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Pieced Together with Love and the Dublin Core

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Abstract

The paper examines the advantages and disadvantages of using Dublin Core to create records describing three-dimensional objects especially quilts - containing 20 original Dublin Core records created from a personal collection of quilts made by Julie Feldhaus, Howard, South Dakota. It also questions if there is any benefit when creating records for such objects.

Keywords: Dublin Core, quilt, quilts, Julie Feldhaus, Howard, South Dakota

Pieced Together with Love and the Dublin Core

Martin & Cassner (2002) write, “Quilting is one of the great American grassroots art forms, but the need to document it is often overlooked” (p. 98). In the small town of Howard, South Dakota, a woman by the name of Julie Feldhaus has been gifting friends and family with the art form of quilts for years. In a personal interview on December 5, 2014, Feldhaus explains that looking at her quilts in chronological order is similar to reading her diary. “Quilts that were made to cover a double bed were usually made for wedding gifts, cowgirl quilts for granddaughters, cowboy quilts for grandsons and buffalo fabric showed up the same time the real ones arrived on the truck,” Feldhaus explained. She also acknowledges that you can tell the state of the economy by the fabrics that are used to make each quilted item. Feldhaus further explained that while she truly does not know how many items she has pieced together, so feels that she has completed at least 200 projects. If one woman’s life story can be captured from examining her quilts, can you imagine the history that can be learned from combining various quilts within a region?

Literature Review

“Museums and libraries of all sizes often find themselves storing and archiving collections of items” (Quilt Index National Leadership Project, 2008) that are unused and often times not cataloged for the patrons to even find. In a study conducted in 1985 of 379 libraries, 58% reported the existence of three-dimensional objects within their collections (Bierbaum, 1985). This same study found that the majority of these three-dimensional objects within library collections were obtained as gifts (Bierbaum, 1985). This suggests that patrons are expecting these items to be found and used within library collections. By creating records using Dublin

Core, these items may be more accessible to the patrons instead of being lost and buried in some dark corner of the library.

Dublin Core was originally made up of 15 elements: title, creator, subject, descriptions, publisher, contributor, date, type, format, identifier, source, language, relation, coverage and rights (Weibel, 1997). Weibel explains that the Dublin Core is intended to be used by “non-catalogers”. “It is expected that authors or Web-site maintainers unschooled in the cataloging arts should be able to use the Dublin Core for resource description, making their collections more visible to search engines and retrieval systems” (pg. 9). Three additional elements, audience, provenance and rights holder, can be added to Dublin Core (Coleman, 2005). With the addition of these three elements Dublin Core is now classified as qualified Dublin Core instead of simple Dublin Core.

Thanks to its ease of use and no official training needed, DC has spread across several fields and countries. Harris and Stuart (2004) write,

“Developed and tested in the bibliographic community in the mid-1990s, the utility of the Dublin Core Metadata Set was quickly recognized internationally. It has now been translated into 25 different languages and seven national governments have adopted the Dublin Core element set as the national metadata standard for government resources. Dublin Core Metadata is the basis for description used by corporations and nongovernmental agencies including the World Health Organization, the United Nations Environmental Program, the European Environmental agency, and the Food and Agriculture Organization” (pg. 32).

While these are some of the specific organizations and agencies that use Dublin Core, it is also used in “librarianship, computer science, text encoding, the museum community, and other related fields of scholarship and practice” (UIL, 2009).

The simplicity of Dublin Core is obvious when comparing a record created in MARC (Machine-Readable Cataloging). Olson (2001) explains when creating records using MARC,

“Handmade objects, three-dimensional art works, or unique materials that are not published would have only a date in the publication, distribution, etc., area, just as is done with dissertations and theses. The name of the maker/creator of the unpublished object goes in the statement of responsibility, bracketed only if not given anywhere on the item, but known by the cataloger. Any information about place of manufacture goes in a note rather than as place of publication, as the item is not published” (p. 141).

Confused? The ease of the 15 elements relieves catalogers of the frustration of trying to figure out what goes where and trying to decide if information should be in brackets or not. How about this example also by Olson (2001),

“The term “realia” is used in AACR2 (Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules) for real items as opposed to reproductions, models, or toys. The real items may be manufactured, such as items of clothing, furniture, or weapons, or they may be handmade, such as quilts, handicrafts, or pottery” (p. 146).

