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CINE-GT 1803: Metadata for Moving Image Collections  
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Assignment 1

For this assignment, I chose to explore the records of the UCLA Film and Television Archive and the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia. My search terms included “Easter Parade”, “I Married a Witch”, “nitrate print”, “cinemascope”, and “Dinah Shore”. Below summarizes my experience searching these terms within the two websites.

**1. How easy was it to find what you were looking for? Was there good documentation about how to search?**

I found the UCLA Archive’s website more difficult to navigate, but it also provided me with better results. When searching the film title *I Married a Witch*, I had to make sure to select the correct “quick limit”. However, each limit came with a lengthy and clear description, each providing entry examples. It was not difficult to use, but it also was not the fastest way to find what I was looking for. The website for the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia also had me limit my searches, but the limits were more intuitive, for example, for the film title I simple selected the “film” limit. Here, there was less documentations and the limits had no explanation, but they were not needed.

**2. Were there multiple ways of searching (e.g. simple and advanced)?**

Both UCLA and NFSA’s websites offered multiple ways to search. They each had a search bar at the top of the website, separate from the catalog. Searching this way would

include catalog records, but would also include other records I was not interested in (e.g. film stills). Both websites also offered simple and advanced ways of searching. NFSA's site refers to each as "easy" and "advanced" searches, while UCLA's site refers to one as "recommended searched" and "advanced".

**3. Was the search interface easy to use? Was both browse and search supported?**

For both the NFSA's and UCLA's Archive, both browse and search were supported. Each website offered collections to browse through if I did not know exactly what I am looking for. On the NFSA's site, on the "Collection Search" page, a menu on the side lets you limit your browse to film, television, sound, radio, and other criteria. You can also browse collection highlights and other organized groupings of collection records. I found this helpful for my searches because it allowed me to limit my search without necessarily having to perform an advanced search.

**4. Did you get the results you were expecting? Did you get what you were looking for?**

For each site, my results were extremely varied. Across both sites, it was easier to find film titles, but searching for vaguer terms like "nitrate print" and "cinemascope" gave me more confusing results, offering things like articles on each topic or films that were filmed on nitrate or in Cinemascope. In general, I found what I was looking for. However, I think because of the specific holdings at each institution, and their

locations, UCLA's Archive had more information on American film titles and television shows or actors (such as Dinah Shore). For example, the metadata for the film title *Easter Parade* was much richer on UCLA's site than on the NFSA's site, including subjects and cast, which NFSA's record did not include. NFSA's site also included a lot of records I was not at all familiar with, most likely because the material originates from Australia.

**5. Could you tell what metadata standard was used and if so which one? Is there documentation about the metadata? Make sure you look around the site to see if there is any documentation. If it doesn't say, see if you can determine which.**

UCLA's catalog records are clearly marked as MARC records. When searching actress Dinah Shore, I selected an episode of her television show "Dinah!". On the right side of the of the screen, there is a column entitled "This item". In this column, there is a link to the "Staff MARC View" which, when selected, shows the full MARC record for the item. There was no documentation on the NFSA's site to indicate what metadata schema was in place. The site mentioned that back in 1999, the archive had an exhibit at the fourth Dublin Core Metadata Workshop. However, the records I looked at did not match the Dublin Core standard, and it has been seventeen years since that workshop. I believe that the NFSA uses the CEN metadata standard. The record offers a unique identifier, title, release date, original format, relationship, and most notably, country of origin. Perhaps this schema was selected in order to make records more easily shared across different nations.

**6. How well did you think the metadata supported finding what you were looking for?**

Because the metadata was so detailed for my specific searches on UCLA's site, I think it helped me find the records I was looking for very quickly. The metadata on the NFSA's site was a bit sparser and therefore yielded more results, even after a very specific advanced search. However, the metadata was a bit fuller for records that originated from Australia. As a test, when I searched film titles from Australia on UCLA's, the record often did not exist. Comparing these two catalogs was difficult not only because of their different schemas, but because of their different priorities and holdings.

**7. After doing a search, were the search results displayed in a meaningful way? Could you tell how they were ordered and was it easy to sort through them?**

On the NFSA's site, the search results were always ordered alphabetically. Although this means that the closest match to my search might not be first, this ordering made it easy to quickly scroll through to find a specific record. UCLA's Archive was more difficult to understand in terms of results. When searching the film *Easter Parade*, the site seemed to order results by how closely they matched my keyword search; in this case, the record for the 1948 film was displayed first. However, when searching an individual (Dinah Shore), the results were presented alphabetically. This made navigating records difficult because I was never sure how the records would be organized.