Metadata Creation Assignment

For this project, I have chosen to focus on a collection that has enduring personal value to myself: my video and computer game collection. At first, this may seem a strange choice. Digital games are considered to be a form of entertainment and nothing more. This has never been the case for me. Throughout my childhood, my father saw games, those involving puzzles in particular, as a way to teach logic. My adolescence was spent playing computer games with regularity. After all these years, I look back and realize how important these games were not only for myself but for my entire generation. Considering the amount of passion I have for these games and the fact that I have chosen to devote much of my professional development to video game preservation, focusing this project on this collection is the only logical choice.

The collection I will focus on is comprised of fifty to sixty games, which are spread over three physical locations. They range from early Windows 3.1 and DOS system CD-ROMs, most of which are over twenty years old, to PlayStation 3 games released a few months ago. These games require numerous formats and not every game retains its original packaging and metadata. Cataloging these games will take a great amount of time and effort but they will certainly benefit from further organization.

For this collection, I have chosen a number of qualities to record. Preservation data will not be included for this private collection. Instead, the collection will focus on descriptive and technical qualities first and foremost with some additional administration and use qualities. These are:

- Identifier: A number provided to each game in the collection that will provide a unique catalog designation.

- Title: The full release title of the game with any additional subtitles if necessary.

- Alternative Title: Any different spellings or forms of a game's title (*Super Mario Bros.* is sometimes known as *Super Mario Brothers*).

- Series: This can be difficult. Many games are parts of larger franchises (*Super Mario Bros* is part of the Super Mario Franchise) and many of these franchises are considered to be the series. Some games are direct sequels and, therefore, might have two series. For example, is *Assassins Creed 3* a direct sequel to *Assassins Creed 2* or part of the larger Assassins Creed franchise? For the purposes of this field, the larger franchise, regardless of direct prequel, will be considered the series.

- Publisher: The company that marketed and sold the game at the time of its release. If the game was purchased and later sold by another company, this field will include that publisher's information as a separate entry under the same field.

- Region: Many games include hardware that is region-specific to certain countries. The games may also be limited to a certain analog television signal. Even if these regions can be defined, this field describes the original, company-intended regions for the game. If none exists, the game will be considered to be Universal in region.

- Language: The game's original language. If the game contains subtitles in multiple languages, this field will only include the main language used for the original edition.

- Year of Release: The edition's original year of release rather than the release of the earliest edition of the game. For example, *Super Mario Bros.* in America has a year of release two years later than the same game in Japan, but each game is region specific and therefore has its own release date.

- Hardware Format: If the game was released for a single format, this will be listed here. If the game was released for multiple platforms at the same time, the hardware format will be only that for which the software was coded. For any other systems upon which the game can be played, see the Adaptable Systems field.

- Software Format: The software on which the game itself is stored. Cartridges, though technically hardware, hold the individual code of the game and are considered to be software.

- Adaptable Systems: Some consoles are backwards compatible and many computer operating systems can play multiple generations of games. This field will list every single system the game can be played on, regardless of quality, so long as the game functions on that system.

- Version: This field will be used for Limited Edition games, anniversary rereleases, or any special versions released for certain occasions.

- ESRB Rating: The rating the game has been granted since the establishment of the ESRB Rating system in 1994. Prior to the addition of that rating, if the box or manuals of the game included a suggested age for play, that will be placed in this field.

- Genre: Games, like movies, are divided into multiple genres. These labels can be variable and multiple genres can apply to a single game. For the purposes of this field, any commonly associated genre names (such as those included in the game's press releases or on its box) will be considered to be its genre. Multiple genres will be placed in separate fields under Genre. To limit confusion, this will be limited to a maximum of three per game.

- Multiplayer Capabilities: Single-player games are the default of any home media game. If the game may be played simultaneously by a number of players, this information will be included. Unlike the Online Capabilities element, this must be answered as a yes or no and there is no "optional" choice.