By using Dublin Core, catalogers with little to no experience are given the freedom of entering the date under the Dublin Core element of date and entering quilt if that is what the item is with the Dublin Core element of type.

If Dublin Core is the perfect solution, why aren't all libraries using it? Guenther (2003) writes that there are three major causes "that can be adduced for the less than enthusiastic adoption in the library world of the Dublin Core" (p. 137). She feels that the Dublin Core is incomplete, does not have an acceptable set of instructions, and has a slow adoption rate. Guenther (2003) further states "because the Dublin Core is incomplete and undocumented, it is expensive and difficult to use, and thus fails to provide a convenient, easy to use standard for creating usable resource descriptions" (p. 138). Guenther isn't the only one with these strong opinions against Dublin Core. Tennant (2002) comments "Dublin Core specifies a "creator" field, but what does that mean? In one case the person identified may be an author; in another, a painter" (p. 32). Chuttur (2014) conducted a study where "participants used Dublin Core to create records for the same resources and errors were analyzed and compared across groups" (p. 28). Chutter questions "errors commonly found in metadata records are the result of the lack of adequate guidelines to assist metadata creators in their tasks" (p. 32). While the study was inconclusive, "it has brought clarifications as to the importance of using best practice guidelines when creating records" (Chuttur, 2014, p. 36). Another disadvantage of Dublin Core acknowledged by Dixon and Nickel (2012) when they discuss selecting subject terms when using Dublin Core: "one person may interpret different themes and see different objects in the the items he or she is cataloging" (p. 75)

Why take the time to create Dublin Core records? The National Institute for Environmental Studies (NIES) chose to use Dublin Core due to the fact that each of the elements is optional and all are repeatable (Robertson, 2001). It's from these adaptations that DC is linked to so many other schemas, and remains the backbone or cornerstone for allowing information to be accessed/harvested from the Web. Other schemas that are related to the Dublin Core are

Metadata Object Description Standard (MODS), Publishing Requirements for Industry Standard Metadata (PRISM) and Metadata Encoding and Transmission Standard (METS). With the ability to crosswalk with several other schemas, creating Dublin Core records for three dimensional objects (quilts) will allow patrons access to these “hidden” treasures within libraries.

Dublin Core is a simple, “easy-to-use” metadata standard that will allow patrons to discover three-dimensional objects that are often undiscovered at libraries. While it can function with several different schemas, it should be remembered that there is no set standard on how much of the information is entered within the Dublin Core elements.

Description of Project

20 Dublin Core records were created from quilts that have been made by Julie Feldhaus, Howard, South Dakota. For each item the following information was recorded: a digital image, title (which J. Feldhaus has labeled on the back of each quilted piece), creator, subject (conforming to the Library of Congress Subject Headings), category (defined as either wall hanging, baby quilt, twin size quilt, full size quilt, queen size quilt, king size quilt, tree skirt or pillow), description, date, format, rights, publisher (entity responsible for making the resource available), identifier, and relation. Would these 10 descriptors provide enough information to be able to identify each individual quilt? What obstacles or problems would arise from using this schema? The following are the 20 Dublin Core records and pictures of the actual items.

Title: 3 Roosters

Creator: Julie Mae (Hall) Feldhaus

Subject: Quilts and quilting; South Dakota;
Miner County

Category: wall hanging

Description: 3 rooster panels surrounded by
leather

Date: 6/2012

Format: 47 x 16 inches

Rights: This image may be downloaded,
viewed and printed for personal use, but it
may not be used for commercial purposes
without permission from Julie Feldhaus.

Publisher: Sarah L. Feldhaus

Identifier: JMF1.jpg



Title: 4th of July Houses

Creator: Julie Mae (Hall) Feldhaus

Subject: Quilts and quilting; South Dakota; Miner County

Category: wall hanging

Description: 2 houses each built from the United States flag

Date: 12/2007

Format: 48 x 21 inches

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Publisher: Sarah L. Feldhaus

Identifier: JMF2.jpg



Title: Johnny & Luke's Puppies

Creator: Julie Mae (Hall)

Feldhaus

Subject: Quilts and quilting;

South Dakota; Miner County

Category: wall hanging

Description: panel containing
puppies looking out a window

Date: 1/2009

Format: 40 x 23 inches

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Feldhaus.

