Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Metadata – a panel discussion
Cynthia M. Whitacre
Senior Metadata Operations Manager

Introductions
Juneteenth:
June 19, 1865
Reimagining Descriptive Workflows

Jennifer W. Baxmeyer
Assistant University Librarian for Metadata Services
Princeton University
Reimagining Descriptive Workflows

Generating Lasting, Meaningful Change in Libraries & Archives

OCLC Cataloging Community Meeting, June 18, 2021

Jennifer Baxmeyer (she/her)
Assistant University Librarian for Metadata Services
Princeton University Library

Photo credit: art by Christine Sun Kim (2018) as part of For Freedom’s 50 State Billboard Initiative, photo by Notley Hawkins.
Princeton University sits on land considered part of the ancient homelands of the Lenni-Lenape peoples.
What is it and why?

- Reimagine Descriptive Workflows
- Eight-month project - “inclusive description”
Who’s involved?

OCLC:
- Rachel Frick
- Marti Heyman
- Merrilee Proffitt
- Chela Weber
- Mercy Procaccini
- Bettina Huhn

Shift Collective:
- Jon Voss
- Jennifer Himmelreich
- Asante Salaam
- Tayo Medupin
- Gerry Himmelreich

Advisory panel:
- Dr. Stacy Allison-Cassin, University of Toronto
- Jennifer Baxmeyer, Princeton University
- Dorothy Berry, Harvard University
- Dr. Kimberley Bugg, AUC Woodruff Library Center
- Camille Callison, University of Manitoba Libraries
- Lillian Chavez, Mescalero Community Library
- Trevor A. Dawes, University of Delaware
- Jarret Martin Drake, PhD candidate, Harvard University
- Bergis Jules, Shift Collective
- Cellia Joe-Olsen, National Library of New Zealand
- Katrina Tamaira, National Library of New Zealand
- Damien Webb, State Library of New South Wales

Image source: http://clipart-library.com/clipart/AcbjLKa9i.htm
What have we done so far?

Two advisory panel meetings

March 30, 2021

May 3, 2021
What’s next?

Virtual meeting, June 22-24, 2021

Participants:

Advisory group plus a diverse group of about 40 practitioners from around the world who will “begin laying the groundwork for lasting, meaningful change in this foundational area of cultural memory, preservation, and discovery.”

Image source: https://www.teamraderie.com/insights/
What we plan to accomplish by the eight-month mark...

- Concrete mechanisms to help libraries create inclusive and equitable descriptive metadata to promote effective representation and discovery of previously neglected or mis-characterized peoples, events, and experiences
- Development of a community agenda that will help clarify issues for those who do knowledge work in libraries, archives, and museums:
  - identifying priority areas for attention
  - providing guidance for national agencies and suppliers
For more information
Reimagine Descriptive Workflows

https://justdescription.org/
Inclusive Description at the Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Celeste Brewer  
Processing Archivist  
Columbia University Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Yingwen Huang  
Processing Archivist  
Columbia University Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Kevin W. Schlottmann  
Head of Archives Processing  
Columbia University Rare Book and Manuscript Library
Inclusive Description at the Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Kevin Schlottmann, Head of Archives Processing
Yingwen Huang, Processing Archivist
Celeste Brewer, Processing Archivist

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Rare Book and Manuscript Library
Columbia University

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Making space for reparative description

How do we bake this into everything we do?

How do we deal with decades of description?

One approach: just do it!
Data available to be queried
Archivists make choices about language and content
These choices can reflect and perpetuate systemic biases
These choices are not always easy to identify!

“Archival description enables archivists to distill masses of information about records into a small set of characteristics describing aggregations of records.”

Describing Archives: A Content Standard, Statement of Principles
Descriptions for Chinese materials

Misspelled names, names with just initials, not enough contextual info

Use non-English resources to identify individuals & update/create NACO Authorities

Enhance contextual information

Bilingual finding aids to ease access
Legacy practice of referring to married women by their husbands’ names

Queried ArchivesSpace data for string “Mrs”

Used Columbia University Libraries’ electronic resources to identify 1,257 individual married women
Adaptation for Anti-Racist Description

Inclusive metadata is not one-size-fits-all

Identification vs. repair

How do you write a script to identify silence?
Systemic issues beyond the scope of a script

Whitewashing
Erasure
Misattribution
Misidentification

Portrait of Pierre Toussaint, circa 1850s
Resources


Remapping LC subject headings in TRLN discovery

Cory Lown
Application Development Project Lead
Duke University Libraries

Lynn Whittenberger
Associate Head, Acquisitions and Discovery (Monographs)
North Carolina State University
Remapping LC subject headings in TRLN discovery

Cory Lown - Duke University Libraries
Lynn Whittenberger - NC State University Libraries
Subject remapping

