The DVRA, Digital Video Research Archive, is an online system containing over three thousand digitized videos of public performances of Morris, Clog and Sword dance (see figure 1).

Figure 2. A public performance video from the archive

The videos in the archive are classified into 18 genres (figure 3) and captured primarily by 13 videographers[1] from 1979 to the present day.

Border Morris
Clog (step) dancing
Cotswold Morris
Flag Waving
Garland Dance
Horn Dance
Longsword
Maypole Dancing
Molly Dancing
Mummers Play
North-West Morris
Portuguese Stick Dance
Processional Dance
Rapper Sword
Ribbon dancing
Social Dance

Figure 4. Dance Genres in the DVRA

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[1] Michael Cooney, Anthony Barrand, Michael Field, Steven Moore, Tom Toleno, Rhett Krause, Kari Smith, Jocelyn Reynolds, Jan Elliott, Margaret Dale Barrand, Dinah Breunig, Ivor Allsop, Margaret Keller.

The initial interface consists of a simple search engine (http://www.bu.edu/uni/dvra/) that presents two forms of input (see figure 2). The first is a text field for general queries, the second is a menu of "What I can tell you about" thematic points for exploration into the archive. The latter provides broad-spectrum knowledge such as "Where do the dances come from?", "Who are the teachers of American Morris?", and "How do the dancers interact with the videographer?"
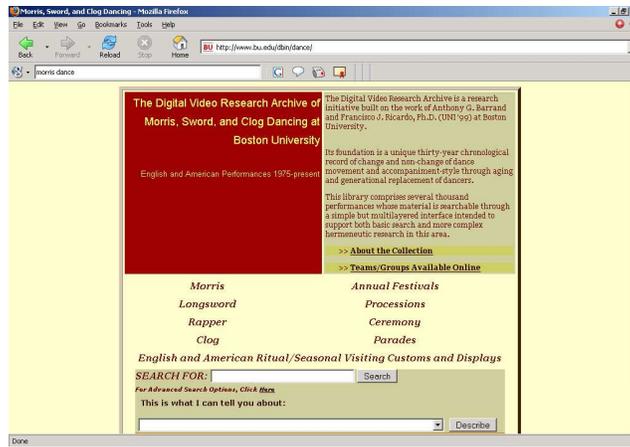

Figure 5. DVRA web site

In the archive, each video is tagged with certain descriptive information including its date of filming, its videographer(s), the location of the event, the occasion (e.g., a festival, or ale), the list of performers, the characters that these would play, the dance genre and dance name, and other internal organizational information. This enables the generic search feature to retrieves videos whose descriptive data match a user's query. In the search results, the relevant information is returned for each video, along with a link that enables users to view it in a separate window.

Figure 6. Search results

At the content management side, an expert editor may assign descriptive information for each video through the Dance Video Library Administrator (figure 7), an administrative utility that preserves the integrity of names and other grouped data across videos and additionally encourages the creation of descriptive links between videos that share thematic information.
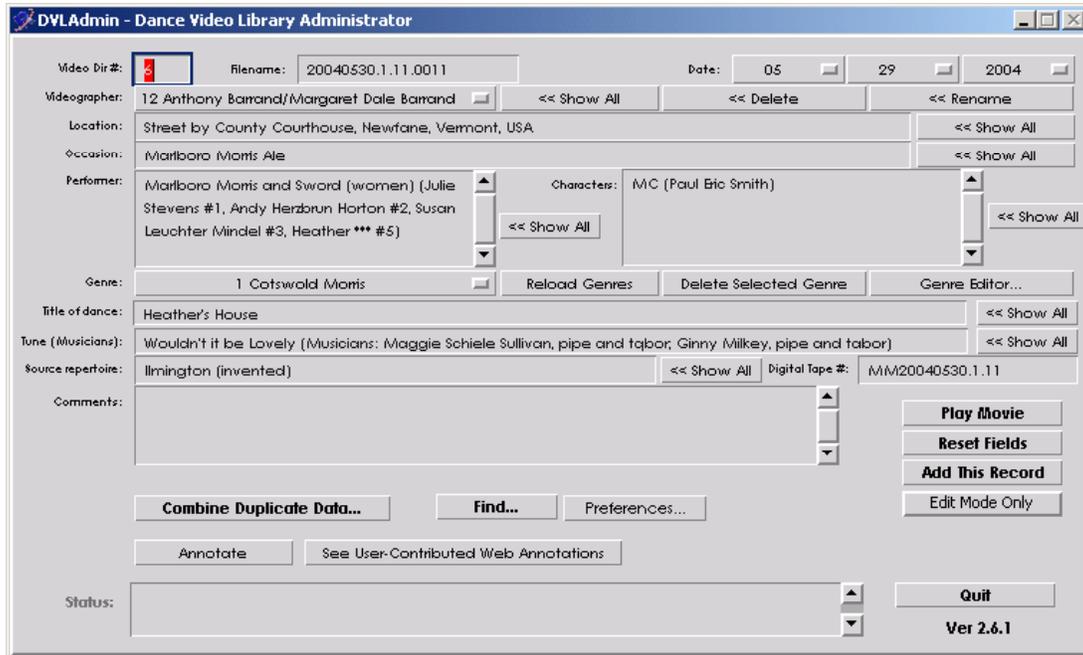
Figure 8. The Dance Video Library Administrator

