2024

Proceedings of the Metadata Justice in Oklahoma Libraries & Archives Symposium

Edited By
Shay Beezley

With Contributions By
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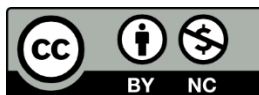*Nicole Sump-Crethar*

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Unraveling Metadata Justice: Librarians and Metadata Wranglers in Making Information Fair for Everyone

Presented by Rebekah Silverstein

ABSTRACT

An exploration of metadata justice, focusing on the critical role of librarians and metadata wranglers. looking into the historical context of metadata practices and the challenges faced by those responsible for organizing information. Through examining the evolution of metadata standards and best practices, we'll highlight the contributions of librarians and metadata wranglers in promoting fairness and inclusivity. Together, we'll uncover strategies for navigating the complex landscape of metadata to ensure equitable access to information for all.

SESSION REPORT

By Shay Beezley

Rebekah Silverstein shared with her attendees a historical timeline she created that details the "pivotal times, places, schemas, collectives & metadata stewards working as catalysts for the critical evolution of conscious cataloging." The timeline encompasses a wide span starting in 7th century BCE showing early efforts to organize knowledge and goes through modern day with current efforts to improve the classification systems we use to organize knowledge.

Key Takeaways

The work we are doing has not happened in a vacuum and builds off of the labor performed by librarians before us. I was reminded of [Violet Fox's keynote from the first MJOKLA symposium](#) where she brought Frances Yocum and Dorothy Porter to attendees' attention as librarians who had been critiquing cataloging standards during the 1930's.

Putting Into Practice

I would like to learn more about the history of our cataloging standards and their critiques. The recently published *Inclusive Cataloging: Histories, Context, and Reparative Approaches* has several chapters focused on the history of inclusive cataloging, and I look forward to reading them!

RESOURCES

- [Timeline on KnightLab](#)
- [Timeline Data on Google Sheets](#)

SPEAKER BIO

Rebekah Silverstein is a Digital Services Librarian at Oklahoma State University, Edmon Low Library, with expertise in statistical reporting and technical services. With a Master's in Library & Information Science and a Data Analytics Certificate from the University of Oklahoma, Rebekah is dedicated to promoting inclusivity in information access. As chair of the Oklahoma Library Association's Technical Services Round Table and Librarian at Emanuel Synagogue's Schneider Library, Rebekah is committed to advancing equitable metadata practices.

Metadata Justice: Inclusive Description through a Critical Lens

Keynote presented by Treshani Perera

SESSION REPORT

by Bailey Hoffner

Treshani Perera's keynote address, "Metadata Justice: Inclusive Description through a Critical Lens," explored the importance of metadata justice work, while critiquing its embedded nature within a professional field that still struggles to prioritize justice work more broadly.

Perera began by prompting a critical assessment of the term "Metadata Justice," followed by real-world examples of bias and discrimination faced by libraries and patrons in Oklahoma. She presented a thought-provoking juxtaposition between recent Oklahoma state policies and the American Library Association's (ALA) Code of Ethics, which champions inclusivity and equity.

The presentation's core focused on identifying biases within metadata systems. Perera asked a series of questions designed to spark critical reflection, such as: who has historically created and continues to create metadata systems? What and whos' intellectual labor is involved? and what resources are and are not available to different communities for contributing to these systems? She further challenged the audience to consider whose expertise is valued and for which communities, as well as the leadership structures within libraries that affect metadata creation.

Perera argued that by incorporating a wider range of perspectives and experiences, the field can begin to address and rectify biases within metadata systems. She highlighted the importance of a diverse workforce in recognizing and valuing the emotional labor that fuels efforts towards equity and justice in metadata.

