Applying *DACS* to Finding Aids: Case Studies from Three Diverse Repositories

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Abstract

Describing Archives: A Content Standard (*DACS*) is the first descriptive standard in the United States to apply to all forms of archival description, including finding aids. This article contains three cases studies from diverse repositories of the implementation of *DACS* as a content standard for finding aids. They show the flexibility of *DACS* and its usefulness in standardizing descriptive practices while respecting different descriptive traditions.

Introduction

When Encoded Archival Description (EAD)[1] emerged in the 1990s, it introduced U.S. archivists to the notion of national standards for finding aids. EAD offers a standard markup syntax for encoding, sharing, and delivering archival finding aids, but it explicitly avoids imposing content guidelines. The EAD Working Group created EAD to be flexible and to accommodate as broad a range of descriptive practices as possible. They chose inclusion over prescription to encourage institutions to adopt EAD. EAD was implemented widely and developed into a true international standard.

Since 1983, *Archives, Personal Papers, and Manuscripts* (*APPM*)[2] had standardized the content of catalog records shared by U.S. archival repositories, and

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[1] EAD: Encoded Archival Description Version 2002 Official Site (EAD Official Site, Library of Congress), http://www.loc.gov/ead/.

[2] Steven Hensen, comp., *Archives, Personal Papers, and Manuscripts*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1989). The first edition was published in 1983.

many institutions stretched *APPM* so that it could be used as a content standard for other kinds of output, including finding aids. As EAD's success spurred a great proliferation of finding aids shared via the Web, the need for a content standard that could comfortably support a broader range of outputs became clear. Motivated in part for better compliance with *ISAD(G): General International Standard Archival Description*,[3] the revisions in EAD 2002 make the need for a new U.S. content standard for all types of archival description even clearer.

Describing Archives: A Content Standard (*DACS*)[4] met that need when it was published in 2004 and adopted as a U.S. standard by the Society of American Archivists (SAA) in 2005. Drawing on *APPM*, *ISAD(G)*, and other sources including the Canadian *Rules for Archival Description* (*RAD*),[5] *DACS* represents the first standard for the content of all descriptive output in the United States. Furthermore, it is output neutral. It applies equally to MARC 21[6] catalog records, paper-based inventories, EAD-encoded finding aids, databases, and so on, unifying all descriptions of archival materials under a common standard.

How has *DACS* been received by archivists faced for the first time with a content standard appropriate for use with finding aids? Case studies at the Bancroft Library[7] and Oregon State University[8] describe successful implementations of *DACS* as a content standard for finding aids. Both repositories had previously implemented EAD, and the creation of *DACS*-compliant finding aids required sufficiently few changes to existing practice as to make the adoption of *DACS* practical.

This article offers three additional case studies of the implementation of *DACS* as it applies to archival description. Daniel Santamaria explains how *DACS* informed and eased the implementation of EAD at Princeton University. Prudence Backman discusses how *DACS* was interpreted in the context of government records at the New York State Archives. Finally, Andrea Leigh explores the usefulness of *DACS* in describing moving image collections, specifically collections of home movies, at the UCLA Film and Television Archive.

These case studies show the diversity of archival repositories implementing *DACS*, which proves itself flexible enough to be useful in all three implementa-

[3] ICA Committee on Descriptive Standards, *ISAD(G): General International Standard Archival Description*, 2nd ed. (Ottawa: International Council on Archives, 2000). Also available at http://www.ica.org/en/node/30000.

[4] Society of American Archivists, *Describing Archives: A Content Standard* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2004).

[5] *Rules for Archival Description* (Ottawa: Bureau of Canadian Archivists, 1990).

[6] MARC 21 is a standard, machine-readable format for capturing and exchanging bibliographic and related information. See MARC Standards, http://www.loc.gov/marc/.

[7] Lynette Stoudt, "Implementing *DACS*: The Experience of the Bancroft Library Archivists," *Descriptive Notes* (Summer 2005): 6–7.

[8] Elizabeth Nielsen, "Implementing *DACS*: A Case Study at Oregon State University," *Archival Outlook* (May/June 2006): 8–9.

tions. It fits naturally for an academic library adopting EAD for the first time, respects the requirements of a government archives with function-based rather than creator-based descriptions, and helps a film archives bridge the gap between traditional ways of describing moving images at the item level and the need to describe bulk aggregations lacking formal titles. As *DACS* continues to be implemented, these case studies suggest that it can successfully meet a broad gamut of archival description challenges.

DACS at the Princeton University Library

Late in the summer of 2004, the Department of Rare Books and Special Collections of the Princeton University Library formally began efforts to implement a program for encoding new finding aids using EAD. Coincidentally, a draft version of *DACS*, the new content standard for archival description, had been released a few months earlier. These two events allowed us to closely examine the relationship between the data content standard and the data structure standard for archival finding aids.

The Department of Rare Books and Special Collections includes the Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library, the department's Manuscripts and Graphic Arts Divisions, as well as several other collections. Department holdings range widely in content and form, comprising university records, large political and organizational collections, literary manuscripts, collections of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century manuscripts documenting the history of the United States and of the state of New Jersey, and many other graphical and textual materials.

We faced a number of challenges when attempting to maintain consistency in our descriptive practices, including the varying sizes of our collections (from thousands of linear feet to individual items), multiplicity in the types of materials, and a wide variety of previous descriptive practices. Historical differences between the manuscripts tradition and the archives and records tradition are also sometimes still apparent within our department,[9] and while I believe our collections are more similar than they are different, all staff members do not necessarily share my opinion. In addition, employees on term appointments ranging from one to three years carry out almost all of our processing and description.

