#### Metadata for description and access



Maggie Kruesi, American Folklife Center Sustainable Heritage Network (SHN) workshop September 14, 2015





# Preserving context and contextual information

Who made you?

Sources: accession records, donor files, databases, inventories, collection itself, preliminary processing by staff

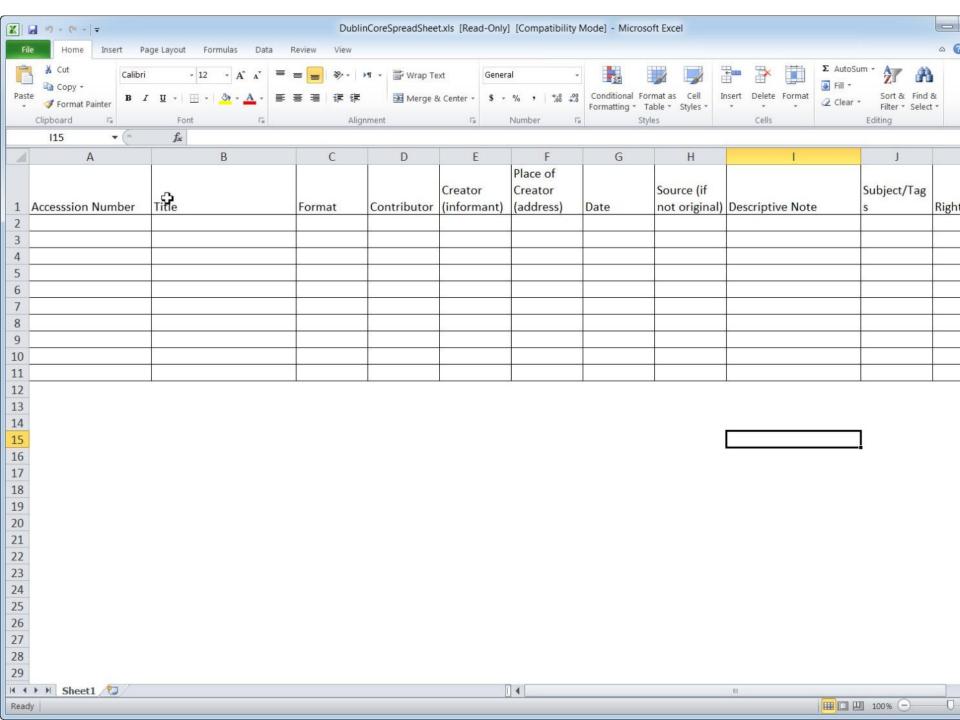
Names: personal and corporate names

When? Where? What?



### What is metadata?

- Information about your information or data, includes handwritten lists, inventories, recording logs
- Who, when, where, what in a framework, with standardized fields: some framework standards, e.g., Dublin Core, MARC 21, EAD 3.0, PBCore, VRAcore

















Interviewing Guides -- An interview is more than following a list of pre-formulated questions or depending on your instinct, empathy or specialized knowledge of community history in order to obtain "good" answers. Importantly, it is a matter of respectful and interested listening, letting the story unfold, and paying close attention to the verbal and non-verbal cues that signal the speaker's own interests and sense of importance of the topic under discussion. All together, these best practices will enable you to understand, from the perspective of individuals, the everyday activities, cultural traditions and artistic performances that structure and enrich community life:[PDF/23KB].

