signing blame to either historians or archivists, it is clear that they view archivists as responsible for the creation of the archival divide and believe that archivists should bear the brunt of responsibility to bridge the divide. Practical aspects of archival administration are criticized as “subordinating historical authority” (48) or dismissed entirely. Perhaps most shockingly, Blouin and Rosenburg argue that the only relevant users of archives are historians and that archivists attempting to involve other constituencies in the archival mission are merely seeking to enlarge their funding base. Sections of the book dealing with technology are the weakest and would have been better treated by archivists and historians working in digital humanities.

Overall, Processing the Past is a worthy addition to archival literature and presents many important ideas. In particular, the author’s exploration of “identity archives” specializing in race, ethnicity, and gender deserves further study. Archivists and historians alike should consider reading this book as a stepping stone across the archival divide. ~ Morgan Davis, Head of Archives and Rare Books, University of North Texas


A Lancastrian Mirror for Princes is McGerr’s study of the relationship between the illustrations and the text within a single manuscript copy of the New Statutes of England (or Nova statuta Angliae) owned by the Yale Law School. The manuscript bears the coat of arms of Margaret of Anjou, who was the consort of Henry VI. McGerr supplies a full codicological description of the manuscript (Appendix 2), as well as links between it and other known Lancastrian “mirrors for princes,” or works of advice about kingship. Her objective, as stated in the Introduction, is to explore the role of a fifteenth-century legal manuscript, as well as to compare the forms of representation it may share with other medieval manuscripts in other genres. Focusing on the relationship between the illustrated margins and the center of the text, McGerr views this illustrated manuscript of the New Statutes of England as a work that not only serves as a record of English law of the period, but also a means of “presenting ideals of kingship, queenship, justice, and grace” (1–2, 10).

The book is relatively brief (only 139 pages without the end matter) and the subject matter is narrow; but, like the visual elements in the Nova statuta, the special features of A Lancastrian Mirror for Princes heighten its value as a resource. Of particular note, especially in a book of such modest cost, is the substantial section of illustrated plates found between pages 86 and 87 of the text. McGerr’s concentration on visual components of the manuscript certainly necessitates the inclusion of such vivid imagery from the Nova statuta Angliae in her book, but she includes a va-
riety of related black-and-white and full-color photographs of related manuscripts as well. Other useful special features include a chronology of significant historic events from 1321 to 1482 relevant to the Lancastrian court, extensive endnotes, a substantial bibliography and list of manuscripts cited, and a thorough index.

The strength of *A Lancastrian Mirror for Princes* is its ability to demonstrate the importance of the book as object. As McGerr indicates, there are many other copies of the text still in existence, but the unique characteristics of this particular copy are what contribute to its significance (11). Margaret of Anjou’s coat of arms within its borders, and the iconographic representations of six English kings within the historiated initials, distinguish it from all other copies (40). Although other legal statutes of the period contained kings’ coats of arms, this particular copy is the only surviving one with the arms of the queen, and McGerr believes that this feature is an attempt to link the manuscript directly with Margaret of Anjou. Among the many implications that these arms generate, McGerr suggests that the fact they remain intact may indicate that the manuscript was owned by someone who remained loyal to Henry VI after he was deposed. McGerr also asserts that the depictions of the kings from Edward III to Henry VI in the *Nova statuta* are intended to represent “an unbroken line of rulers who follow a religious ideal of just kingship,” but the illustrations differentiate Edward IV from his five predecessors (45). The distinction suggests a level of criticism of Edward IV by those who were supporters of Henry VI, including Margaret of Anjou herself. Both types of visual characteristics have larger repercussions in the history of this particular volume and reinforce the importance of the book beyond the text. McGerr has examined what might otherwise appear to be a common fifteenth-century legal text and has successfully demonstrated the ways in which its visual characteristics may have much greater political implications. ~ Jennifer K. Sheehan, Ph.D., Curator of Rare Books, University of North Texas Libraries


This short, easy-to-use handbook was written by Alison Cullingford, the Special Collections Librarian at the University of Bradford in the United Kingdom. It covers the world of special collections from soup to nuts in ten relatively brief chapters, capturing basic points and then pointing the reader to a variety of additional resources for more information. Each chapter ends with a list that includes further reading suggestions, examples and case studies, and useful websites. The focus is on special collections in the United Kingdom, United States, and Australia, though much of the information is universally applicable.

This is a particularly useful resource for library school students and new special col-