Although we had talked generally about standardization, we had no concrete plans to review the elements in our finding aids. However, as we readied ourselves to begin encoding finding aids in EAD and faced decisions

[9] For example, while it is difficult to generalize, the unit responsible for literary manuscripts at Princeton often describes material at the item level and practices tend to be rooted in librarianship and bibliographic description, while the unit responsible for institutional records and political or public policy collections typically produces descriptions at the file level according to archival principles, especially provenance.

about which EAD elements to include in our templates, we were able to use the release of *DACS* to help generate interest in such a review. Rather than simply looking at our current finding aids and mapping them to EAD elements, we conducted an element-by-element review of *DACS*. *DACS* generally served as an effective guide for this process, and the results of the review surprised us.

Many of the *DACS* elements, particularly the Identity elements (chapter 2) and Content and Structure elements (chapter 3), were already present in our current finding aids. (See Figure 1.) As we reviewed *DACS*, however, we discovered that a number of changes would be necessary if we were to comply with the standard. The use of abbreviations such as n.d. was common in our finding aids, and, more importantly, while collection titles and biographical notes mentioned the creators of collections, no single place in the finding aids listed authorized forms of the names of creators.

We also added a number of elements to our finding aid templates. We added the Name and Location of Repository element (2.2), for example, because even though HTML versions of finding aids often included this information through the use of server-side includes,[10] it was not present in the finding aids themselves. (For a complete list of elements added to finding aids, see Figure 1.) Some older finding aids included some of these elements, but they had not been consistently applied across all collections. For example, in the past, access restrictions were noted if any existed, but if a collection was open without restriction, a statement on access was usually not noted. As a result of our *DACS* review, all finding aids now include a statement indicating whether or not collections are open for research.

One of the most significant of our changes was the inclusion of series and subseries descriptions within the contents list of the collections. Princeton finding aids now adhere to the fundamental *DACS* principle that "Information provided at each level of description must be appropriate to that level."[11]

Including all of the *DACS* elements made for quite a long list in our templates, both in the EAD XML files and in the HTML and PDF displays that users of the finding aids see. To address this problem, we made use of EAD's <descgrp> tag to group like elements together (see Figure 2) instead of simply listing the *DACS* elements in our EAD template, and we used the titles of the various *DACS* sections as headings in the finding aids.[12] This approach allowed

[10] Server Side Includes (SSI) are a type of HTML command that allows for the insertion or inclusion of the contents of one or more files into an HTML page when it is delivered by a Web server. Typically these files contain boilerplate like headers, footers, and repository names.

[11] *Describing Archives: A Content Standard*, xv. *DACS* derives this principle from the multilevel description rules in *ISAD(G)*, specifically rule 2.2 "Information relevant to the level of description" on page 12 of the *ISAD(G)* PDF available at http://www.ica.org/en/node/30000.

[12] Because the Identity elements in *DACS* (2.1 to 2.6) are already included in EAD's high-level <did> element, we did not nest these elements within a <descgrp> 2. Element 2.7, Administrative/Biographical History, also displays under its own heading ("Biography" for individuals and "Administrative History" for corporate bodies) and is not nested with the other Identity elements.

	Elements already in Finding Aids
2.1	Reference Code
2.3	Title
2.4	Date
2.5	Extent
2.7	Administrative/Biographical History
3.1	Scope and Content
3.2	System of Arrangement
	Elements Added to Finding Aids
4.1	Conditions Governing Access
4.2 and 4.3	Physical and Technical Access
4.5	Languages and Scripts of the Material
4.6	Finding Aids
5.1	Custodial History
5.3	Appraisal, Destruction, and Scheduling Information
5.4	Accruals
6. 1	Existence and Location of Copies
6.2	Existence and Location of Originals
6.3	Related Archival Materials
6.4	Publication Note
8	Description control elements

FIGURE 1. ***DACS*** **Elements in Princeton finding aids.**

us to display related information easily to finding aid users. It was also an attempt to begin moving away from the idea of finding aids as finely crafted narrative documents and toward recognizing them as tools that consist of distinct data elements.

Our ability to divide the *DACS* elements into distinct groups in EAD began to break down as we approached groups 7 and 8. Both of these sections contained elements that the EAD DTD requires to be placed elsewhere. (<descrules>, for example, is a Description Control element and would logically belong in a <descgrp> 8. <descrules>, however, may only occur within EAD's <profiledesc> element, and <profiledesc> may only occur within the <eadheader>.) We were able to develop workarounds for some of these issues through the use of XSLT stylesheets, which allowed us to display some of the elements under the headings we chose, while the actual XML conformed to the EAD DTD. In the future, however, we should explore closer integration of the data structure standard (EAD) and the content standard (*DACS*) for archival description.

Our current finding aid templates list all of the *DACS* elements. Of course, not all elements are relevant to every collection and every finding aid. It is up to the individual archivist to determine which elements are irrelevant for the finding aid he or she is producing. For example, if the archivist decides that the Location of Copies element (6.2) is not applicable (as is often the case), he or she simply deletes it from our template. This approach has been successful so far.

