

Content-level Intellectual Control for Digital Archives

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Abstract: This presentation is based on a paper that has been accepted for publication by the Journal of Archival organization. It will discuss how the concept and practices of archival intellectual control have evolved in the new technology environment. While traditionally aggregate control dominated archival description, today item-level description is affordable in many scenarios. In addition, the intellectual control of digital records reaches below the item level and includes the description of item-components and individual variables of datasets, as well as the annotation of textual content. These three types of below item-level control together are called content control. This new concept of content control challenges the widely accepted definition of archival intellectual control, which means “the creation of tools such as catalogs, finding aids, or other guides that enable researchers to locate relevant materials relevant to their interests.” Content control is not about creating catalogs, finding aids, or other guides that enable researchers to locate relevant archival records, instead, it is about enabling users to find relevant information from the content of the archival records.

About the Author:

Jinfang Niu is an assistant professor at the School of Information, University of South Florida. She received her Ph.D degree from University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Prior to that, she worked for the Tsinghua University Library in China for three years. Dr. Niu’s current research focuses on information organization, digital curation and archives management.