

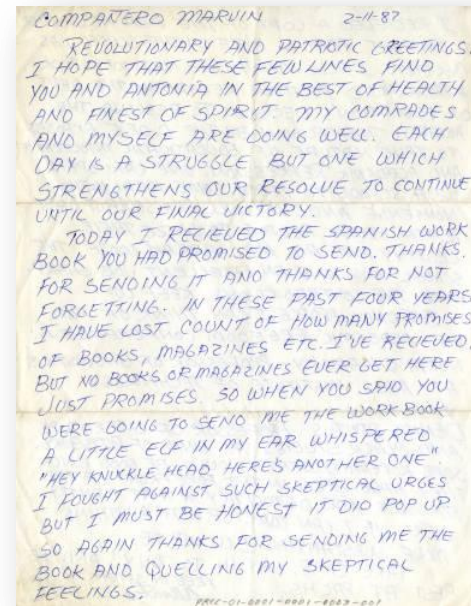
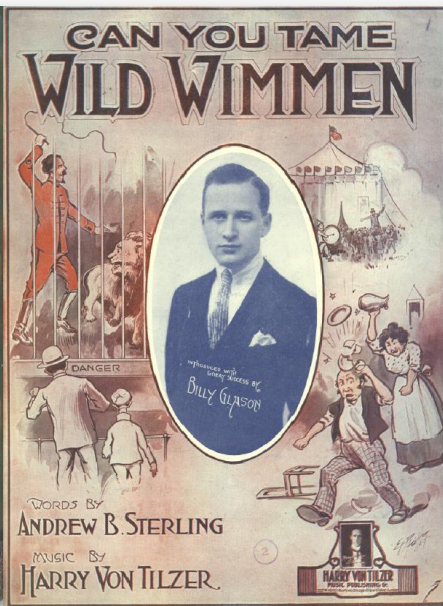
Simplified cataloging for non-catalogers through FAST

Joelen Pastva

**Faceted Subject Access Interest Group
ALA Midwinter 2016 Boston**

**THE
UNIVERSITY OF
ILLINOIS
AT
CHICAGO
RICHARD J
DALEY
LIBRARY**

Non-MARC metadata environment at UIC



CONTENTdm

- Digital images, documents, videos
- Dublin Core, LCSH
- 30 collections
- 59,071 items
- Presented via CARLI consortium CDM interface

Archivists' Toolkit

- Finding aids for manuscripts and archives
- EAD, LCSH
- 624 collection-level records
- 1,528 accession records
- Presented in HTML on library's website

Workflow factors

- Metadata created by non-catalogers
- Non-cataloger librarians frustrated with complexity of Library of Congress Subject Headings
- Minimal time to devote to training
- No detailed documentation for subject analysis
- High turnover rate among graduate assistants and student employees

Result

- Subject treatment varied by collection
- Inconsistencies and duplicates proliferated
- Persistent cry – there has to be a better way!



**Problem: non-expert
catalogers &
inconsistent metadata**

Subject usage analysis:

Subject heading inventory for CDM and AT

CONTENTdm

- 2,413 unique subjects
 - 38% used only once
- 11% of terms subdivided
 - Of the top 100 most used terms, only 1 was subdivided

Archivists' Toolkit

- 937 unique subjects
 - 92% topical, 7% geographic, 1% uniform titles and misc.
- 54% of terms subdivided
 - Most common subdivision: geographical

Types of duplication errors encountered:

- Singular vs. plural

Woman

Women

- Capital vs. lowercase

- & vs. and

City and town life

City & town life

- Subdivision punctuation**

Adults Education

Swimming - Illinois - Chicago

Swimming--Illinois--Chicago

- Order of subdivisions**

African Americans--Illinois--Chicago--Economic conditions

African Americans--Economic conditions--Illinois--Chicago

Concerns about usability

Inconsistent metadata means:

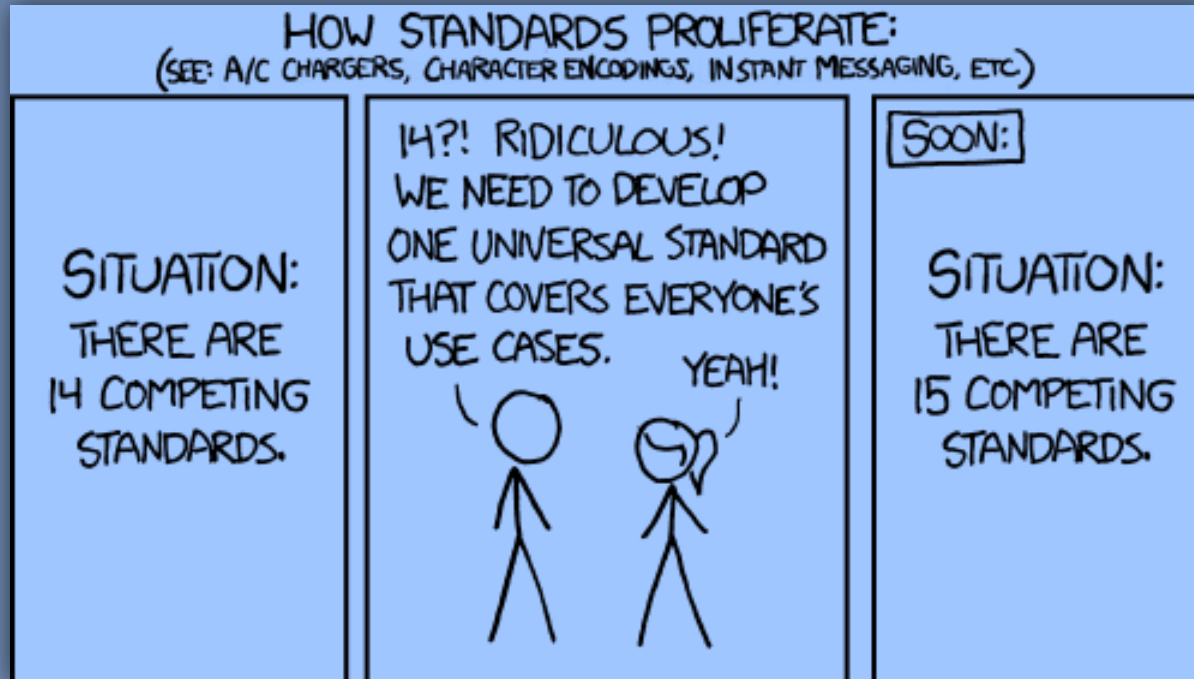
- Compromised facets
- Unsuccessful keyword searches
- Confusion for user

Concerns about interoperability

Our metadata is no longer our own:

- Digital Public Library of America
- Digital Library of the Caribbean
- Explore Chicago Collections portal

Solution: FAST



xkcd: <https://xkcd.com/927/>

FAST impressed non-catalogers because:

- ✓ Simple user interface
- ✓ No more subdividing* – better reflects user behavior
- ✓ Retain much of vocabulary currently in use
- ✓ Easier to take ownership of training outside of Tech Services

FAST plan

- Replace LCSH terms
 - Decision not to use time period facet, genres to be used sparingly – data is captured elsewhere in records
- Split up subdivided headings
- Create new documentation

Implementation: **Conversion**

CONTENTdm

- Collection by collection basis
- Targeted batch updates for geographic & subdivided terms
- Few subdivisions = many terms stay the same
- Still in progress

Archivists' Toolkit

- Vocabulary shared across all collections
- Subdivided terms manually split
 - Illinois--Chicago
 - Politics and government
- Modifications to AT to accommodate FAST
 - Term source dropdown
 - EAD stylesheet

Implementation: **Training**

New documentation on staff wiki

- Overview of facets in FAST
- List of FAST tools and basic instructions
- Tips and best practices for assigning subjects

In-person session for librarians and staff

- Less focus on tools and vocabulary
- Emphasis on methodology
 - Consider user's needs, support user tasks
 - Techniques for subject analysis – painless and demystified

Outcomes

So far...

- Changes have been gradual, especially for public interfaces
 - All new metadata projects use FAST
- FAST is faster!
- More time to concentrate on analysis and user needs

But

- Previous limitations of systems remain
 - Lack of linking in HTML for AT
 - CONTENTdm wonky links and facets
- FAST **not** perfect
 - Quirky interface
 - *Subdivisions remain

Final thoughts:

FAST is a good fit:

- Reflects user searching behavior
- Simplified training procedures
- Catalogers feel more empowered to make judgments and evaluate materials

Switch to FAST –

- Acknowledgement of the non-MARC cataloging environment at UIC
 - Highlights importance of communication and cross-departmental collaboration
- Attempt to better align practices and resources with user-centered mission of library

Questions?

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Image credits:

Alberto, Letter from Puerto Rican nationalist prisoner to a member of the Puerto Rican Cultural Center, February 2, 1987, PRCC_01_0001_0001_0003, Puerto Rican Cultural Center Collection (University of Illinois at Chicago),

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