In fact, one of the strengths of *DACS* is its explicit statement of the requirements for both "minimum" and "optimum" description of archival collections. We were able to distinguish between mandatory and optional elements, and also

<descgrp>	***Includes DACS elements***	***Display heading***
3	3.1 and 3.2	"Description" for element 3.1 Scope and Content, and "Arrangement" for element 3.2 System of Arrangement
4	4.1 to 4.6	Access and Use
5	5.1 to 5.4	Acquisition and Appraisal
6	6.1 to 6.4	Related Materials
7	7 and 8	Processing and Other Information

FIGURE 2. Groupings of Elements in Princeton finding aids.

between "full" finding aids, which contain all of the elements for optimum multilevel description according to *DACS*, and what we had previously termed "preliminary inventories," which now contain all the elements *DACS* requires for minimum multilevel description. This aspect of *DACS* proved particularly useful at Princeton when the department launched an ambitious EAD retroconversion project. Although many of the finding aids encoded as part of the project were created decades apart and varied drastically in content and structure, we were able to easily ensure that all finding aids met *DACS* minimum requirements. This strategy would also be especially helpful for repositories considering implementing minimum standards processing recommendations such as those from the Greene-Meissner article.[13]

DACS has also informed the development of templates used for the creation of MARC21 records at Princeton, though, because of some of the similarities between *DACS* and *APPM*, *DACS* has not had as large an impact on the production of MARC21 records as it has on finding aids here. *DACS* has, however, sparked local debate about the future of MARC21 at Princeton. Examples in *DACS* of both EAD and MARC21 output show explicitly that two separate records contain the same information. We have discussed and debated whether it is necessary to include this data in two places, particularly as the University Library has begun to implement a federated search product that allows users to search across multiple databases simultaneously. At this point, we have decided that the university's OPAC (not to mention national and international databases) still serves as an important entry point to our collections, and we are continuing to create collection-level MARC21 records.

Overall, our experience with *DACS* was positive, and *DACS* served as an extremely helpful tool as we implemented EAD at Princeton. We did encounter areas that *DACS* could address more fully, particularly in relation to the lack of guidance and limited number of examples concerning institutional records. However, reviewing *DACS* and making efforts to update descriptive practices to ensure that finding aids adhere to *DACS* are useful processes that would benefit most repositories.

Implementing *DACS* within a Government Setting

A critical premise of *DACS* is that any given repository will adapt general standards to meet its own specific needs. Before implementing *DACS*, description archivists must consider the nature of their records, the context in which they were created, the descriptive systems in use, and the repository's clientele. Nowhere is the need for this exploration greater than in the unique cases

[13] Mark A. Greene and Dennis Meissner, "More Product, Less Process: Revamping Traditional Archival Processing," *American Archivist* 68 (Fall/Winter 2005): 208–61.

presented by government records, as we discovered when we set out to apply *DACS* in the New York State Archives.

Several distinctive characteristics of government records make the implementation of *DACS* at government archives different. The first relates to the process of records creation in corporate entities, where records are created to carry out a specific function. The location of these functions sometimes changes within an organization from one creator to another, even though the activities remain the same. In state government, whole offices are periodically eliminated and their functions dispersed to various agencies. Although scattered, the functions and resulting records remain the same. Because functions move, it is necessary to focus on the records from a single function rather than from the activities of a given office or agency. Therefore, in a repository like the New York State Archives, records tend to be arranged and described at the function-based series level rather than at the office- or agency-based collection level. As a result, records at the New York State Archives generally do not have multiple levels of description. We need, however, to show the relationships between our series descriptions and the creating agency or agencies so users can see either all the records produced by a given agency or all the records surrounding a given function.

The second characteristic relates to the use of historical notes. When series are function rather than agency based, individual series descriptions do not include the history of an office or agency. At the New York State Archives, we create a separate agency history record and will ultimately create an Encoded Archival Context (EAC)[14] record to describe the current functions and organizational history of each agency or office. Each of the series relating to this agency or office then points to the "master" historical note. Within a series description, we use the MARC21 Administrative History field (545) to describe the purpose of the records in that series, rather than the history of the creating organization. Often this includes information on the law that established the function and its resulting records, and it notes changes to the information in the records over time.

When the New York State Archives was established in 1978, our first endeavor was to get basic control over all the information in our holdings. Because we describe records at the series level, we found that series-level MARC21 catalog records were fine at providing "blunt pointer" access to our basic series-level summary descriptions. MARC21 fields accommodated most, if

[14] Encoded Archival Context is an XML standard currently under development for encoding archival authority records. For more information on EAC and how it is intended to be used for creator description, see http://www.iath.virginia.edu/eac/and http://www. library.yale.edu/eac/. For more information on the description of archival creators, see ICA Committee on Descriptive Standards, *ISAAR (CPF): International Standard Archival Authority Record for Corporate Bodies, Persons and Families*, 2nd ed. (Paris: International Council on Archives, 2003), available at http://www.ica.org/en/node/30230.

not all, of our descriptive needs. The 520 field for scope and content information effectively allowed for an adequate description of the series. While we sometimes made long summary notes, most critical information about the records could be conveyed in one or two paragraphs. As a content standard, we applied *APPM*. We addressed other components of traditional finding aids by describing administrative histories in the agency history record and container lists available locally.

A combination of new technology options for archives and our interest in and capacity for creating more detailed control over our materials made it possible for us to begin working toward providing access below the summary descriptive level. We began this work in earnest with a National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) grant, collaborating with other local governments and historical records repositories to describe holdings related to environmental history. As part of the grant, we expanded records descriptions to include more topical terms in addition to form and function terms. We also began to explore developing traditional finding aids for the archives' own records and encoding them using EAD. As part of the grant project, we developed a database to house the EAD finding aids. As a result, we were poised to implement finding aid creation for other State Archives series, but first we needed to learn how to apply *DACS*.

