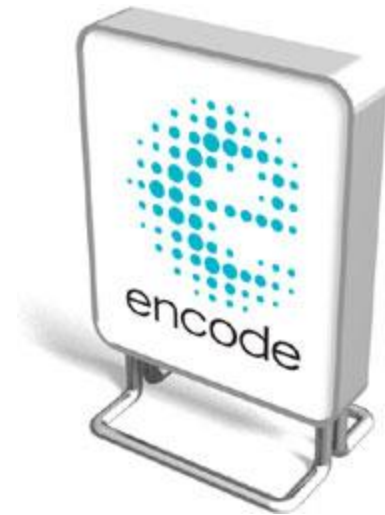


<ead>Princeton</ead>

ENCODED ARCHIVAL DESCRIPTION

A Brief Introduction to  
Finding Aids and EAD



# Institutional Context

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- > Department of Rare Books and Special Collections (RBSC)
  - Mudd Library
    - University Archives
    - Public Policy Papers
  - Manuscripts Division
    - Literary collections
    - Holdings in Western Americana, New Jerseyana, Colonial period, faculty papers, and many other subjects
  - Other Divisions
    - Rare Books, Graphics Arts, Numismatics, etc.

# Institutional Context

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- Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library
  - Public Policy Papers
  - Princeton University Archives
  - Circa 35,000 linear feet in total
    - Personal Papers, University Records, Photographs, Audiovisual, Beer Cans, Laundry Bags...

# Goals at Mudd Library

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- > Reducing backlogs
  - Processing
  - Finding aids
- > More content available online to improve service to patrons
  - 4000-5000 researchers each year
- > Commitment to archival standards
  - DACS, EAD

# Archival Description

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- > Usually deals with collections, not individual items.
- > Usually deals with unpublished material, not books or other published items.

# Archival Description

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> Basic Tool: Finding Aids

# Finding Aids

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## > Definition

n. ~ 1. A tool that facilitates discovery of information within a collection of records. – 2. A description of records that gives the repository physical and intellectual control over the materials and that assists users to gain access to and understand the materials.

# Finding Aids

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- > Content Standard: Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DACS) (2004).
- > Data Structure Standard: Encoded Archival Description (EAD).
- > Comparable to AACR2 and MARC for bibliographic records.

# What is EAD

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- > Encoded Archival Description
- > SAA definition:  
n. (EAD, abbr.) ~ A standard used to mark up (encode) finding aids that reflects the hierarchical nature of archival collections and that provides a structure for describing the whole of a collection, as well as its components.

# What is EAD

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- > A data structure standard.
- > Part of a tradition of archival descriptive standards.
- > Created in 1995 (Berkeley Project; Ann Arbor Accords).
- > Adopted by numerous institutions.
- > XML.

# What is XML

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- > eXtensible Markup Language.
- > Not HTML.
- > Deals with data and structure, not layout and presentation.

# HTML vs. XML

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- > HTML tags: `<i>`, `<b>`
- > XML (EAD) tags: `<bioghist>`,  
`<scopecontent>`, `<unitdate>`

# Advantages of EAD

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- > A standard way to structure finding aids.
- > XML and stylesheets allow for flexible displays and multiple outputs from a single EAD file.
- > XML allows for structured searching of finding aids.
- > Inclusion in local, national, and international databases.
- > XML: preservation of finding aid data.

# EAD at Princeton

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- > Historically some reluctance to adopt.
- > Formally began efforts to encode in 2004.
- > Implementation involved review of new content standard (DACS), development of templates, best practices and documentation, tools for encoding.
- > Retro-conversion project.
- > Nearly 2000 finding aids now available.

# EAD at Princeton

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> Our EAD website:

<http://diglib.princeton.edu/ead/>

# EAD at Princeton

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## > Site features:

- Basic and advanced search interfaces.
- Browse lists sorted by collection creator, title, or call number.
- Browse by topic option.
- Help pages with search tips.

# EAD at Princeton

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- > Finding aid features:
  - Floating navigation menu.
  - Links to contact information/reference assistance.
  - HTML and PDF outputs.
  - Subject headings linked to Library Catalog.

# EAD at Princeton

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## > Current Status:

- 1997 EAD finding aids available online.
- All University Archives, Public Policy Papers and nearly all Manuscripts Division collections represented.
- Latin American Ephemera and Engineering Library finding aids also available.

# EAD at Princeton

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## > Future Projects:

- Improved search functionality
  - Phrase searching
  - Relevancy ranking
- Usability Testing
- Redesigned finding aid interface
- Linking to digital surrogates of items in our collections.
- Social Tagging/Web 2.0

# Additional Information

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> EAD Help Pages:

<http://www.archivists.org/saagroups/ead>

> LOC official EAD site:

<http://www.loc.gov/ead/>

> Many other sites and best practice documents.

# Questions and Comments

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## > Contact Us:

- Dan: [dsantam@princeton.edu](mailto:dsantam@princeton.edu)

## > Visit:

- <http://diglib.princeton.edu/ead/>