EDI CV & Description Working Group

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she/her/hers
Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) at University Libraries

Ohio State University Libraries strives to provide welcoming, supportive environments for all to pursue and share knowledge. University Libraries is guided by the following strategic priorities which facilitate, celebrate and honor diversity, inclusion, access and social justice.

- **Open content** to expanded access to the essential information and resources of University Libraries.

- **Increased outreach** to underserved communities through partnership, collaboration and support.

- **Enhanced programming** to promote engagement, cross-culture information exchange, and diversity within the university and the librarian profession.

https://library.osu.edu/equity-diversity-inclusion
There was some inspiration …

Ohio State University hosted IDEAL ’19 on August 6 to 7, 2019 in Columbus, Ohio.

The conference included a screening of the documentary “Change the Subject” (https://www.library.dartmouth.edu/digital/digital-collections/change-the-subject).
... but we still have this?

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About the EDI CV & Description Working Group

• Group consisted of 12 librarians and staff in several units in Acquisitions & Discovery and one person from Special Collections. Members included catalogers, archivists, and non-MARC metadata creators.

• Meetings occurred monthly from July 2020 to September 2020 after a kick-off meeting on July 1. Three members worked on wrap-up report in October 2020.

• Meetings were conducted as a reading/viewing group with suggested readings/viewings to sign-up for. Each meeting we discussed and documented what we learned.

• Final output is expected to be an annotated bibliography.
Scope and criteria of work

- **Scope**: Resources on controlled vocabularies and description in LAM (libraries, archives, and museums) community.
- **Potential themes**: inherent knowledge structures, reparative metadata, race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion, culture, disability, socioeconomics, and age
- **Currency**: While newer resources were preferred, older resources were acceptable.
- **Content types**: journal articles, white papers, webinar recordings, websites, blog posts, news articles, etc.
- **Excluded**: Resources only focused on classification.
What does it mean to be neutral? How do we “other” people and groups?

male

Christian

white / Caucasian

cisgender

ableist

heterosexual

Anglo-Saxon
Time for a history lesson …

… and, no, we can’t avoid classification completely.

The basis of our taxonomies and knowledge management come from Library of Congress and let’s not forget Dewey.

LC is not a national library. Politics take precedence and progress comes slowly.

Other taxonomies and knowledge management systems, e.g. Wikidata, reinforce these early efforts.

Photo by Annamarie Klose
Ethics, knowledge organization, & harm

- Cataloging Ethics Bibliography, maintained by Karen Snow, Dominican University, [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1bHtghhSL54PFlekIwnmHpF9O_2KR_GMq5GWIBgNLKDg/](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1bHtghhSL54PFlekIwnmHpF9O_2KR_GMq5GWIBgNLKDg/)


- Hardesty, Julie, “Bias and Inclusivity in Metadata: Awareness and Approaches,” Indiana University Brown Bag webinar recording and slides ([http://hdl.handle.net/2022/22880](http://hdl.handle.net/2022/22880)) – 1 hour crash course
Humanizing individuals past and present

- Archives for Black Lives in Philadelphia’s Anti-Racist Description Working Group (October 2019), Archives for Black lives in Philadelphia: Anti-racist description resources, https://archivesforblacklives.files.wordpress.com/2019/10/ardr_final.pdf - Describing people who were slaves means giving them a name and changing the rhetoric about race and slavery. Avoid passive language. There are insights here that can be applied to other groups of people.


Photo by thelesleyshow at Morguefile.com, http://mrg.bz/vZ3a75
Self-identification, changing terminology, & the lack of consensus

• How individuals self-identify varies. Specific communities often do not have one specific term that they agree on. An example is the various terms, Hispanic, Latino/Latina, and Latinx, for a specific group(s).

• Terms and their usage changes over time, e.g. African-American, Buckeye.

• It’s crucial to maintain outdated terminology in historic collections [with warnings]. Attempts to erase history are just as damaging.

• Archives for Black Lives in Philadelphia’s Anti-Racist Description Working Group (October 2019), Archives for Black lives in Philadelphia: Anti-racist description resources, https://archivesforblacklives.files.wordpress.com/2019/10/ardr_final.pdf - Should we remove or keep offensive language in collections? What is the impact of these decisions?


Issues with identifying people in audiovisual resources without context

Example:

George Herriman, a noted cartoonist, was mixed race. He was Creole mulatto and identified as white. His comic strip Krazy Kat sometimes touches on racial issues.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Herriman
The right to be forgotten or change your identity

- Foo Yun Chee. (September 24, 2019) “You have the right to be forgotten by Google – but only in Europe.” Reuters. https://www.reuters.com/article/us-eu-alphabet-privacy/you-have-the-right-to-be-forgotten-by-google-but-only-in-europe-idUSKBN1W90R5 - What we put online has ramifications to individuals and groups depicted.


- Spencer, Samuel. “Using Elliot Page’s ‘Deadname’ is a Problem - Here’s Why.” Newsweek. https://www.newsweek.com/elliot-page-deadname-birth-name-1551714 - How do we support trans individuals when it comes to their name and identity?

Photo by lauramusikansi at Morguefile.com, http://mrg.bz/ueLR2I Cropped by Annamarie Klose
Technology involves challenges and opportunities

- **Homosaurus: An International LGBTQ Linked Data Vocabulary**, [https://homosaurus.org/](https://homosaurus.org/) - This is a great example of a well-formed, community created controlled vocabulary that ethically fulfills the information. Can we get more linked data initiatives like this?!

- Fox, V., Bennyhoff, N., George, K., Grant, E., Gross, T. & et al, “Report of the SAC Working Group on Alternatives to LCSH ‘Illegal aliens’,” June 2020, [https://alair.ala.org/handle/11213/14582](https://alair.ala.org/handle/11213/14582) - Your ILS can make it difficult to quit “illegal aliens” or work around it!


*Photo by GeoffS at Morguefile.com, [http://mrg.bz/TArTBi](http://mrg.bz/TArTBi)*
The need to consult with communities in terms of description and digitization

- First Archivists Circle. (April 9, 2007). Protocols for Native American Archival Materials, http://www2.nau.edu/libnap-p/protocols.html - There’s a lot of great advice in this article that could be used for other communities, as well. There are items in our collections that we shouldn’t digitize or even have, e.g. people’s bones, documents of sacred rituals.


Photo by lisaleo at Morguefile.com, http://mrg.bz/1CVXN4
Recommendations

• Metadata should humanize individuals
• There is a need for dialogue with marginalized communities in terms of metadata.
• There is a need to evaluate local vocabularies and established controlled vocabularies for EDI considerations.
• EDI work related to metadata should be considered an iterative process. As the meaning of language and terms changes, the work of aligning our metadata practices to EDI is an ongoing process that is never complete.
• A top-down approach from administration is necessary for work to be successful and long-lasting.
Limitations of this group’s work

• Study was not all inclusive.
• Requires top-down approach. Changes require administrative support.
• Cannot be a static process, requires iterative approach.
• Technical considerations, e.g. Sierra updates.
• Need for buy-in with changes. Would need to have stakeholder discussions, within Libraries and in the greater community.
• Classification was considered out of the scope of this group. Classification is related to the inherent issues with cataloging and subject analysis.
• Membership of working group was fairly homogenous.
Working Group members

- Annamarie Klose, facilitator
- Ariel Bacon
- Courtney Bishop
- Morag Boyd
- Alyssa Cruz
- Lisa Iacobellis
- Ashleigh Minor
- Christina Moore
- Cate Putirskis
- Rocki Strader
- Audrey Wimbiscus
Thank you!

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