

Metadata, Second Edition

MARCIA LEI ZENG and JIAN QIN

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The most common expression of metadata in the context of the archival profession is our finding aids for archival materials. Yet metadata, “data about data”, “information about information”, or structured, encoded data to describe information, tends to scare some people when they see acronyms like EAD, EAC-CPF, OAI-PHM, METS, XML, HTML, OAIS or PREMIS. But in order to output finding aids and share them in a way that can be easily discovered and understood it is essential that all archivists understand these metadata schemas.

This revision of Zeng and Qin’s benchmark textbook offers a refreshed look at the metadata schemas that exist in the world of library, archive, and museum (LAM) communities. Both Zeng and Qin are professors in library and information science at universities in the United States. Whilst the cover claims to be a text of use to information professionals globally there is no mention of metadata relating to the recordkeeping community, and it clearly has an American bias with the mention of DACS (Describing Archives: A Content Standard) by the Society of American Archivists and complete omission of equivalent standards such as RAD (Rules for Archival Description) by the Bureau of Canadian Archivists and the Australian Recordkeeping Metadata Schema (RKMS), or Describing Archives in Context: A Guide to Australasian Practice (DAC:GAP).

The textbook is split into five parts - Part I: Fundamentals of Metadata, Part II: Metadata Vocabulary Building Blocks, Part III: Metadata Services, Part IV: Metadata Outlook in Research, Part V: Metadata Standards – with a total of ten chapters. Each chapter helpfully includes suggested further readings and exercises.

Metadata standards and schemas are constantly being revised or introduced so there is always a risk with a text like this that it will quickly become obsolete. However, Part I provides an excellent and thorough introduction to the standards, principles, and vocabularies. It helpfully and clearly distinguishes between the different types of metadata standards, which in my experience are frequently confused by colleagues. At the same time it describes concepts that archivists will be familiar with such as creation of metadata descriptions and the expressions of these in specific markup languages such as HTML and XML.

Part II provides the basic concepts of metadata structures, semantics and schemas. It covers the incredibly important concept of ‘crosswalks’,

which is essential for any archival institution when looking to migrate their data from one system to another. This was of particular interest to me as I recently was involved in developing the crosswalk and the migration scripts for recent migration of TAPUHI data to KE Axiell EMU software at Alexander Turnbull Library.

Part III discusses metadata services, which any colleagues who were involved in the historic Matapihi project or are contributing to the current Digital New Zealand would appreciate. Of special interest is its description of the Open Archives Initiative Protocol for Metadata Harvesting (OAI-PMH) which is used by Digital New Zealand and excitingly is being used by Australian colleagues at the Public Record Office Victoria to develop visualisations of their archival collections. This section also deals with the importance of quality measurement indicators, evaluation, achieving interoperability, and linked data, essential for metadata discovery.

Part IV deals with metadata research and highlights the lack of research in this area, but I believe is of limited practical application to colleagues.

Part V describes the current metadata standards and is perhaps the most essential and useful section of the textbook. It is careful to emphasise that it does not cover descriptive or content standards but instead discusses the current metadata standards of use to libraries, museums, and archives. I found this incredibly useful as an archives professional who works predominately with born-digital collections and within a library institution as it describes all the essential standards such as DC (Dublin Core), EAD (Encoded Archival Description), EAC-CPF (Encoded Archival Context-Corporate bodies, Persons and Families), METS (Metadata Encoding and Transmission Standard), and OAIS (Open Archival Information System). In particular I found the explanations on the elements, attributes and attribute values in EAD incredibly good. The examples provided for EAD were illustrative but not exhaustive and other metadata standards examples were lacking. It is important to note that this section only provides an introduction and description of these metadata standards, and for more in-depth information and examples readers are encouraged to refer to other documentation.

As a textbook the language can tend to be alienating and quickly becomes inaccessible if you choose to access only discrete portions as it assumes that the reader has already read and understood the preceding chapters. However, despite this it should be a useful resource in any archival workroom. If the current price is not affordable for some archival institutions, it is recommended to inter-loan it through your local or institutional library.

Kirsty Cox

Teaching with Primary Sources:**Modules 9-11 in Trends in Archives Practice**

CHRISTOPHER J. PROM and LISA JANICKE HINCHCLIFFE (Eds.)

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Archival literacy ensures user understanding of what archives are, how they can be viewed in context and utilised for research purposes. With this in mind, the authors of *Teaching with Primary Sources* highlight educational initiatives, focusing on ways archives can contribute to embedding an important student skill in physical and digital contexts. Although the focus is on a North American environment, much of this volume's content invites reflection on current antipodean practice, as well as providing practical ideas on ways to structure educational programs.

