages (a page is one side of a leaf). Leaves are often made by folding a sheet of paper:

1 fold = 2 leaves, 4 pages
2 folds = 4 leaves, 8 pages
3 folds = 8 leaves, 16 pages etc.

Leaves - folding
There are many ways of folding sheets besides those depicted here. Leaves may be made from single sheets, half sheets, and other combinations. They may also be of materials other than paper.
Leaves - shapes

Sheet folding also affects the shape of the leaves. Because sheets of paper usually are rectangular, the number of folds (odd or even) is somewhat predictable based on the leaf shape. Note: Only applies to old books.

1 fold = tall rectangle shape
2 folds = squat rectangle
3 folds = tall rectangle etc.

Sewing

Leaves that are grouped together with one spine fold make up a signature, also called a section or gathering. Signatures are sewn together to make a text block.

Sewing - supports

There are many ways of sewing a text block. Some methods use sewing supports, additional material that supports the stitches. Supports can be made of vegetable fiber cord, parchment, leather, or cloth tapes. Unsupported sewing lacks this additional support.

Sewing - patterns

Sewing patterns vary greatly. Here are a few examples:

It is also possible to skip holes and to sew more than one signature at a time.

Other leaf attachment

Not all books are sewn. Leaves may be held together by adhesive alone, or by other methods, to make a text block.

There may also be unsewn leaves in a sewn textblock. For example, leaves are sometimes tipped in, or adhered to an adjacent leaf.

Text block features

Text blocks have several different features. They may have trimmed or untrimmed edges; they may be shaped or not; and they may have spine linings and endbands. Trimmed edges may also be colored or gilded.
Text block features - shaping

Shaping a text block includes **rounding** and **backing**. Rounding creates convex curvature of the spine. Backing gives the book **shoulders**. Books may be both rounded and backed, or neither.

![Rounded, but not backed (no shoulders)](image)

Text block features - spine lining

A book’s spine may be lined with one or more layers of flexible material, such as paper, parchment, or cloth. The lining material is adhered directly to the spine folds or to other linings.

![Spine lining](image)

Text block features - endbands

Books often have endbands at either end of the spine. Endbands may be sewn, rolled, or woven from various materials; or they may be machine-made and stuck on.

![Endbands](image)

Text block features - examples

Unlike sheet folding, sewing, and spine lining which can be difficult to see, text block trimming, shaping, and endbands are easily observable. Let’s look at some examples.

![Examples](image)

Text block features - example 1

This book is neither rounded nor backed—it has a flat spine and no shoulders. The edges are trimmed. There are no endbands. Because the cover is removable, we can see that the spine is not lined, and the sewing is supported.

![Example 1](image)
Appendix 4. Lecture materials

Text block features - example 2

The edge of this text block is trimmed smooth.

The shape is rounded, but hardly backed—the book has slight shoulders.

An endband is visible.

The spine and sewing supports are hidden by the cover.

Covers

Once the text block is finished, the next step is making and attaching a cover*. A wide range of materials and several methods of cover attachment are used in covering books.

*Covers may also be sewn together with the text block and therefore would already be attached, as in a sewn boards structure.

Covers - materials

Covering materials include leather, parchment, cloth, and paper.

Covers - board materials

Covers may have boards or not. Board materials include wood, mill board, and pasteboard. Covers without boards are called “limp” or “soft.”

Covers - board squares

Boards that are bigger than the text block—meaning they stick out around the edges—have squares.
Boards may also be shaped. For example, the board on the right has a beveled edge.

There are two basic approaches when attaching a cover to a book:
- Make the cover directly on the text block.
- Make the cover separately, then attach it to the text block.

The first approach is generally associated with laced construction; the second, with cased construction. There are exceptions, but we won’t get into those here.

In laced construction, boards are attached to the text block before they are covered with leather or some other material. This means the text block must be made first, and the cover is usually adhered to the spine.

In this example, the sewing supports are laced through holes in the boards to attach them to the text block. The boards have not been covered.

In cased construction, the cover (or “case”) is attached to the text block with adhesive. The case can be made separately, at the same time as the text, and is not adhered to the spine.

Here the boards have already been covered to make the case. The case only needs to be adhered to the text block.

No matter when or how the boards are attached, the covering material is adhered to the boards and “turned in” (folded) around the edges. The flaps of covering material that get folded over are called turn-ins.