In addition to links across videos, the archive enables users to annotate any video with additional information viewable from both a web page (figure 9) and the internal tool (figure 10).
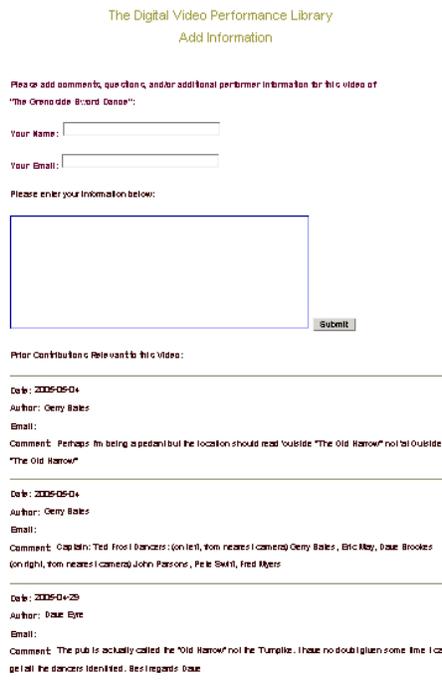

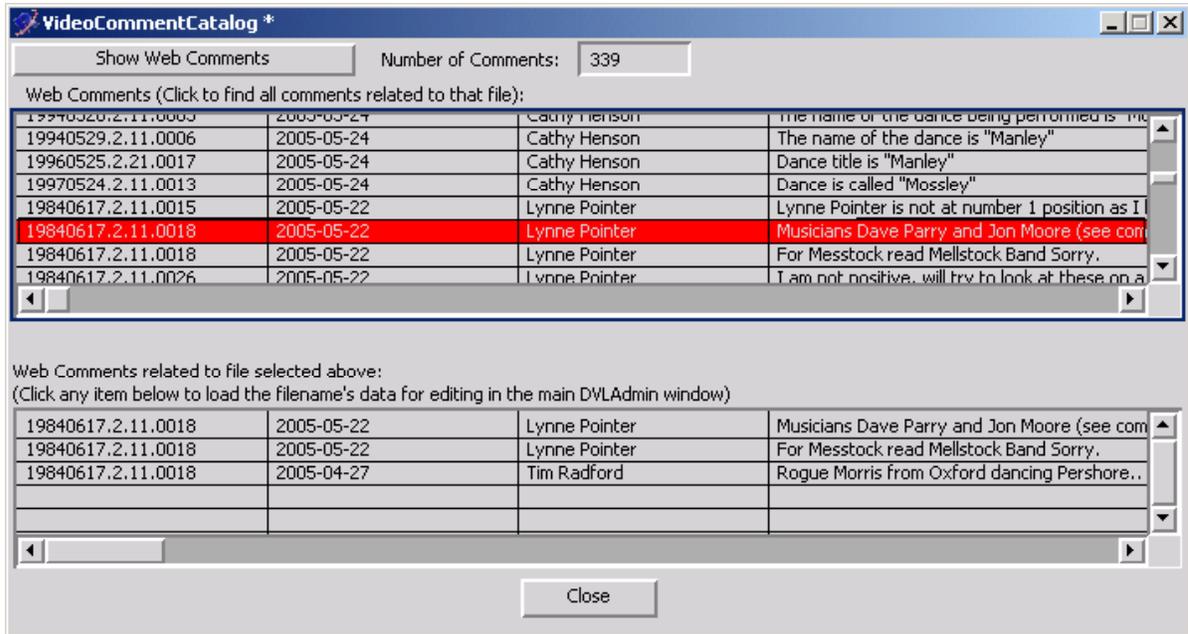**Figure 11. Web view of user contributed annotations**

Figure 12. Internal view of user contributed annotations

Such comments then become integrated with the individual performance in a cross-reinforced matrix of description where links *across* videos represent thematic and annotations *within* videos are comments specific to the individual performance.