Perera concluded by offering recommendations for achieving metadata justice moving forward. These recommendations included ensuring diverse and inclusive representation in metadata records to reflect the rich tapestry of perspectives, cultures, and identities within library collections. She stressed the importance of making metadata accessible to all users and respecting the agency of marginalized communities by utilizing their preferred language when describing resources. Additionally, Perera emphasized transparency in the creation and management of metadata, advocating for iterative processes to address biases within existing descriptions. She also encouraged consideration of the ethical implications of using technology, particularly regarding the potential use of Generative AI in cataloging and metadata workflows. Finally, Perera underscored the importance of ongoing engagement with library users and the communities served to solicit feedback and address concerns. She provided resources, including the UCO Inclusive Metadata Initiative reporting form, as a starting point for further exploration.

During the Q&A, Perera recommended working with broader collectives and professional organizations, especially when one's workplace is less supportive of this work. She highlighted both the growth of LCSH subject funnel groups as well as the work of the National Indigenous Knowledge & Language Alliance as collective efforts bringing hope to this area of work. She also highlighted the work of the Queer Metadata Collective and the Trans Metadata Collective, specific to the area of LGBTQ+ community-informed metadata work.

By critically examining the who, what, where, and why of metadata creation, Perera's presentation challenged the audience to move beyond simply describing information to a place of inclusive and equitable description that honors the complexities of the communities served by libraries.

Key Takeaways

Perera's session argued for continual critical engagement in library work, both in assessing the language, systems, and metadata we use and create, as well as the need for critically assessing inclusivity, representation, and bias in library work more broadly. Perera recommended transparency and accessibility towards ensuring more inclusive representation in descriptive work, as well as respecting marginalized communities' language preferences, and ongoing efforts to identify and address biases in library systems and tools.

Putting into Practice

I appreciated Perera's call to respect terminology preferences of marginalized communities and am excited to explore her list of resources (linked below) to continue expanding our efforts towards respecting those most directly described and/or affected by metadata work.

RESOURCES
- [Presentation Slides](#)
- [Critical Cataloging: Identifying and Dismantling Bias in Description Readings and Resources](#)

SPEAKER BIO

Treshani Perera (she/her) is the Head of Fine Arts Library Technical Services at the University of Kentucky Libraries. Treshani provides original and complex copy cataloging for all formats and subject areas in the Fine Arts Library; oversees operations in cataloging, physical processing, and binding; and manages several special projects in the Fine Arts Library. Treshani has presented various critical cataloging webinars and workshops for We Here LLC, the Summer Educational Institute Workshop (SEI), the Association of Recorded Sound Collections (ARSC), the American Theological Library Association (ATLA), and various regional cataloging and library systems groups. Treshani has presented findings from research in inclusive description at Art Librarians Society of North America (ARLIS), Visual Resources Association (VRA), and Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) annual conferences. Treshani's ongoing research interests include critical cataloging and inclusive description in libraries, archives, and museums.

The Limits of Repair: The Case for and Boundaries of Reparative Description

Presented by Rachel Searcy and Weatherly A. Stephan

ABSTRACT

This presentation will discuss a group reparative description project undertaken on an assembled archival collection held by New York University Libraries Special Collections that consists of documents concerning enslavement in Spanish-colonized Cuba. Years after its acquisition and accessioning, the Archival Collections Management (ACM) department undertook collaborative reparative description on the collection, applying the recommendations of the Archives for Black Lives in Philadelphia's Anti-Racist Description Resources. The presentation will discuss the project design and outcomes, as well as larger reflections on the individual, institutional, and systemic challenges encountered and the limitations on archival re-description alone in the service of anti-racism and anti-oppressive.

By Sana Masood

Rachel Searcy and Weatherly Stephan presented on the Collection on Enslavement in Cuba was purchased in 2014 by a subject liaison in the New York University library and then transferred to Special Collections in 2017. A considerable amount of time passed between the acquisition and the accessioning of the collection in 2019, and the staff at NYU did not have sufficient provenance or custodial history of the materials.