In an effort to improve the subject terms used in TRLN’s discovery layer to better represent diverse populations, and to change existing subject terms that may be exclusionary or divisive, the TRLN Metadata Team is collecting suggestions to overlay existing problematic subject headings with alternative vocabulary terms.

https://www.library.dartmouth.edu/digital/digital-collections/change-the-subject
Subject remapping

TRLN had the technical ability to overlay these problematic subject headings in our shared discovery layer

- Proof of concept testing with
  - “Illegal aliens” (overlaid with “Undocumented immigrants”)
  - “Poor” (overlaid with “Poor people”).
Subject remapping – defining the process

- TRLN webpage: https://trln.org/resources/subject-remapping/
- Newsletter/ blog post: https://trln.org/2020/10/trln-discovery-subject-re-mapping-program/
Subject remapping - process

- User submits a subject change request
Subject remapping - process

- The TRLN Discovery Metadata Team reviews and researches each suggested term
  - some suggestions may require collaboration with the TRLN Metadata Interest Group, subject matter experts, and other stakeholders to determine whether a term should be remapped as part of this program and what is the preferred term

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April 8, 2021

https://duke.zoom.us/j/252574952

- Subject Headings (request spreadsheet)
  - "Problem children"
    - Proposed to map to "Children with behavior disorders" - any objections?
    - Approved - Kelly will send for PO approval
    - Is "problem youth" a separate mapping we should add? - Yes, added to sheet.
    - Michelle proposed SACO proposal - group supported this idea, even if it might have complications
  - "Slaveholders": "Slave trade" and "Slave traders"
    - Proposed
      - Slaveholders -> Enslavers
      - Slave trade -> Trafficking in enslaved persons
      - Slave traders -> Traffickers in enslaved persons
    - "Enslavers" may not be "best" choice, but agreement that it is reasonable to put those headings in line with "Enslaved persons"
  - "Female Impersonators"
    - LW: New LCSH headings for Drag kings & Drag queens with xrefs added to Female Impersonators: https://classweb.org/approved-subjects/2102.html
    - LW Recommendation: Institutions should review "Female Impersonator" SH's and change/add Drag queens as appropriate
    - "dirty war, 1976-1983" update
Subject remapping - process

- TRLN Discovery Metadata Team reviews research, discusses request, and makes a recommendation
  - Recommendation is documented on a tracking spreadsheet
Subject remapping - process

- TRLN Discovery product owners review the recommended terms to remap
  - if they approve, the terms are added to the configuration file and then will be visible to end users
- The user who submitted the change request is notified
- List of newly added remapped terms is reported in the TRLN monthly newsletter
Subject remapping - user display

- If a user searches for “illegal aliens”, they will return results using this term; however the subject facet and the item record’s subject will display “Undocumented immigrants”.

- The remapping only applies to subject headings. If “Illegal aliens” displays elsewhere, such as title, then this information will not be overlaid with “Undocumented immigrants”.

![Image of search results]

Limit your search

1. Illegal aliens: limited research suggests illegal aliens may displace native workers: briefing report to congressional requesters.


   Hunt Library — bookBot

   Call Number: GA 1.13.PEMD-86-9
   Date: Available upon request

   2. Illegal aliens: their employment and employers

   Barry R. Chownick, Chownick, Barry R.


   D. H. Hill Jr. Library — Stacks

   Call Number: H08091.A5 C473
   Notes: Available
Subject remapping - **user display**

**Authors, etc.**

Smith, Hillel R., author

Library of Congress. Congressional Research Service, issuing body

**Find similar items**

**By Topic**

- Deportation > United States
- Detention of persons > United States
- Emigration and immigration law > United States
- Undocumented immigrants > United States

**Other details**

Series

IF ; 11357
Subject remapping - user display

Catalog
Books & Media

Searching:

- NC State University Libraries
- TRLN libraries: NC State, Duke, NCCU, UNC (3,640)

Limit your search

- Available Online 610
- Library Location
- Resource Type
- About Topic
- Undocumented immigrants 959
- Government policy 411

1. The undocumented Americans
Karla Cornejo Villavicencio.
Cornejo Villavicencio, Karla, author

D. H. Hill Jr. Library Popular Reading Collection
Call Number: JV6483 .C59 2020
Status: Checked Out
(1st floor, East Wing)
Subject remapping - technical implementation

- Remapping a subject heading does not change the MARC record data, but rather changes subject data that displays to the end user.

