EAD @ 10
THOUGHTS ON THE FUTURE

Jeanne Kramer-Smyth
http://www.spellboundblog.com
August 31, 2008

Beyond the Markup

- Tools
- Centralized Repositories and Union Catalogs
- Data
- User Generated Content
- Visualization

More Tools

- Tools for creating EAD
- Tools for conversion between formats
- Tools for visualizing EAD

Possible Impacts of Tools

- Small archives can join the fun
- Reasons to use EAD beyond ‘getting the finding aid online’
- Faster and easier to gain high level understanding of records available
- Better tools for administrators
- And eventually… improved paths for the general public to follow to primary sources

More Centralized Repositories

Examples:

- Online Archive of California (OAC)
- Northwest Digital Archives (NWDA)
- ArchiveGrid

Related efforts:

- Descriptive Metadata Guidelines
- Further work on centralized thesaurii

Metadata Guidelines

CDL Guidelines for Digital Objects: Descriptive Metadata Guidelines

- The form of the heading should be taken from a standard or local thesaurus
- If possible, indicate the code for a standard naming authority file from which the heading is taken. Use "lcsh" for LCSH, "aat" for AAT, or "gmgpc" for TGM I

http://www.cdlib.org/inside/diglib/guidelines/dmdreqs.html#dmdsubjecttopic

Centralized Vocabulary Work

- OCLC Terminologies Service
- High Level Thesaurus (HILT) project (targeted completion of phase 4 in early 2009)
- Simple Knowledge Organisation Systems (SKOS) leverages the Resource Description Framework (RDF) to support representation of knowledge organization systems (KOS) such as thesauri, classification schemes, subject heading systems and taxonomies.

Encoding controlled vocabularies for the Semantic Web using SKOS Core

Linda Cantara:

"Controlled vocabularies facilitate consistent documentation, but they do not guarantee flawless searching across multiple domains." we need for tools that can "link the relationships between search terms or phrases, tools that will facilitate searching for abstract and semantically significant content."

Cantara, Linda. (2006) Encoding controlled vocabularies for the Semantic Web using SKOS Core, *OCLC Systems & Services: International digital library perspectives, 22/2,* 111-114.

Controlled Vocabularies & Subjects

- More transparency about vocabularies being used
- Work on formal cross walks between vocabularies
- Innovation into computer driven term grouping

What about user contributed tags?

What could the relationship be between EAD subjects and folksonomic tags?

Create Paths Where People Walk

‘Metadata for the Masses’, Peter Merholz

Photo from Phil Gyford(http://www.gyford.com)
Reprinted here under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 2.0

Cross Collection Understanding

INSTEAD OF

a text list of groups of records

RATHER

An understanding of quantity, subject and years covered by the combination of many collections

Information Visualization

- EAD opens the door to structured data about archival records
- Structured data lets us aggregate data – 30,000 foot perspective
- Standard used around the world
- XML is open and accessible

Challenges to Aggregation

- Diversity of subject terms
- Incomplete subject assignments – sometimes subject implied by title is not included as a subject
- Differences in standards for specifying dates and collection sizes