We thought it important for all staff members who describe records to receive *DACS* training, ideally at the same time. Simultaneous training would ensure that we shared an understanding of how to implement *DACS* and the opportunity for dialog about practice. Since description activities at the New York State Archives do not reside solely in one unit but are undertaken by most of the professional staff, we held an SAA workshop on-site so staff members could be trained together. Afterward, we used one of the workshop's exercises to assess our current descriptive tools thoroughly. That assessment enabled us to evaluate for *DACS* compliance a number of the finding aids we had produced as part of the NEH grant. We looked at areas of difference and then discussed a possible set of revised standards for the archives.

First, we checked to be sure that the elements *DACS* requires for a minimum record were present. While we were in compliance for most of the elements, a few appeared incomplete. For some of those incomplete elements, we were capturing all the needed information in our EAD database, but not always displaying it through our stylesheet. The Web display of the repository name did not include an address (2.2 Name and Location of Repository), and we were not providing the Library of Congress (LC) universal code with our location code (2.1 Reference Code). In addition, we only provided information on access conditions when there was an issue (4.1 Conditions Governing Access), and we only listed languages other than English (4.5 Languages and Scripts of the Material).

We also found some inconsistency in our method of constructing a supplied title (2.3 Title). Sometimes the title included the name of the creator; other times it did not. In some cases, our displays did not clearly label descriptive elements to make their purpose evident to users. The assessment pointed out a clear need to improve the labels we use in the public view and to determine how to make our finding aids more user friendly.

We next assessed our summary notes to see if the components of *DACS*'s Scope and Content element (3.1) were present. As mentioned earlier, we used the MARC21 Administrative History field to hold information about the purpose, function, and changes in the record, not about the creator. Here we found that the components were included but again not always clearly labeled or evident to users. For a few series, we provided more detailed information, but, in these cases, using the display could be difficult since it involved scrolling through a number of screens. Also, information about additions could prove confusing to users who had to wade through descriptions of numerous accruals. We did, however, provide fairly extensive subject, location, function, and form access points, and we were routinely making use of other MARC21 elements to address particular descriptive needs. As in the minimum record, the elements were included but not always displayed in a user-friendly fashion.

Last, to provide users with a way of making connections among related series, we needed to explore further how *DACS* handles multilevel descriptions.[15] Multilevel description has yet to be fully explored at the New York State Archives since most of our series do not have multiple levels. We expect to develop more multilevel descriptions as we begin to integrate accrual descriptions into the initial summary note, shorten lengthy catalog records, and move fuller descriptions from MARC21 records to EAD-encoded finding aids. For the few multilevel descriptions that we have encountered so far, implementing *DACS* has resulted in redundancy of information. Content changes very little between series and subseries levels, which makes it difficult to provide context for the subtle changes that do occur without repeating information. We need to determine how much information to provide at the different levels, at which level particular information should be provided, and under what circumstances repetition is acceptable. In all of these cases, we need to make these decisions with a view to use of these finding aids by remote researchers. What information

[15] *DACS*'s glossary provides two definitions for multilevel description: "1. The preparation of descriptions that are related to one another in a part-to-whole relationships that need complete identification of both the parts and the comprehensive whole in multiple descriptive records. 2. A finding aid or other access tool that consists of separate, interrelated description of the whole and its parts, reflecting the hierarchy of the materials being described," *Describing Archives: A Content Standard*, 205. In this situation, the second definition applies to the records of the New York State Archives.

do users need to get the full picture? How much information do they need to keep from getting lost, especially in long finding aids? Finally, we need to explore creating hierarchical suites of linked MARC records for series with the same creator.

EAD and *DACS* provide us with ways to capture a lot of information, but is all that information necessary for the user? How do we decide what information the user needs to understand the records? The New York State Archives has begun to grapple with these questions and to set some institutional standards. First, the <titleproper> of each EAD-encoded finding aid will conform to the rules of the *DACS* Title element (2.3), carrying segments for both name (creator) and nature of archival unit. But the <unittitle> (which will be displayed) will not repeat creator information if it is carried within EAD's <origination> element. We also decided to depart from *DACS* by excluding the Language and Scripts of the Material element (4.5) when the records are in English. Instead, we will continue to follow the MARC21 policy of including a language note only if the language of the materials differs from the expected. In an institution that has very few non-English materials, most users will correctly assume that the materials are in English. If a series contains other languages in sufficient quantities, we will include the Language element.

Implementing *DACS* served as a vehicle for ensuring that our staff is up to date on current standards. In assessing each of the *DACS* elements, we highlighted and dealt with problems and points of confusion. *DACS* also helped us assess the quality of information that our institution provides via finding aids and catalog records. It offered an excellent opportunity to address some inconsistent applications and to identify missing or incomplete information.

Beyond these functional uses, however, *DACS* also inspired our staff to think more globally about our institution's finding aids. The Internet now enables potential users around the world to find our holdings. The day of the reference interview as the sole method of helping users find materials is waning. Many users will not have the opportunity to consult with a reference archivist. We need to provide these users with the information they need to understand what we hold and how they can gain access to it. That may require the use of different types of information, such as the LC location code, institutional addresses, and access status. We must look closely at our access tools and ensure that they can stand on their own, and *DACS* is helping us do that.