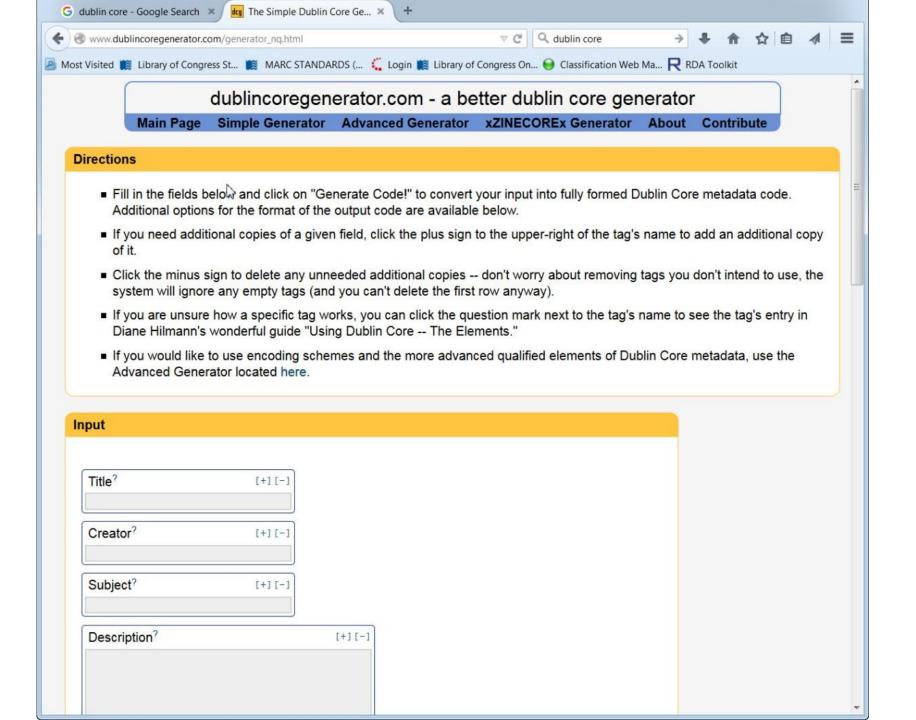
Field Notes -- A record of the researcher's activities in the field includes general observations about the progress of fieldwork, impressions of interviewees, summaries of conversations, descriptions of the natural and built environment and drawings and diagrams of buildings and artifacts. In addition, information about lighting conditions during photography and sources of extraneous sounds on recordings will aid in the interpretation of project documents. At the very least, field notes provide a useful chronology of the fieldworker's activities. At best, they are the intellectual core of a project's documentation, preserving the observations and ruminations of the fieldworker as the project unfolds:[PDF/26KB]

Collections Appraisal & Description -- These documents cover a range of activities in the area of collections processing and acquisition, such as written assessments and appraisals of potential acquisitions: [PDF/185KB] . Another central activity of repository staff is processing and describing the content of collections once they are housed in the institution's archive. These documents provide both simple cataloging schema for items: [Excel/27KB] along with an explanation of its structure: [PDF/39KB] and a more complex metadata schema for cataloging oral history interviews: [Excel/76KB].

Interview Logs -- Logs are concise, written summaries of recorded interviews. They are not as extensive as the verbatim transcript but are more substantial than the quickly jotted field notes you take. Logs are an important means of providing yourself and colleagues with key understandings of the subject matter, themes and perspectives contained in an audio or video recording of community members. The "Louisiana Voices" website contains examples of various forms of fieldwork documents including logs, transcripts, and fieldnotes.

Permissions and Release Forms -- Obtaining the consent of the individuals who share their stories and knowledge with you during the course of documentation is an essential ethical and practical responsibility. These sample forms, some of which have been used in actual fieldwork projects, may be adapted for use in your own research. They can be downloaded as one pdf document:. [PDF/180KB]

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#### Data elements

 Title – unique, descriptive, short? You may need who, what, when, and where in titles for AV materials, including photographs.

 Date – dates for AV materials can be complex, date of recording, date(s) of copies, dates of preservation reformatting



# A little metadata can go a long way...case study

- Federal Cylinder Project, 1980s
- In 2015 we completed collection-level cataloging of circa 8000 cylinders for preservation at the LC National Audiovisual Conservation Center, most are American Indian recordings from more than 140 collections from 1890-1940s