Covers without boards may also have turn-ins.
Cover attachment - pastedowns

The inside of the boards is often covered by a piece of paper, called a pastedown. The pastedown also covers the turn-ins. Although they are covered, the turn-ins sometimes show through the paper.

Cover attachment - examples

Because much of the cover attachment is often hidden under the covering material or behind the pastedowns, it can be hard to tell how everything was put together. These are examples where some attachments are visible.

Cover attachment - example 1

The sewing support goes into the edge of the board and comes out in a groove on top.

Cover attachment - example 2

Here, the supports travel over the board edge and onto the side. Both examples are laced construction.

Decoration

At this point the book is fully assembled! Decoration may be added for the finishing touch. These are a few examples of decorative techniques.

Elements of a book structure

A set of specific elements that is consistent between books of a certain time period, geographic location, etc. make up a “structure” or “binding style,” e.g. a “Gothic” book structure.

A Gothic book may have most or all of these features.
Book structures change over time

By examining the features previously described, you can place a bookbinding roughly in the time period of its production. Note that books may be rebound several times—an old book may have a much more recent binding. Books may also exist for many years after printing before finally being bound, or they may be bound in an older style.

Example: comparing bindings

Here are two books, both printed in the 15th century. If we examine their features, we can see several differences:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book 1</th>
<th>Book 2</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>paper</td>
<td>paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leaves</td>
<td>leaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>single supports</td>
<td>single supports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>text block</td>
<td>text block</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trimmed, red edges</td>
<td>trimmed, red edges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-wood, squares</td>
<td>non-wood, squares</td>
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<tr>
<td>sprinkled leather</td>
<td>sprinkled leather</td>
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<td>laced</td>
<td>laced</td>
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<tr>
<td>gold tooling</td>
<td>gold tooling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blind tooling</td>
<td>blind tooling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example: evidence of rebinding

Was Book 1 rebound or bound later in an 18th century style?

One clue that Book 1 was rebound is the row of unused sewing holes, highlighted in red. These holes mean that the book was completely taken apart and resewn using new holes, leaving the old holes empty.

Example: evidence of rebinding

Other evidence of rebinding includes cropped text and smaller edges. This is because books are often trimmed during rebinding, which makes them smaller and leads to narrower margins and possibly loss of text.
Activity - examining a book

Now try examining a book and describing its features. Remember, not all of a book’s parts are readily observable. For instance, you probably won’t be able to see the sewing supports or spine linings. You might be able to see some of the sewing, but if the book doesn’t open easily, don’t force it.

Examination form

You can use this form to record your observations and compare books. Refer to Parts of a book and the List of terms to review useful words.

Parts of a book

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Textblock</th>
<th>Endband</th>
<th>Spine/back</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Back/Spine</td>
<td>Section</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gathering</td>
<td>Shaped</td>
<td>Shoulder</td>
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<td>Gold tooling</td>
<td>Laced</td>
<td>Signature</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leaf</td>
<td>Spine lining</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

List of terms

- backing
- beveled
- blind tooling
- boards
- case
- endband
- gathering
- gold tooling
- laced
- leaf
- limp
- page
- pastedown
- rounding
- section
- sewing supports
- shaped
- shoulder
- signature
- sprinkling
- soft (cover)
- squares
- tipped in
- trimmed
- turn-ins
- unsupported sewing

References & further reading


Acknowledgements

Cynthia Van Ness & Buffalo History Museum
Gary Frost
Judith Walsh
Lisa Berglund
Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
Buffalo State College Tuition Grant
## Book examination form

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<tr>
<td>Material</td>
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<td>Other attachment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Text block</td>
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<td>Colored/gilded edges</td>
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<td>Rounded/flat</td>
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<td>Backing/shoulders</td>
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<tr>
<td>Endbands</td>
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<td>Covers/cover attachment</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other attachment style</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decoration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of rebinding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unused sewing holes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cropped text</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrow margins</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Book examination form

Parts of a book

List of terms

backing    limp    sprinkling
beveled    page     soft (cover)
blind tooling    pastedown    squares
boards    rounding    text block
cased    section    tipped in
d endIndex    sewing supports    trimmed
gathering    shaped    turn-ins
gold tooling    shoulder    unsupported sewing
laced    signature
leaf    spine lining
Appendix 9.6. Linked Data Bibliography


https://www.w3.org/standards/xml/core.

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-73515-3_7.
