Northwest Digital Archives
Best Practice Guidelines for Encoded Archival Description (EAD) (NWDA BPG)
Oral History Encoding Guidelines

It is not within the purview of EAD to describe archival materials at a narrower level than the *item* (see the section of the NWDA Best Practice Guidelines on Component Tags). An interview clip or segment generally forms part of a sound or video recording and is therefore at a narrower level of description than an item and should not be encoded in a <c0x> entry of its own. However, NWDA member institutions hold significant collections that consist of or include interviews, and some have described (and even linked to digital versions of) segments of those interviews. The recommended method for describing material at the sub-item level, particularly when a link is given to the streaming audio or video that comprises the segment, is to link from an accepted level of description in EAD to more a specifically descriptive METS or record.[1] However, implementation of METS is not trivial, and no NWDA member institution is yet generating METS records on a regular basis. Until a practical solution is available, therefore, the NWDA suggests the following approach to encoding sub-item-level media clips.

- In a finding aid that describes a single interview, provide a description of the interview as a whole in top-level <archdesc> elements; describe segments of the interview in <dsc>.

  Note: If only copies of original media items are available for public use due to preservation concerns, describe the originals in the <physdesc> elements, but state that the copies must be used in <accessrestrict> and describe the copies in <altformavail>, all at the broadest level of description in <archdesc> (DACS, 4.2, 6.2). At the segment level, provide the starting timecode information and container number of the original recording, and in <altformavail>, give the number and starting timecode information of the copy.

- In the <c01> element for each segment, define descriptive levels as: **<c01 level="otherlevel" otherlevel="segment">**
- In <unitid>, enter the beginning timecode number (or counter number, although timecode is preferable) of the original recording clip, e.g., **<unitid>00:02:25</unitid>**
- In the <container> element, provide the number or number and side of the original media item on which the interview was recorded, e.g., **<container type="audiocassette">1A</container>**
- In <unittitle>, devise a brief title that indicates the topic of the clip, e.g., **<unittitle>Early life and education</unittitle>**
- In <physdesc><extent>, provide the duration of the clip (optional), e.g., **<physdesc><extent>4 minutes, 15 seconds</extent></physdesc>**
- In <scopecontent>, summarize the content of the media clip, e.g., **<scopecontent><p>Born in Birmingham, Alabama, in 1952, Briggs moved with his**

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[1] The METS standard provides a structure for linking metadata about digital files to the digital objects themselves.

family to Helena, Montana, two years later. He attended a Catholic elementary school and studied mathematics at the University of Montana until a meeting with physicist Matthew Jordan led him to pursue a PhD in computational physics.</p></scopecontent>

- Information pertaining to a copy of the original item, such as the number of the copy tape or CD containing the clip and the timecode of the clip on the copy, may be given in <altformavail>, e.g., **<altformavail><p>CD 1, 00:23:32</p></altformavail>**

Do not repeat any information that has already been given at a broader level of the finding aid, such as top-level <archdesc> elements (DACS, Principle 7.3, and "Requirement for Multilevel Descriptions," pp. 9-11).

For a collection consisting of multiple interviews, describe the collection as a whole in top-level <archdesc> elements and prepare a component-level entry in <dsc> for each interview. Describe segments of each interview in entries subordinate to the interview-level entry.

Top-level <archdesc>:	**<unittitle>Northwest Dairy Association Oral History Project</unittitle>**
	<unitdate>1985-1987</unitdate>
	<physdesc>
	** <extent>125 videocassettes (VHS)</extent>**
	** <physfacet>color</physfacet>**
	** <dimensions>1/2 inch</dimensions>**
	</physdesc>
	<scopecontent> Interviews with 68 members and officers of the association, which represents dairy farmers in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Montana […] </scopecontent>
<dsc>	**<c01 level="item"> …**
	** <unittitle>Oral history interview with Anita Johnson</unittitle>**
	** <unitdate>1986 January 22-23</unitdate> …**
	** <physdesc><extent>2 videocassettes (ca. 30 minutes each)</extent></physdesc>**
	** <c02 level="otherlevel" otherlevel="segment">**
	** <did>**
	** <unitid>00:02:25</unitid>**
	** <container type="audiocassette">8A</container>**
	** <unittitle>Cooperative marketing efforts</unittitle>**
	** <unitdate>1986 January 22</unitdate>**
	** <physdesc><extent>3 minutes, 12 seconds</extent></physdesc>**
	** </did>**
	** <scopecontent><p>In 1968 a group of Oregon dairy farmers formed a cooperative that by 1970 was marketing milk throughout the central and eastern parts of the state … </scopecontent>**

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<altformavail>CD 7, 00:18:05</altformavail>
<daogrp>
  <resource label="vidlink">video</resource>
  <daoloc role="video/quicktime"
  label="video"
  href=http://www.plu.edu/~archives/oh/finding
  _aids/ajohnson8.mov title="video clip of
  interview"/>
  <arc from="vidlink" to="video" show="new"
  actuate="onrequest"/>
</daogrp>
  </c02> …
</c01>
```