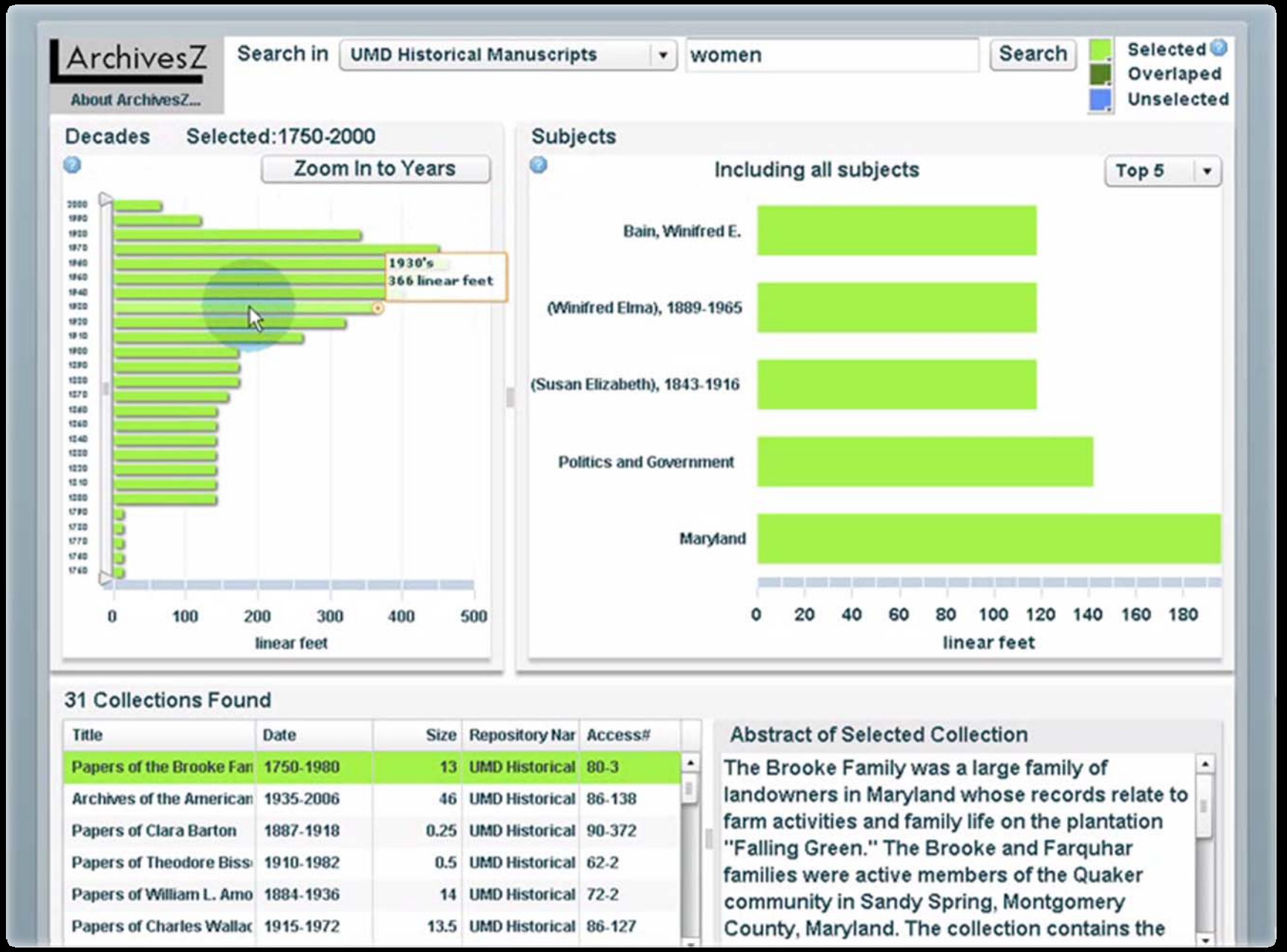
Future…

- Centralized Repositories and Union Catalogs
- Metadata Guidelines
- Thesaurii and subject cross walks
- Establish best practices for incorporating user generated tags in predictable and regular manner
- Information Visualization to give us the 30,000 foot view of collections

ArchivesZ

ArchivesZ

- Information Visualization class project
- Focus on EAD as a source of structured data
- Pull data into database for scrubbing
- Build UI based on aggregation and visualization


ArchivesZ
About ArchivesZ...
Search in
UMD Historical Manuscripts
women
Search
Selected
Overlaped
Unselected
Decades
Selected:1750-2000
Zoom In to Years
1930's
366 linear feet
0
100
200
300
400
500
linear feet
Subjects
Including all subjects
Top 5
Bain, Winifred E.
(Winifred Elma), 1889-1965
(Susan Elizabeth), 1843-1916
Politics and Government
Maryland
0
20
40
60
80
100
120
140
160
180
linear feet
31 Collections Found
Title
Date
Size
Repository Nar
Access#
Papers of the Brooke Fan
1750-1980
13
UMD Historical
80-3
Archives of the American
1935-2006
46
UMD Historical
86-138
Papers of Clara Barton
1887-1918
0.25
UMD Historical
90-372
Papers of Theodore Biss
1910-1982
0.5
UMD Historical
62-2
Papers of William L. Amo
1884-1936
14
UMD Historical
72-2
Papers of Charles Wallac
1915-1972
13.5
UMD Historical
86-127
Abstract of Selected Collection
The Brooke Family was a large family of landowners in Maryland whose records relate to farm activities and family life on the plantation "Falling Green." The Brooke and Farquhar families were active members of the Quaker community in Sandy Spring, Montgomery County, Maryland. The collection contains the