- Online Capabilities: Should the game allow a user to connect with multiple users online, but this online connection is not mandatory, this field will state "Optional Online Capabilities". Otherwise, the field contains a yes or no answer.

- Awards: Any awards presented to the game through industry-specific organizations or by major publications and websites.

- Location of Item: Where the game's software is physically located at this time. This will include information on its residence, one of three possible sites, as well as in what area of the residence the game may be found. Should the area be non-conformable at this time, only the larger residence will be included.

- Condition: The current physical condition of the software.

Even though computer and video games are accessed in the virtual world, they remain material objects and an XML-schema focusing on digital objects would be far too complex for this collection. However, these items are still complex enough that they require a system with some level of detail. Metadata Object Description Schema (MODS) is adaptable to a number of formats and their associated metadata, making it a good choice for the unique nature of these items. It is appropriate for academics, librarians, and preservationists attempting to keep such a strange collection organized. It is supported through a number of open-source applications widely available online at no cost to the collection. It may not be simple enough for an individual without an archiving

background, but this collection will never be in such an environment and such constraints

need not be considered.

The second standard chosen was the Library of Congress Subject Headings

schema. This functions as an online thesaurus where titles, names, and formats can be

located online and a collection uses that information to standardize their catalogue

records. When a user decides to search for an item in this collection, it is easier to locate

those items that are kept up-to-date with a single standard. This lessens confusion and

creates a simpler user interface. It is appropriate here for long-term organizational

purposes, as well, due to the Library of Congress' notorious delays in updating terms in

its subject headings. The lack of natural language may limit casual users but, again, as in

the above structure standard, this is a private collection that will not be accessed by non-

archivists and therefore does not need to be simplified. Unfortunately, this thesaurus does

not include all video and computer game terms and is missing major systems and

alternate game versions. For the mapping portion of this assignment, I have indicated

where this thesaurus is appropriate to use. However, if a particular record element cannot

be located through the thesaurus, this part of the XML language will be dropped. The

large number of common formats that were not available clearly demonstrates that this

standard is lacking in video game metadata, but it is the only option available.

ADD MARCTARGET

Lastly, the MARC Code List for Languages supplies a three-letter code for each

language, ensuring all records are filed under the appropriate language. It is used only to

identify the game's language and is not used in any other element.

Field	MODS	Notes
Identifier	identifier	This is the most critical element

		here and must be unique.
Title	titleInfo, title authority="lcsh"	The Library of Congress Subject Headings may be used here.
Alternative Title	titleInfo, title type="alternative" authority="lcsh"	The Library of Congress Subject Headings are used here. This is an optional field and is not included if the game has only one title.
Series	relatedItem type="series", titleInfo, title authority="lcsh"	The Library of Congress Subject Headings may be used here. If the series has an alternate title, it will reside under "relatedItem type=series" then follow the above coding for alternative titles.
Publisher	originInfo, publisher	
Region	originInfo, edition type="versionidentification"	Regions are defined by which broadcast standard it plays on. In MODS, "edition" is the only equivalent
Language	language, languageTerm type="code" authority="iso639-2b"	MARC Code List for Languages is linked to the authority iso639-2b to provide a standard three-letter codes for language elements.
Year of Release	originInfo, dateIssued type="date"	
Hardware Format	physicalDescription note type="medium" authority="lcsh"	Library of Congress Subject Headings may be used here but hardware the terms were rarely located.
Software Format	physicalDescription type="physical description" authority="lcsh"	See note for Hardware Format.
Adaptable Systems	note type="additional physical form" authority="lcsh"	See note for Hardware Format.
Version	note type=version identification	
ESRB Rating	targetAudience	
Genre	genre authority="lcsh"	Three genres will be included and will use the Library of Congress Subject Headings. This use of the content standard always occurred.
Multiplayer Capabilities	note type="system details"	
Online Capabilities	note type="system details"	
Awards	note	No "types" could be used to further identify this note.
Location of Item	location, physicalLocation	
Condition	physicalDescription, note	

	type="condition"	