Applying *DACS* to Moving Image Collections

When describing motion pictures and television programs, the moving image archival community has traditionally favored item-level bibliographic description, where titles, dates, and credits are transcribed from the chief source

of information.[16] This is a relatively straightforward practice, since commercially distributed moving image products, like published books, exist in multiple copies, are acquired by a number of repositories, and are self-contained and self-explanatory. Researchers and scholars also tend to seek out commercially distributed motion pictures and television programs chiefly by title and date of original release or broadcast, as is evidenced by citation practice in published reference works.

Descriptive practices in moving image archives differ significantly from manuscript and document archives in that what is being described is the moving image work in its entirety. This means that the description is not only concerned with documenting the intellectual content and creators of the film or program, but also has the goal of aggregating the moving image components that are critical to re-creating or reconstructing the work as close to its original exhibition or broadcast format as possible. These film or video components may or may not be from the same source, since the achievement of this goal requires—to the extent possible—compiling the best film or video components from archives around the world.

Another major difference is that moving image archives have not traditionally collected the companion documentation that contextualizes a film or television program. Rather, this complementary material is frequently separated and donated to a manuscript or special collections repository. As a result, the official documentation recording the activity surrounding the production of a feature film or television program will be described and arranged according to the principle of provenance and original order, while the completed moving image work—isolated from the context in which it was originally created—will receive item-level description rooted in a bibliographic framework.[17]

The creation of conventional hierarchical finding aids based on provenance is not a common approach for bringing together collections of moving image materials.[18] The preference for transcription at the item level is codified in an appendix in *Archival Moving Image Materials*, 2nd ed. (*AMIM2*), which suggests that the title—rather than the creators of the material—is the primary

[16] *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules*, 2nd edition, 2002 revision (Chicago: American Library Association; Ottawa: Canadian Library Association; London: Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals, 2002). According to *AACR2r* rule 7.0B, the chief source of information for motion pictures and videorecordings is the item itself, its container (and container label) if the container is an integral part of the piece, and the following sources: accompanying textual material (scripts, shot lists, publicity material), container (if not an integral part of the piece, e.g. can label), other sources.

[17] A bibliographic framework is most commonly characterized by the rules produced by the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) known as the *International Standard for Bibliographic Description (ISBD)*, a framework standard adapted for *Archives, Personal Papers, and Manuscripts* (*APPM*), the content standard *DACS* superseded.

[18] See Abigail Leab Martin, ed., *AMIA Compendium of Moving Image Cataloging* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2001), 35. The *Compendium* suggests that moving image archivists are likely departing from, rather than embracing, multilevel archival description and arrangement.

access point for describing moving image materials at the collection level. Since the concept of main entry or primary access point is not rooted within archival descriptive practice, collection-level cataloging according to *AMIM2* mirrors concepts explicitly stated within the Anglo-American cataloging tradition.[19] However, as more noncommercial moving image material enters archives, borrowing concepts from the bibliographic tradition may not be the best approach for certain categories of moving images, particularly those that do not come into the archives with the equivalent of a title page.

This section of the paper discusses the UCLA Film and Television Archive's melding of item-level cataloging based on the bibliographic tradition with collection-level description conforming to *DACS*. This approach can apply to a variety of categories of moving images that are not commercially distributed, and the description of silent comedy great Harold Lloyd's collection of home movies is a good example of *DACS*'s usefulness in this context.

The UCLA Film and Television Archive contains more than 225,000 motion picture and television programs, and its strength is feature films of the classic Hollywood studio era. UCLA is also the repository of the Hearst Metrotone News Collection (27 million feet of newsreel material consisting of completed newsreel issues distributed theatrically, unreleased stories, and unedited footage), trailers and electronic press kits, television commercials and news footage, music videos, outtakes from feature films and television programs, and home movies and amateur films and video.

Home movies, in particular, present descriptive problems. Since they are likely sought for their evidential or informational content, moving image repositories prefer to describe them at the shot level—a practice that requires the matching of content of the resource at the level of the individual shot, preferably using a thesaurus of keywords relating to people, places, and actions. Since shot-level description requires viewing the content of the resource in its entirety, this practice is prohibitively expensive for the majority of public-sector moving image archival repositories.

Yet trying to apply bibliographic item-level descriptive practices to the often fluid and transitory nature of ephemeral moving images can also present challenges.[20] The transcription model described above is not an optimal approach when the moving images being described rarely contain definitive titles and credits. As more ephemeral moving images enter archives, collection-level

[19] AMIM Revision Committee, Motion Picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound Division, *Archival Moving Image Materials: A Cataloging Manual*, 2nd ed. (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, Cataloging Distribution Service, 2000). Rule C4.1 Title in *AMIM2* states that "The main entry or primary access point for collection-level records is the title proper . . . *optionally* archives may choose to use a personal name or corporate body as the main entry."

