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Managing the Transition from Large-Scale Oral History Research to Digital Archive: The Digital Librarian's Perspective

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**Managing the Transition from Large-Scale Oral History Research to Digital Archive:
The Digital Librarian's Perspective**

**Cory Lampert
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Oral History Association Meeting 2007**



Digital world users want:

- Information 24/7
- Everything online
- Found in one place
- Fast!

Libraries and Archives:

- Evaluate and select quality sources
- Organize the information
- Preserve historic materials for the future
- Catalog with standards
- Processes proven, but take time



Librarians (historians, too?) like to search...

...everyone else likes to FIND!

Quote from Roy Tennant, originally published in *Library Journal* (2001)

Organization and Retrieval on the Web



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Welcome

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Searching and Browsing

Searching:

- Known items (i.e title)
- Good once a research topic is decided upon
- Specialized users
- Indexes, TOC, glossary
- Depends on accurate dates, spellings and good subject indexing
- ITEM-LEVEL

Browsing:

- General broad interest
- Best when investigating topics
- Global audience
- Similar to shelf-browsing or to web: hyperlinks
- Depends on layout and keywords
- COLLECTION-LEVEL

Digitization Project Management



Phase One: Digital Conversion

Phase Two: Metadata



Phase Three: Online Presentation

Free Text vs. Controlled Vocabulary vs. Local Subjects

Controlled Vocabulary

Jobs
Work
Labor



“EMPLOYMENT”

Free Text:

title, names, dates

Local subjects: terms not found in authority files for controlled vocabulary, but essential to retrieving records on a particular subject.

Geographic names, proper names, or specialized jargon

NSTOHP Data Dictionary for Descriptive Metadata

| FIELD | DUBLIN CORE METADATA STANDARD MAPPING | CONTENT SOURCE MATERIAL | EXAMPLE | AUTHORITY |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Media | Format | Original transcript, Word file, NSTOHP list of transcripts | 71 p. transcript; digital audio | [#pg.; format] |
| Tests, Series, Experiments, Operations Discussed | Subject | From Locations in TOC, index. Limit to verified locations on Test Site | Nancy; Sedan; | US Nuclear Tests |
| Locations at Nevada Test Site | Location | From Locations in TOC, index. Limit to verified locations on Test Site | Nevada Test Site Area 400; Camp Desert Rock; | Getty Thesaurus for Geographic Names, or local standard [LOC format] |
| Local Subject | Subject | From TOC, index | Downwinders; Stewart Indian School; Dosimetry, Miss Atomic Bomb | Locally-created list. Check thesauri then assign term |

Next steps:

As back-end metadata and database records are completed...

We switch gears to create a visually appealing front-end for users.

Add pictures here? Something “visually appealing”

Challenges: Different professional cultures

Librarians

Add picture here? “Communication”

Oral Historians

Information

Technologists

Challenges: Complex Content

Agencies

DOE

AEC

DOJ

LANL

LLNL

REECo

NIH

U of U

JASON

SNPO

Tests, Operations

Fulcrum

Gasbuggy

Gnome

Hardtack II

Kiwi (nuclear
reactor)

Latchkey

Plowshare

Project Pluto

Rover

Sedan

Pictures?

Digital collections have wonderful potential to open up unique content to wider audiences and researchers around the world!

Picture?