### Metadata for time-based media

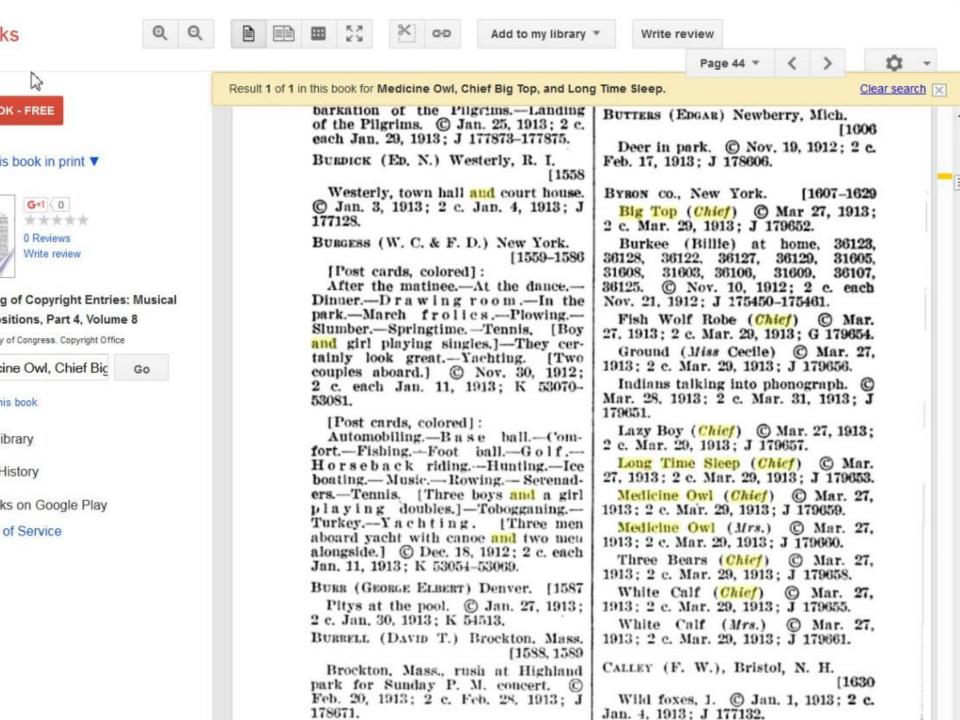






# We found notes on 4 scraps of paper inside the cylinder boxes

- Medicine Owl's Medicine pipe song / sung by himself (Medicine Man)
- -- Shining star song Blackfoot love song / sung by Chief Big Top and Long Time Sleep; words by Chief Big Top
- -- Wolf song / sung by Medicine Owl, low pitch
- -- Sacred sweat lodge song / sung by Long Time Sleep.



### Big Top and Long Time Sleep



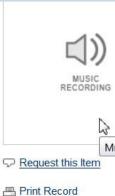






### "Indians talking into phonograph"





Published/Created 1913.

#### Description

5 sound cylinders; 5 in. manuscripts 1 folder.

Music Recording (Collection) Duplication of sound recordings may be governed by copyright and other restrictions.

http://lccn.loc.gov/2015655339

"" Cite Record

#### Permalink:

XML Formats:

MARCXML Record MODS Record

Report Errors:

Report Record Errors

Access advisory Collection is open for research. Access to recordings may be restricted. To request materials, please contact the Folklife Reading

Room at http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.afc/folklife.contact

Performer Various performers and speakers including including Medicine Owl, Chief Big Top, and Long Time Sleep.

Summary

Main title Blackfeet cylinder recordings collection [sound recording].

identified on pencilled notes inside the cylinder boxes.

Partial contents

Medicine Owl's Medicine pipe song / sung by himself (Medicine Man) -- Shining star song Blackfoot love song / sung by Chief Big Top and Long Time Sleep; words by Chief Big Top -- Wolf song / sung by Medicine Owl, low pitch -- Sacred sweat lodge song / sung by Long Time Sleep.

Collection of sound recordings of Blackfeet singers including Medicine Owl, Chief Big Top, and Long Time Sleep. According to the

Blackfeet Papers, v. 3, p. 771, ten Blackfeet Indians traveled from the Glacier National Park, Montana area to New York City in a special

Great Northern Railway car to participate in the Great Northern Railway's exhibit in the New York travel and vacation show held in the Grand Central Palace from March 20-29, 1913. Performers and titles for cylinders numbered 2, 3, 4, and 7 from this group were

Subjects

Songs--Montana--Great Blackfeet Reservation.

Siksika Indians--Music.

Indians of North America--Montana--Music.

Great Blackfeet Reservation (Mont.)

Form/Genre

Cylinder recordings.

Notes

Originals on 5 sound cylinders, not standard size, approximately 5 in. These recordings were not duplicated for the Federal Cylinder Project.

Undated, but the cylinders appear to have been recorded in New York City in March 27-29, 1913.

Related photographs from the Museum of the City of New York, identified as Cree Indians, include portraits of the singers and others in the group; their tipis constructed on the roof of the McAlpin Hotel in New York City; and a recording session. These photographs, with

# But metadata separated from its audio carrier means undiscoverable recordings



4/4/40.