Publisher: Sarah L. Feldhaus

Identifier: JMF3.jpg



Title: Holy Nativity

Creator: Julie Mae (Hall) Feldhaus

Subject: Quilts and quilting; South Dakota; Miner County

Category: tree skirt

Description: hand pieced Nativity with 5 shepherds, 2 angels, 1 donkey, 1 goat and 28 sheep

Date: 12/2013

Format: 54 inch diameter

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Publisher: Sarah L. Feldhaus

Identifier: JMF4.jpg



Title: Snowman Greeter

Creator: Julie Mae (Hall)

Feldhaus

Subject: Quilts and quilting;

South Dakota; Miner County

Category: wall hanging

Description: Hand pieced flannel
snowman

Date: 12/2006

Format: 34 x 20 inches

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without permission from Julie
Feldhaus.

Publisher: Sarah L. Feldhaus

Identifier: JMF5.jpg



Title: It's A Boy!

Creator: Julie Mae (Hall) Feldhaus

Subject: Quilts and quilting; South Dakota; Miner County

Category: wall hanging

Description: Baby boy panel with hand stitched accents and button accents

Date: 6/2006

Format: 41 x 23 inches

Rights: This image may be downloaded, viewed and printed for personal use, but it may not be used for commercial purposes without permission from Julie Feldhaus.

Publisher: Sarah L. Feldhaus

Identifier: JMF6.jpg



Title: Be My Valentine

Creator: Julie Mae (Hall) Feldhaus

Subject: Quilts and quilting; South Dakota; Miner County

Category: wall hanging

Description: Valentine panel with button accents

Date: 2/2009

Format: 38 x 23 inches

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Publisher: Sarah L. Feldhaus

Identifier: JMF7.jpg



Title: Come Let Us Adore Him

Creator: Julie Mae (Hall) Feldhaus

Subject: Quilts and quilting; South Dakota; Miner County

Category: wall hanging

Description: Christmas themed panel with various lines from various Christmas hymns

Date: 12/2011

Format: 40 x 23 inches

Rights: This image may be downloaded, viewed and printed for personal use, but it may not be used for commercial purposes without permission from Julie Feldhaus.

Publisher: Sarah L. Feldhaus

Identifier: JMF8.jpg



Title: Welcome Halloween

Creator: Julie Mae (Hall) Feldhaus

Subject: Quilts and quilting; South Dakota;
Miner County

Category: wall hanging

Description: panel depicting a haunted house
embellished with buttons

Date: 10/2008

Format: 36 x 24 inches

Rights: This image may be downloaded,
viewed and printed for personal use, but it
may not be used for commercial purposes
without permission from Julie Feldhaus.

Publisher: Sarah L. Feldhaus

Identifier: JMF9.jpg



Title: Peacock

Creator: Julie Mae (Hall) Feldhaus

Subject: Quilts and quilting; South Dakota; Miner County

Category: wall hanging

Description: Peacock panel

Date: 3/2010

Format: 42 x 23 inches

Rights: This image may be downloaded, viewed and printed for personal use, but it may not be used for commercial purposes without permission from Julie Feldhaus.

Publisher: Sarah L. Feldhaus

Identifier: JMF10.jpg



Title: Visions of Buffalo

Creator: Julie Mae (Hall) Feldhaus

Subject: Quilts and quilting; South Dakota; Miner County

Category: baby quilt

Description: 3 rooster panels surrounded by leather

Date: 11/2014

Format: 34 x 43 inches

Rights: This image may be downloaded, viewed and printed for personal use, but it may not be used for commercial purposes without permission from Julie Feldhaus.

Publisher: Julie Feldhaus

Identifier: JMF11.jpg



Title: Arrows and Steel

Creator: Julie Mae (Hall) Feldhaus

Subject: Quilts and quilting; South Dakota; Miner County

Category: baby quilt

Description: various colors of blocks accented by arrow fabric

Date: 11/2014

Format: 52 x 52 inches

Rights: This image may be downloaded, viewed and printed for personal use, but it may not be used for commercial purposes without permission from Julie Feldhaus.

Publisher: Julie Feldhaus

Identifier: JMF12.jpg



Title: Harvest Scarecrows

Creator: Julie Mae (Hall) Feldhaus

Subject: Quilts and quilting; South Dakota;
Miner County

Category: wall hanging

Description: Harvest scarecrow panel
accented by three dimensional crows

Date: 10/2014

Format: 42 x 36 inches

Rights: This image may be downloaded,
viewed and printed for personal use, but it
may not be used for commercial purposes
without permission from Julie Feldhaus.

