
National Diet Library Newsletter

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Seminar on the Archives of Earthquake Disaster in the Tokyo Main Library

On January 9, the "Seminar on the archives of earthquake disaster: From experiences of New Zealand Canterbury Earthquake and Great East Japan Earthquake" was held at the Conference Room in the Tokyo Main Library, National Diet Library (NDL). Approximately 60 people were in attendance.

At the beginning of the symposium, Professor Paul Millar (University of Canterbury, Head of the School of Humanities) delivered a keynote speech entitled "Why Archive Catastrophe? - The Importance of Preserving and Making Freely Available the Digital Record of a Natural Disaster." He introduced the background, idea, current status, and future prospects of the [UC CEISMIC Canterbury Earthquake Digital Archive](#) (hereafter referred to as CEISMIC), which was developed to collect, preserve and provide cultural data of the Canterbury earthquakes in 2010 and 2011. His speech began and concluded with the same quotation of a Maori proverb: "He aha te mea nui o te ao? He tangata! He tangata! He tangata!" (What is the most important thing in the world? It is people! It is people! It is people!).

Then Mr. Tamotsu MATSUMOTO (Senior Librarian, Digital Information Department, NDL) reported the current status of the NDL's efforts to preserve the earthquake-related materials both in paper and in digital form, and that of the NDL Great East Japan Earthquake Archive "HINAGIKU" project.

Following a question-and-answer session, Professor Millar, the audience and our staff members had a discussion on some topics as follows:

- factors why the consortium in the CEISMIC became successful
- utilization of archives and means to get feedback
- relationship between search engines including Google and earthquake archives
- relationship between archives and history education
- earthquake-related documentary films and art works

Some of the attendants who filled in questionnaires made the following comments:

- I think this seminar is very informative and now I understand that the CEISMIC project has a definite purpose for development of the archive, special staff members to improve the utility of information, the aim of distributing to the world, and collaborations formed among the related institutions.
- Professor Millar's speech was really interesting and I think it was the close relationship with the Christchurch area that led to success.
- The CEISMIC seems to be a model case for earthquake archives in the disaster area. The factor of "area" makes it easy to think about utilization.

The NDL held this seminar to share and solve problems of earthquake archive management, as well as to enrich contents of "HINAGIKU" and promote interaction between archives. The following results were achieved.

- We understand that utilizing archives is important to collect records. Since the CEISMIC attached importance to data reuse, we could learn about cases that utilize data in research on public health and infrastructure disaster prevention.
- We learned from the CEISMIC consortium's background, which reminds us that multi-institutional collaborations play a vital role in solving complex problems related to earthquakes.

Handouts of the seminar are available in "[HINAGIKU](#)."