Regtime Annie (fiddle).
Red Harmon & Willard Brewer.
(Poor recording).

The Wagoner. Red Harmon & Willard Brewer.

he Shanghai. — willard Brewer (w. gwilar)

Willard Brewer (w. guitar)

21.

A1 - Ragtime Annie Red Harmon + Willa Grov recordis).

Az-Waggoner -

B 1- The Shanghai

willows Brews

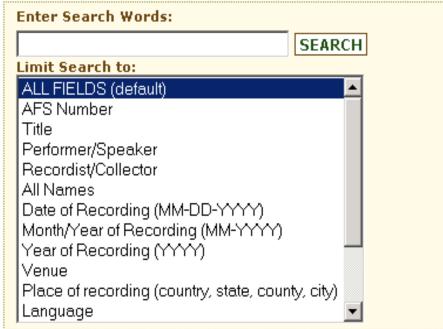
B2 - Johnny Willard Grena (



### Traditional Music and Spoken Word Catalog

#### from the American Folklife Center

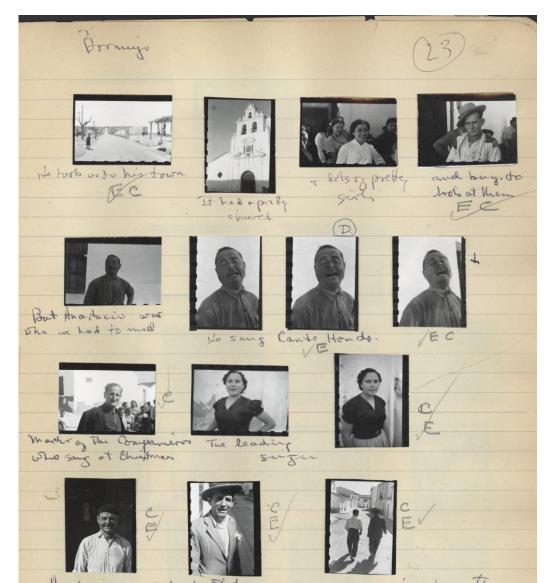
This searchable database provides bibliographic information on approximately 34,000 ethnographic sound recordings recorded primarily between 1933 and 1950. Search the data using the form below. » more about the catalog



Searching Help | Photo Captions | Acknowledgments
Contact Us | Ask a Librarian | American Folklife Center Home



### Alan Lomax Collection field notes, Bormujos (Sevilla), Andalucía, Spain 1952



# Why standards? What can you do with your metadata?

- Consistency
- Sharing
- Interoperability across various databases/systems
- Re-use metadata in the future!



### Metadata for time-based media

- Paper-based collections can be described at various levels: the container; a series of containers; the folder; one information object/genre, e.g., a diary or scrapbook; and at the item level, e.g., a memo
- Audiovisual media must be accounted for and described at the item level, and frequently are described at the track-level (a segment of the item), e.g., a song title





### AV media capture events

- Events occur in time, so capturing the metadata for the sequence of events is important.
- An event, or intellectual series of events (a field trip; an oral history collection on a topic) becomes a "collection."
- Number your items in the sequence they were recorded; use unique identifiers



Alan Lomax's metadata instructions for AV, 1940

"...the records can be much more easily catalogued"

Mr. Charles L. Todd 14 McKevett Drive Manta Paula, Calif.

Dear Mr. Iodd:

Enclosed you will find a letter of introduction and authorisation from the Librarian and a set of operating instructions fee the recording e uipment from Jerome Beisner. In addition, I should like to make a few suggestions which will make your material more useful to the Archive. Most of these suggestions, I'm sure will be mere repetition, but if they're followed exactly, the records can be much more easily catalogued.

- 1. Give your trip a name, viz, " John Doe's Expedition to Kalamazo", or something of the sort.
- 2. Number the records in the order they are recorded, writing or stamping the titlesof your trip and the number of your particular recording on the top of each record envelope.
- 3. Scratch or write in the caster of each side the letter A or B, thus identifying the record side.
- 4. The strips on each side should be Nos. 1, 2, 3, and etc. in the order of their cutting and each of these strips should be identified by giving the title of song as the singer gives it (followed by the recordist's title or other title), the name of singer (s) with instrumentation, the place of the recording and the date. The slip cover, where such notations are generally made, should then look like this:
  - Al-Barabra Allen, sung by John Doe with guitar and with fidule by Jim Henry, Pasedena, N. Y. Dec. 6, 1844.
  - A2, A3, A4, etc.
  - B1- B2, B3, B4, etc.
- 5. Saturally, we hope that you will be able to furnish us with a great deal of additional material surrounding the recordings, both, in terms of careful field notes and interesting interviews. recorded with the songs. You'll find



