**Role of the Professional Librarian in Technical Services Interest Group**

**ALA Annual - June 26, 2021**

**Breakout Session 4 - EDI: Where do we Begin? Session Notes**

Many participants reported that their technical services departments don’t yet have a plan, or have just begun discussions and information gathering, or they might have begun early steps and small projects. Some reported that they are not sure they have the resources or support yet. Other projects already in the works, or low staffing levels also have been a hinderance in implementing plans.

We discussed that task forces without a plan don’t always succeed, so it is better to come up with a more concrete plan first, and then form a working group around specific goals and tasks. Also must get buy in from all parties to be successful.

One approach might be to just start small ; begin with a more manageable small pilot project and go from there. One example given was adding local headings to bib records that better describe authors (see <https://diversefamilies.org/about/> and <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/diversefamilies/>)

Another library mentioned that they started by forming a committee and then began one project to change “illegal aliens,” building on work that colleagues at another university had done in Primo. They plan to choose projects to focus on each year, as well as ongoing work fixing user reported issues collected via a web form, such as items that are misclassified.

Another mentioned that a cataloging committee they are on plans to focus on cataloging ethics, metadata description, and subject vocabularies and are now figuring out how they will do that. Possibilities are to create a LibGuide to organize resources, share what other institutions are doing, and link to webinars and tutorials. This may help those at individual institutions create plans of their own.

Also mentioned was the desire for a list of libraries that are currently removing offensive subject headings, which like the article about Harvard removing “illegal aliens,” would help make the case for doing so at their own institution, and that as more larger libraries make these changes, it will be much easier for public libraries to convince their stakeholders to proceed. SUNY libraries is one that could also be on this list.

One example of a large consortium making changes: TRLN is remapping offensive LCSH in their discovery layer. The underlying LCSH in MARC remain, so that in the future if the LCSH does change, they can more easily be changed in the MARC records.

Using the 386 field in bib records for Creator/Contributor Characteristics was mentioned, with the need to be careful when deciding whether to add descriptors, so as not to “other” individual authors.

Also mentioned was the need to balance the time-consuming nature of adding more descriptors.

Mentioned as additional resources were

* Cataloging Lab’s list of problem subject headings <https://cataloginglab.org/problem-lcsh/>
* Cataloging Ethics Steering Committee / Cataloguing Code of Ethics <https://sites.google.com/view/cataloging-ethics/home>
* Reimagine Descriptive Workflows <https://justdescription.org/>
* Inclusive Metadata & Conscious Editing Resources <https://sunshinestatedigitalnetwork.wordpress.com/2020/10/05/inclusive-metadata-conscious-editing-resources/>