[20] "Ephemeral" implies that the moving images lack commercial value or an ongoing means of formal distribution, thereby making them especially susceptible to abandonment, destruction, disintegration, and loss. These lost or forgotten films and video are often referred to as "orphans."

description may be a more appealing alternative than shot-by-shot or item-level analysis, particularly as a descriptive method for home movies and amateur films and video, which display characteristics similar to diaries and are evidence of activities or events. Moving image archives may also choose to use multiple means to describe moving images that are not traditionally released or broadcast. The most famous amateur footage, such as the Zapruder film recording the Kennedy assassination, video of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, and video of the beating of Rodney King by Los Angeles police, all feature shots that have evolved as iconic representations of these historic events. Shot-by-shot analysis is an effective method to tease out the contents of a moving image resource for the purpose of stock footage licensing, but favoring content analysis over contextual analysis is not an optimal descriptive method for research and study purposes. As a result, moving image archives often complement item- or shot-level descriptions by creating collection profiles or study guides.[21]

The common practice in moving image archives of segregating the moving images from their accompanying paper documentation was followed with Harold Lloyd's collection. The UCLA Film and Television Archive retains the moving images—Lloyd's feature films, shorts, excerpts, outtakes, and home movies—while the Margaret Herrick Library of the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences[22] retains the family photographs and scrapbooks, motion picture stills, and original still photograph negatives. Cataloging staff at the UCLA Film and Television Archive initially created item-level records encoded in MARC21 for both Lloyd's commercial output and home movies, based on a combination of both national and local standards and procedures.[23] Processing staff transcribed inscriptions penned on the can labels by the Lloyd family on forms for each individual item. The forms were then passed on to cataloging staff and used as the basis of the title and summary description for inclusion in the archive's MARC21-based integrated library system. This practice made it challenging to target Lloyd's commercially released works in the catalog, as a search on "Harold Lloyd" brought up hundreds of individual reels of home movies interspersed with Lloyd's features and shorts. The home movies do not contain distinct titles and credits cited in published reference works, and cataloging each at the item level and capturing content descriptions from can labels or film leaders did little to convey the context of their creation.

[21] As an example, Northeast Historic Film, a regional moving image archives located in Bucksport, Maine, offers an online collections guide for its moving image collections described at the item level. See http://www.oldfilm.org/ocg.

[22] The Margaret Herrick Library collects a wide range of materials documenting film as both an art form and an industry. To learn more about the Herrick and its collections, see http://www.oscars.org/mhl/index.html.

[23] Rule 1F1 in *AMIM2* provides instructions for structuring supplied titles with form terms. UCLA Film and Television Archive's local procedures for the establishment of supplied titles with form terms are available at http://www.cinema.ucla.edu///CPM#pc20Voyager/ CPMV05.html#5.2.

Title search	Uniform Title	Full Title	
[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Children's Halloween party at beach home. 1931].		[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Children's Halloween party at beach home. 1931].	
Library Location: Non-circulating Nitrate Vaults archival copy		*Call Number: M31963*	*Status: Noncirculating*
[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Children's Halloween party. 1927-10-31].		[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Children's Halloween party. 1927-10-31].	
Library Location: Non-circulating Nitrate Vaults archival copy		*Call Number: M32036*	*Status: Noncirculating*
[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Children's party. 1932-05].		[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Children's party. 1932-05].	
Library Location: Non-circulating Nitrate Vaults archival copy		*Call Number: M31959*	*Status: Noncirculating*
[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Children's party. 1932].		[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Children's party. 1932].	
Library Location: Non-circulating Nitrate Vaults archival copy		*Call Number: M31960*	*Status: Noncirculating*
[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Family. 1932-08].		[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Family. 1932-08].	
Library Location: Non-circulating Nitrate Vaults archival copy		*Call Number: M31954*	*Status: Noncirculating*
[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Gloria - baby pictures].		[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Gloria - baby pictures].	
Library Location: Non-circulating Nitrate Vaults research copy		*Call Number: M32047*	*Status: Noncirculating*
[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Gloria - baby pictures].		[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Gloria - baby pictures].	
Library Location: Non-circulating Nitrate Vaults research copy		*Call Number: M32046*	*Status: Noncirculating*
[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Gloria - baby pictures].		[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Gloria - baby pictures].	
Library Location: Non-circulating Nitrate Vaults archival copy		*Call Number: M31961*	*Status: Noncirculating*
[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Gloria at 2 years old].		[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Gloria at 2 years old].	
Library Location: Non-circulating Nitrate Vaults archival copy		*Call Number: M31949*	*Status: Noncirculating*
[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Gloria's baby party. 1926].		[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Gloria's baby party. 1926].	
Library Location: Non-circulating Nitrate Vaults archival copy		*Call Number: M31939*	*Status: Noncirculating*
[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Gloria's birthday party. 1928].		[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Gloria's birthday party. 1928].	
Library Location: Non-circulating Nitrate Vaults archival copy		*Call Number: M31950*	*Status: Noncirculating*
[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Gloria's birthday party. 1930].		[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Gloria's birthday party. 1930].	
Title has multiple holdings			
[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Gloria's birthday. 1929].		[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Gloria's birthday. 1929].	
Library Location: Non-circulating Nitrate Vaults archival copy		*Call Number: M31952*	*Status: Noncirculating*
[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Gloria's costume party. 1929-10-26].		[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Gloria's costume party. 1929-10-26].	
Library Location: Non-circulating Nitrate Vaults archival copy		*Call Number: M31951*	*Status: Noncirculating*
[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Gloria's kiddie party].		[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Gloria's kiddie party].	
Library Location: Non-circulating Nitrate Vaults archival copy		*Call Number: M31953*	*Status: Noncirculating*
[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Gloria, 2 years old at beach].		[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Gloria, 2 years old at beach].	
Library Location: Non-circulating Nitrate Vaults archival copy		*Call Number: M31948*	*Status: Noncirculating*
[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Gloria--baby pictures].		[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Gloria--baby pictures].	
Library Location: Non-circulating Nitrate Vaults archival copy		*Call Number: M32045*	*Status: Noncirculating*
[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Golf. 1927-01-05, 1927-08-22].		[Home movies. Harold Lloyd. Golf. 1927-01-05, 1927-08-22].	