#### Context!!

 Please note that Lomax's comment "if the informant does not know that the interview is being recorded..." reflects outdated practice and is unethical. a questionnaire enclosed which has been used in the field to some extent. It contains a great many pertinent suggestions for questions. My personal opinion is that it is valuable to get the informant talking eloquently for himself, rather than interrupt him or push him with questions. The recording interview can be as significant as the song itself and is valuable as a fresh field document, especially, if the informant does not know that the interview is being recorded, and if he never learns it.

- 6. It is very important to record the tunings of all instruments which play a part in the music, to photograph the instruments and get the informant to explain how he plays it. In the case of unusual instruments, it would be worthwhile to make accuratendrawings or send the instruments where they could be drawn to scale. If part singing is recorded, it would be a real contribution to record the parts in the harmony separately. This can be done by shifting the singers in front of the microphone.
- son of different versions of the same song from different regions. So also, are different performances of the same songs in the same community by different singers, or the same song by different members of the family, or the same song by the same performers at different times. Therefore, it is not so important to us that material be always rehearsed without a mistake or hesitation. The great beauty of field recordings is that performers take their own time and do things their own way, feeling that if they make a mistake, they can try again. The results are such that no commercial recording company can ever hope to achieve.

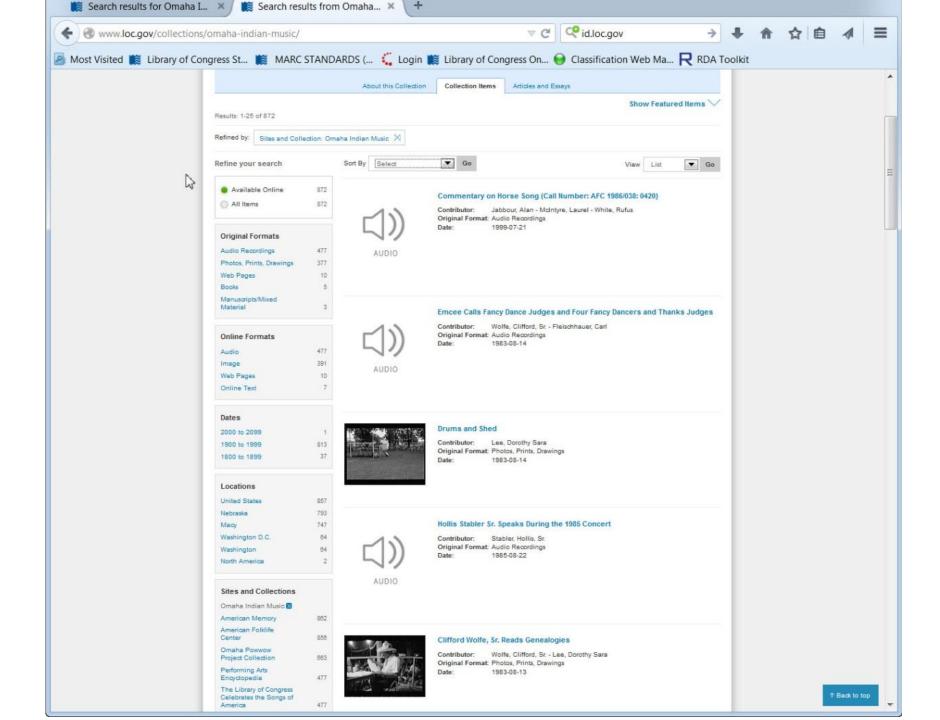
With best wishes for a successful trip, I am,

Alan Lomax Assistant in Charge Archive of American Folk Song Library of Congress



### Audio in sequence







# AV media items often have multiple generations

When? Dates are important!

- Identify the date of the original recording, esp.
  if you have a copy in hand
- Identify the date when the copy was made
- Record the date when a transfer was made from analog to digital (there usually will be embedded metadata in the digital file, but...)