- Remapped headings must be specified at the whole subdivision level. This requires some repetition in the configuration file, but this also accommodates nuance in the remappings.
  - $a$Poor$xMedical care -> Poor people -- Medical care
  - $a$Poor children$xMedical care DOES NOT GET REMAPPED

- As of May 2021, 13 headings have been remapped - impacting several hundred thousand records
Technical implementation

- Simple implementation made possible by the system architecture
- Data transformation steps
  - Example MARC 651 field
  - Data transformations
- Specifies remappings for problematic LCSH
  # Headings to remap must be specified at the whole subdivision level.
  # Only entire subfield values are replaced. For example:
  # $aPoor$xMedical care --> Poor people -- Medical care
  # BUT:
  # $aPoor children$xMedical care DOES NOT GET REMAPPED
  # This requires some repetition here in the mappings, but it is clearer and safer

- aliens: "Noncitizens"
- alien detention centers: "Immigrant detention centers"
- child slaves: "Enslaved children"
- children of illegal aliens: "Children of undocumented immigrants"
- freedmen: "Freed people"
- fugitive slaves: "Fugitive enslaved persons"
- hideous subdivision: "Better subdivision" # Test case
- illegal alien children: "Undocumented immigrant children"
- illegal aliens: "Undocumented immigrants"
- illegal aliens in literature: "Undocumented immigrants in literature"
- indian slaves: "Enslaved indigenous peoples"
- indians of central america: "Indigenous peoples of Central America"
- indians of mexico: "Indigenous peoples of Mexico"
- indians of north america: "Indigenous peoples of North America"
- indians of south america: "Indigenous peoples of South America"
- indians of the west indies: "Indigenous peoples of the West Indies"
- older slaves: "Enslaved elderly"
- poor: "Poor people"
- problem children: "Children with behavior disorders"
- problem youth: "Youth with behavior disorders"
- slave owners: "Enslavers"
- slave trade: "Trafficking in enslaved persons"
- slave traders: "Traffickers in enslaved persons"
- slaves: "Enslaved persons"
- women illegal aliens: "Women undocumented immigrants"
- women slaves: "Enslaved women"
Technical implementation - source data

<datafield tag="651" ind1="" ind2="0">
<subfield code="a">Argentina</subfield>
<subfield code="x">History</subfield>
<subfield code="y">Dirty War, 1976–1983</subfield>
<subfield code="x">Influence.</subfield>
</datafield>
Technical implementation - remapped headings

"subject_headings": [
  {
    "value": "Motion pictures -- Argentina -- History"
  },
  {
    "value": "Memory in motion pictures"
  },
  {
    "value": "Gender identity in motion pictures"
  },
  {
    "value": "Argentina -- In motion pictures"
  },
  {
    "value": "Argentina -- History -- Terrorismo de Estado, Argentina, 1976-1983 -- Influence"
  }
]
Technical implementation - original heading

"subject_headings_remapped": [
  "Argentina -- History -- Dirty War, 1976-1983 -- Influence"
],
Technical implementation - remapped browse terms

"subject_chronological": [
  "Terrorismo de Estado, Argentina, 1976-1983"
],
Technical implementation - Search index config

```
<str name="subject_qf">
  genre_headings_ara_v
  genre_headings_cjk_v
  genre_headings_remapped_tp^2
  genre_headings_rus_v
  genre_headings_tp^2
  subject_headings_ara_v
  subject_headings_cjk_v
  subject_headings_remapped_tp^2
  subject_headings_rus_v
  subject_headings_tp^2
</str>
```
1. Argentine foreign policy during the military dictatorship, 1976-1983: between a nationalist and pragmatic approach

Magdalena Lisinska.
Lisinska, Magdalena, author
Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, [2019] / Online


Angela Abmeier.
Abmeier, Angela, author
Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, [2017] / Print
1. Argentine foreign policy during the military dictatorship, 1976-1983: between a nationalist and pragmatic approach

Magdalena Lisińska.
Lisińska, Magdalena, author
Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave, Macmillan, [2019] / Online

2. Kalte Krieger am Río de la Plata?: die beiden deutschen Staaten und die argentinische Militärdiktatur (1976-1983)

Angela Abmeier.
Abmeier, Angela, author
Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, [2017] / Print
Related subjects

- Cold War (1945-1989)
- Dirty War (Argentina: 1976-1983)
- Germany (West) > Relations > Argentina
- Germany (East) > Relations > Argentina
- Argentina > Relations > Germany (West)
- Argentina > Relations > Germany (East)
- Argentina > History > Terrorismo de Estado, Argentina, 1976-1983
- Argentina > History > 1955-1983
  - Cold War
  - International relations
- Argentina
- Germany (East)
- Germany (West)
- 1955-1983
Submit questions in Chat.
Send chat to “Everyone”
African-American band at Emancipation Day celebration on June 19, 1900, in Austin, Texas.

Source: [PICA-05481], Austin History Center, Austin Public Library