Editors Christopher Prom and Lisa Hinchcliffe have authoritative credentials. Prom is Assistant University Archivist and Associate Professor of Library Administration at University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, and SAA Publications Editor and Chair of the Publications Board. Hinchcliffe is Professor and Coordinator for Information Literacy Services and Instruction, University Library and Affiliate Faculty in the Graduate School of Library and Information Science, University of Illinois. Information literacy is one of Hinchcliffe's specific areas of international expertise.

The volume is divided into three modules. Elizabeth Yakel and Doris Malkmus bring their experience in teaching with primary sources to the first, 'Contextualising Archival Literacy'. The section opens with a discussion of core themes; domain knowledge, primary source literacy, and archival literacy. This is valuable from a scholarly point of view, and academics and practitioners alike will enjoy the analysis. The module not only provides context to all that follows in the subsequent two sections, it moves quickly to practical applications. Active learning and constructivism are discussed, followed by an examination of practical ways archivists teaching with archival sources can embrace these particular pedagogies. The importance of assessment is highlighted, and discussion follows on what robust assessment methods might look like. It is heartening to see that the notion of assessment does not preclude the efforts of small archives, encompassing low key methods such as pre and post workshop discussion.

With a North American environment in mind, a lack of standardisation in primary source and archival literacy instruction across sectors is highlighted; the authors discuss benefits to standardisation, as well as considering what well standardised initiatives might look like. Despite a non-New Zealand setting, the issues seem similar to those faced here, and are worthy of comparison. In the same vein, discussion of collaboration with stakeholders is easily translated to this country's environment, and could be a useful aid to a variety of sectors. These include public archival institutions curating primary sources for digitisation, the educational sector, public and school librarians, and archivists working in smaller settings.

The second module, 'Teaching with Archives: A Guide for Archivists, Librarians, and Educators', is written by Sammie L. Morris, Tamar Chute, and Ellen Swain, collectively experienced in archival outreach and education. Opening with a discussion of the changing archival landscape, the authors note a proliferation of digitised material available online means archives can be, in part at least, virtual. They acknowledge the challenges posed in this environment to those who may find it difficult interpreting digitised archives in context, and also highlight opportunities for professionals to collaborate across sectors to provide enhanced instruction in archival literacy. Benefits of educational outreach are considered, with ideas for possible outcomes. The authors note these can be as simple as a poster, a subject guide, or even a video, shared with the archive once complete, and possibly offered to other users as resources.

A section on planning begins with discussion of preparations university archivists are likely to undertake before liaising with faculty, and also includes information on identifying resources. Such information, including references to 'flipped classroom' settings, is not solely useful to university archivists though; a smaller non institutional archive could tweak these ideas, and utilise them to meet their particular requirements. In the same vein, while the 'embedded archivist' may not be the local norm, strategies for consulting and collaborating with teachers are useful, as is discussion on preparing for a one off educational session. This includes tips such as focusing on imparting skills that can't easily be transmitted in textual form, and incorporating active learning principles into activities such as interrogation of archival texts. The closing recommendations are relevant to all settings. Some crossover between modules on topics such as collaboration means an index could be a handy addition, certainly for users of the print edition. Appendices provide lists of further reading and resources, and include sample archival literacy

competencies, and course descriptions.

The third module, 'Connecting Students and Primary Sources', also written by Morris, Chute and Swain, is based on interviews with archivists working in a variety of settings, as well as faculty, and a sole secondary school teacher. The interviews inform the content, collated into thematic sections. Themes discussed include institutional goals, how varying levels of responsibility and input into educational outreach might be set, collaboration with teachers, selection of content for activities, the importance of context, and the design of digital resources for educational purposes. In the section on 'Levels of Involvement' a range of situations are discussed, from the archivist investigating artifacts with middle (Intermediate) school pupils prior to production of a time capsule, to embedded archivists responsible for history department course content at tertiary level. The module provides further ideas on how an archive can offer programs that connect to tangible educative products. Illustrative examples gleaned from the interviews mean this is a very practical module. Appendices include examples of assignments for use in archives, as well as a list of useful resources.

'Teaching with Primary Sources' will appeal to those interested in international trends in archival outreach and education. In addition, local practitioners in small and large archives alike should find information on invigorating archival programs through use of sound teaching methodologies, standardisation, and collaboration across sectors well worth perusing.

Sarah Mathieson