### Metadata for different purposes

- Descriptive metadata = who, what, when, where for discovery and access (Dublin Core fields,etc.)
- Technical metadata captured by recording devices and by reformatting systems
- Administrative metadata needed to manage collections in a repository or system



### Descriptive metadata standards

- For description of content, they are known as "content standards" e.g., DACS, Describing Archives, a Content Standard, SAA, 2007, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Available as PDF
- RDA Resource Discovery and Access
- AMIA Cataloging Rules, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.



# Structural or framework metadata standards

- Dublin Core
- EAD 3
- MARC 21
- BIBFRAME
- PBCore
- others



# Technical metadata standards and tools

BWF MetaEdit tool

- Look at Federal Agencies Digitization Guidelines (FADGI) <a href="http://www.digitizationguidelines.gov/">http://www.digitizationguidelines.gov/</a>
- Be conscious of technical metadata your devices capture, e.g., time, date, geospatial metadata, and more...



### Controlled vocabularies

- Are standards in themselves
- Enable sharing, discovery and access
- Are available as linked open data id.loc.gov
- Library of Congress Subject Headings (Icsh)
- Library of Congress Name Authority file (Icnaf)
- AFS Ethnographic Thesaurus (afset)
- Virtual International Authority file (viaf)
- Getty Art and Architecture Thesaurus (aat)

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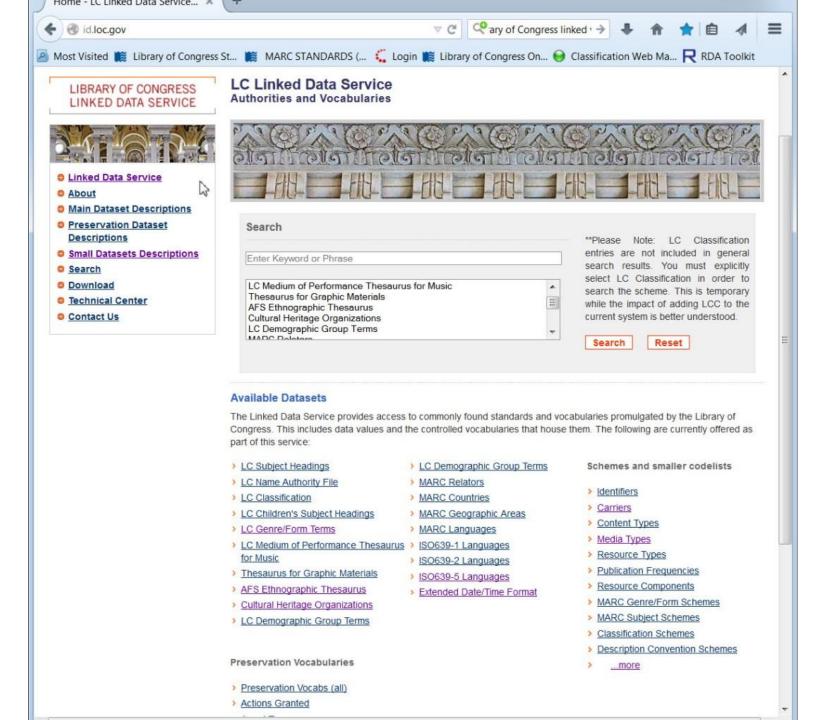
#### Name Authority Record [Lattanzi Shutika, Debra, 1964-]

ID:	n 2011001919	Entered:	110110	Replaced:	20120615
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008/07 Roman:	-No attempt	008/15 Subj Use:	a-Appropriate	008/31 Rec Upd:	a-Can be used
008/09 Kind Rec:	a-Estab hdo	008/17 Type Subd:	n-Not applie	008/33 Level Estab	a-Fully

- 010 \$a n 2011001919
- 040 \$a DLC \$b eng \$c DLC
- 100 1 \$a Lattanzi Shutika, Debra, \$d 1964-
- 400 1 \$a Shutika, Debra Lattanzi, \$d 1964-
- 570 \$a Beyond the borderlands, c2011: \$b ECIP t.p. (Debra Lattanzi Shutika) data view (Debra Lattanzi Shutika, b. May 9, 1964)
- 670 \$a Consultation with author, June 14, 2012 \$b (prefers to use surname: Lattanzi Shutika)