FIGURE 3. Part of the original inventory of the Harold Lloyd home movies described at the item level.

As additional home movies were accessioned into the Lloyd collection, UCLA cataloging staff re-examined its item-level approach for certain categories of moving images, particularly ephemeral moving images that were not going to be viewed for description at the shot level.[24] As part of this process, cataloging staff, in consultation with the motion picture and television archivists, decided to bring together Lloyd's home movies based on the principle of provenance following guidelines established in *DACS*, while still cataloging the remainder of Lloyd's commercial output at the item level. Using *DACS*, one catalog record was created for the hundreds of reels of home movies.

DACS's compatibility with other standards facilitated its integration with UCLA's established item-level cataloging procedures. For the home movies from the Lloyd estate accessioned into the UCLA Film and Television Archive with Lloyd's commercial output, the cataloging staff described the home movies

[24] For a broader overview of collection-level description for moving image materials, see Andrea Leigh, "Context! Context! Context! Describing Moving Images at the Collection Level," *The Moving Image* 6, no. 1 (Spring 2006): 33–65.

based on the "Single Level Added Value" option defined in Chapter 1 of *DACS*. This strategy allowed the description to include notes on and access to related materials described in the catalog.

The single-level collection description is encoded in MARC21 and available through UCLA's integrated library system.[25] This provides users with an alternative method for seeking out these materials, by targeting an overview of the collection first, then drilling down to each individual item. Since the home movies comprise part of a larger collection and the materials are split between two repositories, the addition of *DACS*'s Related Materials element (6.3) was of particular relevance, providing a means to inform users how to bring the entire collection together through the use of a collection code. This element also alerts users to the related documentation held at the Margaret Herrick Library.

To manage the individual physical components, UCLA Film and Television Archive processing staff, in consultation with cataloging staff, developed an in-house FileMaker Pro inventory database informed by on the emerging PBCore standard developed by the Public Broadcasting Corporation.[26] The PBCore provides a rich level of granularity for both digital and analog film and video formats. The single-level overview of the collection based on *DACS* provides the option of linking to an inventory list of individual items downloaded from the FileMaker Pro database.

The choice of collection- or item-level description depends on an institution's needs and the resources available. Separate item-level records can be created to highlight important works and then connected to an overall collection-level description to maintain context. Other factors that may inform decisions relating to levels of description include, but are not limited to, who is likely to use the material and how often, the evidential or intrinsic value of the material, the resources available, copyright or legal restrictions, and preservation priorities. Providing minimum collection-level summaries for all holdings is a sound strategy to ensure some access to all collections, rather than rich access to a few, especially when resources prohibit item-level description.

Use is a particularly important consideration. Item-level description can provide direct access to frequently requested popular moving image materials or to particular moving images to be used in digital or preservation projects, licensing, exhibits, or publications. Item-level description also helps reduce handling of fragile materials and prevents high-value materials from being stolen. For certain categories of moving images, such as home movie collections, however, collection-level *DACS*-compliant description may suffice.

[25] The UCLA Film and Television Archive maintains an Endeavor Voyager file that is separate from the UCLA Library. See http://www.cinema.ucla.edu/.

[26] The PBCore is a fifty-three-element set arranged in fifteen containers and three subcontainers, all organized under four content classes. PBCore is built on the foundation of Dublin Core, with twenty-eight elements available as instantiation. See Corporation for Public Broadcasting, *PBCore: Public Broadcasting Metadata Dictionary Project*, http://www.pbcore.org/.