Publisher: Carrie Derksen

Identifier: JMF13.jpg



Title: Wildlife Blocks

Creator: Julie Mae (Hall) Feldhaus

Subject: Quilts and quilting; South Dakota; Miner County

Category: king size quilt

Description: moose, white-tailed buck, loon and duck blocks

Date: 9/2014

Format: 101 x 90 inches

Rights: This image may be downloaded, viewed and printed for personal use, but it may not be used for commercial purposes without permission from Julie Feldhaus.

Publisher: John Derksen

Identifier: JMF14.jpg



Title: Just a Touch of Pink

Creator: Julie Mae (Hall) Feldhaus

Subject: Quilts and quilting; South Dakota; Miner County

Category: baby quilt

Description: a strip of black and white placed in reverse order accented by pink and white rick-rag

Date: 7/2014

Format: 44 x 44 inches

Rights: This image may be downloaded, viewed and printed for personal use, but it may not be used for commercial purposes without permission from Julie Feldhaus.

Publisher: Sarah L. Feldhaus

Identifier: JMF15.jpg



Title: Random Blocks for a Baby Girl

Creator: Julie Mae (Hall) Feldhaus

Subject: Quilts and quilting; South Dakota; Miner County

Category: baby quilt

Description: pink fabric highlighted by a block of black and white various patterns

Date: 7/2014

Format: 44 x 34 inches

Rights: This image may be downloaded, viewed and printed for personal use, but it may not be used for commercial purposes without permission from Julie Feldhaus.

Publisher: Julie Feldhaus

Identifier: JMF16.jpg



Title: Leon's Hankies

Creator: Julie Mae (Hall) Feldhaus

Subject: Quilts and quilting; South Dakota; Miner County

Category: baby quilt

Description: baby quilt constructed from 4 hankies

Date: 7/2014

Format: 24 x 24 inches

Rights: This image may be downloaded, viewed and printed for personal use, but it may not be used for commercial purposes without permission from Julie Feldhaus.

Publisher: Lyndsie Jeffery

Identifier: JMF17.jpg



Title: Cowboy Playtime

Creator: Julie Mae (Hall)

Feldhaus

Subject: Quilts and quilting;

South Dakota; Miner County

Category: wall hanging

Description: hand pieced star,
cowboy and horse accented with
cowboys and cowgirls playing

Date: 6/2014

Format: 34 x 24 inches

Rights: This image may be
downloaded, viewed and printed
for personal use, but it may not be
used for commercial purposes

without permission from Julie Feldhaus.

Publisher: Julie Feldhaus

Identifier: JMF18.jpg



Title: Baby Wildlife

Creator: Julie Mae (Hall) Feldhaus

Subject: Quilts and quilting; South Dakota; Miner County

Category: baby quilt

Description: narrow panel of baby wildlife animals accented by coordinating square color

Date: 6/2012

Format: 54 x 34 inches

Rights: This image may be downloaded, viewed and printed for personal use, but it may not be used for commercial purposes without permission from Julie Feldhaus.

Publisher: Robert Feldhaus

Identifier: JMF19.jpg



Title: Mommy & Me Baby Farm Animals

Creator: Julie Mae (Hall) Feldhaus

Subject: Quilts and quilting; South Dakota; Miner County

Category: baby quilt

Description: various square panels of mother and child farm animals mixed with blocks of coordinating colors

Date: 4/2014

Format: 52 x 36 inches

Rights: This image may be downloaded, viewed and printed for personal use, but it may not be used for commercial purposes without permission from Julie Feldhaus.

Publisher: Lauri Johnson

Identifier: JMF20.jpg



Conclusion

Dublin Core is an effective schema when cataloging three dimensional objects especially quilts. By photographing and describing these quilted items, Julie Feldhaus will be able to keep track of the items that she has created - not only the number of items, but also who each item was originally gifted to. It also allows her family to visualize and recall each piece that has been made, and in the process it will more than likely stir up memories either of the recipient or through the items that are depicted on several of Feldhaus' pieces. While these records provide enough description to be beneficial to her family, further description may be needed to provide improved records for quilting enthusiasts or historians. With Dublin Core's solid foundation and ability to be configured with so many other schemes, it is definitely a great starting point to any metadata project.

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