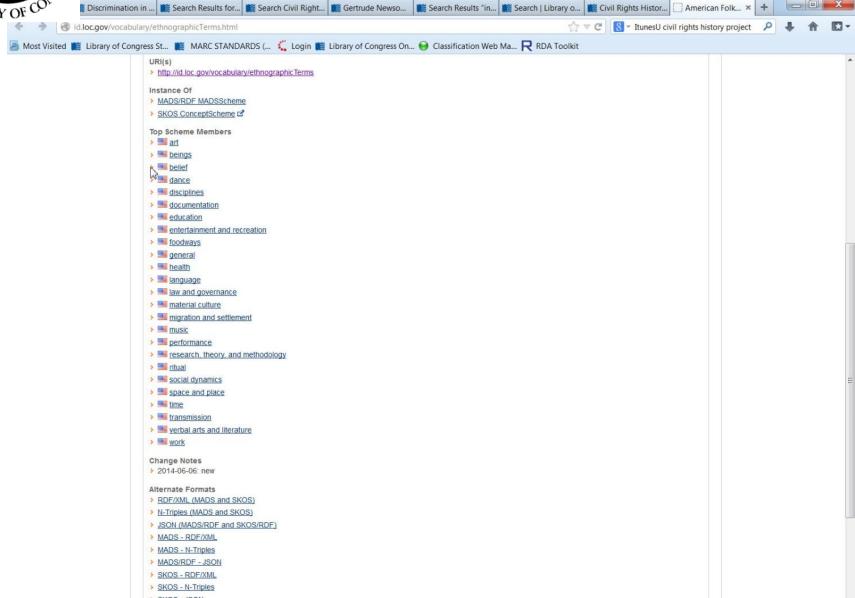
Record: 4751545

Added: Mon Jan 10 00:00:00 2011 Modified: Fri Jun 15 07:48:09 2012





### AFS Ethnographic Thesaurus





### Linked open data

- Advantage of using linked data in your cataloging system is that you don't have to update your names/places
- Each concept or term has a persistent URI
- You can download and modify controlled vocabularies to use in your content management system



### Subjects, topics, genre/form

- What?
- Keywords (uncontrolled)
- Community description
- Controlled vocabularies (id.loc.gov)
- Genres (performance genres, e.g., songs, instrumental music, plays, poems)
- Document forms (notated music, diaries, office files, baseball cards, posters)
- Library of Congress Genre/Form vocabularies (lcgft) for music medium of performance, music genres, demographic groups, etc.



### Metadata for mapping

#### Where?

- If your recording device has GPS, e.g. your iphone, your digital recorder, your camera
- You have to set date/time and turn that feature on to embed the GPS metadata
- Which you can use to make fabulous maps
- If you choose to (ethical questions)



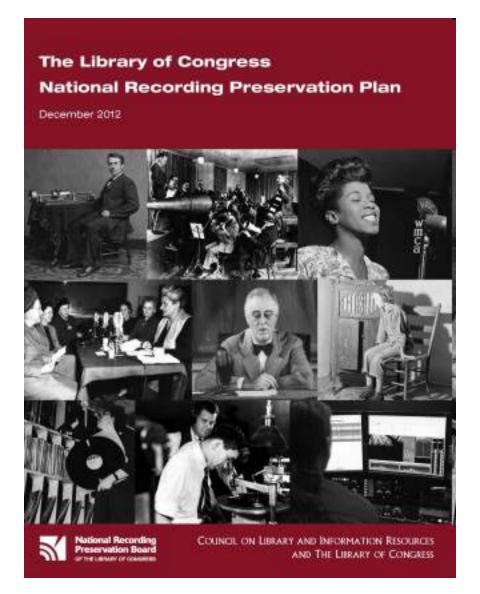
### Metadata for oral histories

- Interviews (audiovisual media)
- Photos of interviewees, settings
- Photos owned/taken by interviewees (copy photos, photos of scrapbooks)
- Interview recording logs
- Full transcripts of interviews
- = sub-collection



#### Time based media won't last without support

http://www.loc.gov/rr/record/nrpb/PLAN%20pdf.pdf





# Archivists, librarians, and museum curators

- Are on the front line preserving and normalizing existing metatdata
- Community members, researchers, collaborators can correct and enhance description
- Metadata is essential for resource discovery and access!

### Film canisters in the "Choreo" or choreometrics series in the Alan Lomax collection



### contact: mkru@loc.gov