2. Identity Elements	
2.1.3 Local Identifier	Collection 8
2.1.4 Repository Identifier	CLU-FT
2.1.5 Country Identifier	cau
2.2 Name and Location of Repository	UCLA Film & Television Archive
2.3 Title	Harold Lloyd collection of home movies
2.4 Date	1926-1971, bulk 1926-1932
2.5 Extent	approximately 5100 feet of nitrate film, 7000 feet of safety film, 15 videocassettes
2.6 Name of Creator(s)	Lloyd, Harold, 1893-1971
2.7 Administrative/Biographical History	Harold Clayton Lloyd (1893-1971) was born in Burchard, Nebraska, the second son to James Darsie and Elizabeth Fraser Lloyd. During his childhood, he lived, at various times, in the towns of Pawnee City, Humboldt, Beatrice, and Omaha, Nebraska, and Fort Collins, Durango, and Denver, Colorado. Throughout his childhood, he shared with his mother a passion for the theatre, and engaged in amateur theatrics for most of his adolescence. He arrived in Los Angeles, in 1912 and made his film debut as an extra in a 1913 one-reel film for the Edison Film Company. He became friendly with another extra, Hal Roach, and when Roach formed his own film company, he invited Lloyd to join him. Lloyd's films frequently contained "thrill sequences" of extended chase scenes and daredevil physical feats, for which he is best remembered today. Lloyd did many of these dangerous stunts himself, despite having severely injured himself in a 1919 accident with a prop bomb that resulted in the loss of the thumb and index finger of his right hand, an injury that was disguised on film with the use of a special prosthetic glove. Lloyd and Roach parted ways in 1924, and Lloyd became the independent producer of his own films. Overall, Lloyd made nearly 200 films, both silent and sound, between 1914 and 1947. Among his most famous are Grandma's boy (1922), Safety last! (1923), The freshman (1925), The kid brother (1927), Speedy (1928), and Movie crazy (1932). In 1923, Lloyd married his leading lady, Mildred Davis (1900-1969). The Lloyds commissioned architect Sumner Spaulding to build them a 44-room Mediterrean/Italian Renaissance style residential complex, Greenacres. Greenacres was built between 1926-1929, and listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1984. It was at Greenacres that the Lloyds raised their three children: Gloria (1923-), Peggy (1930-1986), and Harold, Jr. (1931-1971). In 1927, Harold Lloyd became a founding member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. He received an honorary Academy Award in 1953, two George Eastman House Lifetime Achievement Awards in 1955 and 1957, and was elected Imperial Potentate of the Shriners in 1949. After retiring from films, Lloyd kept busy with various philanthropic activities, vigorously pursued his many hobbies, and became a prize-winning stereo (3-D) photographer. Lloyd produced two compilation films of his earlier work, Harold Lloyd's world of comedy (1962) and Harold Lloyd's funny side of life (1963), and was preparing further revivals of his best films before succumbing to cancer on March 8, 1971 at the age of 77.
3. Content and Structure Elements	
3.1 Scope and Content (summary description follows C4.5.3 Summary, in *Archival Moving Image Materials*, 2nd ed.)	This collection of home movies primarily documents the early years of the Lloyd children and life at the family's Irving Street home located in the Los Angeles neighborhood of Hancock Park (where the family lived until 1929), and Greenacres estate in Beverly Hills, California. It features children's parties, birthday celebrations, family gatherings, Halloween parties, picnics, barbecues, beach vacations at their get-away home in Santa Monica, and footage of Lloyd's annual invitational pro golf tournament played on the nine-hole course at his Beverly Hills estate. Also included is amateur footage of Lloyd and his volunteer activities at the Shriners Hospitals for Crippled Children. The majority of the footage was originally shot by professional studio cameramen on 35 mm. black and white nitrate film. The exceptions are a compilation of footage that was transferred to Betacam SP videocassette that features Lloyd's 1971 funeral and Betacam SP reproductions of the Shriners Hospitals footage originally shot on black and white 16 mm. safety film.
4. Access Elements	
4.1 Conditions Governing Access	APPOINTMENT REQUIRED FOR VIEWING MATERIALS ONSITE. Inquire at the Archive Research and Study Center for further information (email: arsc@ucla.edu)
4.5 Languages/Scripts of the Material	Materials entirely in English.
4.6 Finding Aids	Inventory list available. Inquire at the Archive Research and Study Center.
5. Acquisition and Appraisal Elements	
5.2 Immediate Source of Acquisition	Deposit; Harold Lloyd Trust; August 1985

FIGURE 4. Using *DACS* as a content standard to describe the Harold Lloyd Collection of Home Movies.

6. Related Materials Elements	
6.2 Existence and Location of Copies	Betacam SP and DVCAM videocassette compilations available that were reproduced from selected footage from the original nitrate elements.
6.3 Related Archival Materials	Lloyd's feature films, shorts, outtakes, tests, and excerpts that also form part of the Harold Lloyd Collection at the UCLA Film & Television Archive can be brought together in the catalog using the Collection (SPAC) search: HLC.
	Related materials providing family photographs of Lloyd and his wife Mildred Davis with all of their children and life at Lloyd's famous Greenacres estate comprise part of the Harold Lloyd Collection at the Margaret Herrick Library, Academy of Motion Pictures Arts & Sciences in Beverly Hills, California. The collection materials consist of 3,000 original still photograph negatives and approximately 85 scrapbooks.
6.4 Publication Note	Selected footage from this collection forms part of the bonus features in the 2005 DVD release distributed by New Line Home Entertainment: The Harold Lloyd comedy collection.
Access points:	*Library of Congress Authorities* <http://authorities.loc.gov/>:
	Lloyd, Harold, 1893-1971--Archives
	Motion picture actors and actresses--California--Los Angeles--Archival resources
	Lloyd, Harold, 1893-1971--Homes and haunts
	Davis, Mildred, 1900?-1969--Homes and haunts
	Shriners Hospitals for Crippled Children
	Children's parties--California--Beverly Hills
	Birthday parties--California--Beverly Hills
	Halloween--California--Beverly Hills
	Golf--Tournaments--California--Beverly Hills
	Beaches--California--Santa Monica

FIGURE 4. Continued.

A survey of twenty archival repositories that collect moving images found a preference is to describe these materials at no more than two levels of hierarchy.[27] *DACS* helps in this by providing an effective means of contextualizing moving images at the collection level and encouraging the use of companion data structure and value standards for other levels of description.

Conclusion

From home movie collections, to state records, to literary and historical manuscripts, the case studies presented here show the gamut of materials that three very different repositories have used *DACS* to describe. In each case, the first-ever output-neutral American descriptive standard proved flexible enough to accommodate varying local finding aids practices and to work easily with other standards. The cases show that the process of implementing *DACS* can spur thought and action that result in improved, standardized descriptive practices. For American archivists, *DACS* is the standard of first resort, and these three case studies suggest that it succeeds in its role as the metaphorical multi tool of archival description.

[27] *AMIA Compendium of Moving Image Cataloging.*