		COMMENTARY	IN	EACH	VIDEO	
		Video 1	Video 2	Video 3	…	Video n
	Dress	comment	comment	comment	comment	comment
THEMES	**Steps**	comment	comment	comment	comment	comment
ACROSS	**Roles**	comment	comment	comment	comment	comment
VIDEOS	**Players**	comment	comment	comment	comment	comment
	Props	comment	comment	comment	comment	comment
	…	comment	comment	comment	comment	comment

Table 1. Matrix of commentary

Annotations for each video are contributed by users of the system who wish to add context or missing information, including further comments on any prior annotation. Designed to foster dialogue in this way, any video becomes in essence its own discussion list.

Themes across videos indicate thematic patterns that can be intentionally created or possibly inferred by the system automatically by means of a trigger word that retrieves any other video whose description contains that term. This occurs in the DVRA Annotation Catalog (figure 13). As the author writes, the system generates links in real time to videos that relate to each sentence.
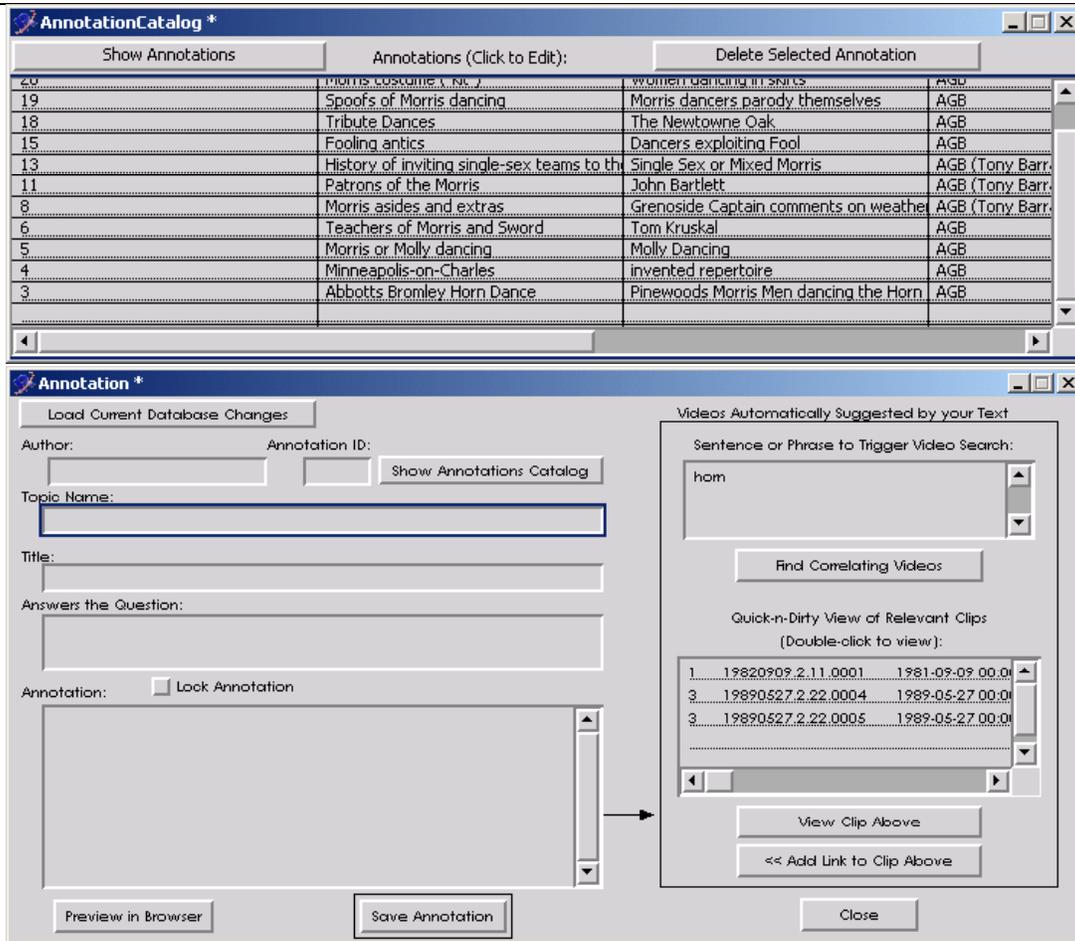
Figure 14. The DVRA Annotation Catalog