

Digital Library Federation

Forum on Digital Library Practices

“Skating away on the thin ice of a new day”

Implementing the EAD at
The New York Public Library

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7/17/99

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Strategic Goals for the Digital Library at NYPL

- Create an online research environment
- Scalable technology infrastructure
- Digitization of unique collections
- Expanding public access to primary source material through our catalogs, finding aids, and other research tools

Principles

- Use public standards or best practice
- System-wide procedures and practices
- Web delivery, searchability
- Integrate and supplement our OPAC with digital resources
- Integrate access to our digital and paper collections

The Archives at NYPL

- Mss & Archives Div. 29,000 lin ft, 3,000 collections
- Schomburg Center 8,000 lin ft, 650 collections
- Berg Collection 50,000 mss
- Music Division over 1 million ms items
- Rodger & Hammerstein Archive of Recorded Sound 500,000 recordings
- Dance Collection over 1 million ms items
- Theatre Collection

Why EAD?

- Uniform
- Stable
- Non-proprietary
- Distributable
- Searchable
- Hypertextual

Archival Documents

Hypertextual by nature

Not independent

Created in and for a context

Linked to other documents

- By content

- By association

- By historical circumstance

Documentary Entropy

Entropy: the natural and irreversible tendency toward randomness and disorder in any system

Second Law of Thermodynamics: Entropy, randomness, always increases

Bob's Law of Documentary Entropy:
Documents tend to disorder

- Correspondence to in one collection
- Correspondence from in others
- Circumstance and time have dispersed documents
- If collected they are in many different places

Relinking the Documents

Dance Heritage Coalition

- 7 institutions
- 51 Collections
- 1 Server
- Searchable
 - by institution
 - by collection
 - across all collections, all institutions



Distributed Collections

Distributed by format

- Rosa Ponselle Papers in Music Div.
- Rosa Ponselle recordings and motion pictures in Rodgers & Hammerstein Archive of Recorded Sound










Distributed by type

- Edward Albee Papers in Mss & Arch. Div.
- Edward Albee Playscripts in Theatre Coll.

Reuniting the Collections

New York Public Library Digital Library Collections

New York Public Library Finding Aids

-  [Albee \(Edward\) Papers, ca. 1945-1964](#)
-  [Albee \(Edward\) Scripts](#)
-  [Antoon \(A. J.\) Papers](#)
-  [Astruc \(Gabriel\) Papers](#)
-  [Atkinson \(Brooks\) Papers](#)
-  [Bakeless \(John Edwin\) Papers, 1913-1977](#)
-  [Belasco \(David\) Papers](#)
-  [Bliss \(Anthony A.\) Papers](#)
-  [Bowman \(Betty\) Ephemera](#)

Current Status

- 57 EAD FA's on Web
- 39 HTML FA's on Web
- About 180 EAD FA's coded and being edited
- Bulk of SGML markup has been outsourced
- SGML served by Dynaweb

Future Needs

- What we need to get
- What we need to implement
- What we need to learn
- What we need to decide

What we need to get

Better and fewer tools

- Collapse process
 - Convert existing FA's
 - Create new FA's
 - Maintain, update, modify
 - Create paper output
- User interface

What we need to implement

- Systematic training
- Integration of EAD into processing
- Name authority control
- Management of online resources
- Better and more consistent display

What we need to learn

- How FA's are used by researchers
- How to design FA's for use
- How to integrate FA's into other parts of Digital Library

What we need to decide

- XML--When and How?
- Use EAD data structure for other purposes?
- How much more conversion of existing FA's?
- Links to external resources