Stephan accessioned this collection and made it immediately accessible with the aid of a repurposed inventory list used as the container list. A pejorative term to describe Chinese laborers was removed from the container list. Stephan identified that the inventory should be improved during processing. Searcy brought this project to Stephan in Spring 2022 to revise the front matter, recontextualize the materials, recenter the identities of the enslaved people represented in the collection, and improve the accuracy of the inventory. This required revising item titles, occasionally creating item-level scope notes, and revising the front matter. All these actions were documented for transparency and accountability. The two resources used for the project were the Archivists for Black Lives in Philadelphia's Anti-Racist Description Resources and P. Gabrielle Foreman, et al.'s "Writing About Slavery: This Might Help." All professional staff in the department were assigned 12 items to examine with a 6-week deadline.

Due to the gaps in knowledge about the custodial history and provenance, the ACM staff wanted to fill them in. The material in this collection is assembled colonial documents that have been removed from their original context. The question arose if reparative description is sufficient for harmful collecting. Inventories should also be approached with a critical eye. No other material in NYU's special collections aligns with the subject matter in this collection. Language expertise on staff was limited to processing archivists with basic Spanish reading proficiency, but they still ran into problems such as difficult to read handwriting and missing information in the documents. The staff questioned how much of the processing challenges should be public, and they settled to be transparent in a blog post with an invitation for further conversations about the work and making the previous version of the finding aid available in GitHub.

Taking an inclusive approach from the start helps mitigate harm done to communities described in a collection. Archivists should not just repair description but also not create harm in the first place. Looking ahead for this collection, they hope to gain insight from subject and language experts. They could imagine a digitization effort with other repositories that have similar collections and bring the material together. Newly acquired collections that have complex ethical issues will be approached with consideration from the insights gained from this experience.

Key Takeaways

The Collection on Enslavement in Cuba at NYU's Special Collections lacked provenance, custodial history, and context due the time between its acquisition and its accessioning, which created a challenge for the archivists. By creating a project to examine this collection, staff found themselves reflecting on reparative description and how to approach description to mitigate harm.

Putting into Practice

By having all the staff in the department work on items of the collection and then bring their findings together, this project was both beneficial in improving the collection description but also helping the staff learn. A project that allows everyone to learn together while also doing archival work is overall helpful for the repository.

RESOURCES
- Presentation Slides

- [Archives for Black Lives Philadelphia Anti-Racist Description Resources](#)
- [P. Gabrielle Foreman, et al's "Writing About Slavery: This Might Help"](#)

SPEAKER BIOS

Rachel Searcy (she/her) is the Accessioning Archivist at New York University. Previously, Rachel held positions focused on processing, metadata, and digitization at NYU's Tamiment Library and Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives, and the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum. She holds an MS in Library and Information Science with a concentration in Archives Management and an MA in History from Simmons University, as well as a BA in English and History and a Certificate in Celtic Studies from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Weatherly A. Stephan is the Head of Archival Collections Management at New York University Libraries. Prior to her appointment at NYU, she held processing positions at the Brooklyn Historical Society and New York Public Library. She holds an MLIS from Rutgers University, and an MA in English from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

Reparative Analysis of OOHRP's Oklahoma and OSU Diverse Sexuality and Gender Collections

Presented by Katanna Davis and Patrick Daglaris

ABSTRACT

This presentation will focus on two Oklahoma Oral History Research Program collections, the Oklahoma and OSU Diverse Sexuality and Gender collections. As the OOHRP Digital Curation GRA, I will discuss my process of using controlled vs. homegrown vocabularies, more specifically the Library of Congress Subject Headings and FAST and the alternative vocabulary of the Homosaurus. I will go into discussion of how I approach, and what it looks like, creating metadata for these collections, along with the description writing process for these oral histories. There will also be a more broad discussion of reparative practices regarding 2SLGBTQIA+ oral histories and oral history collections.

SESSION REPORT

By Heather Scheele-Clark

Katanna Davis and Patrick Daglaris spoke about their work with the Oklahoma Oral History Research Program at Oklahoma State University that began in 2007 with the ambitious goal of capturing diverse perspectives across Oklahoma through recorded interviews. Over the years, they have amassed a collection of 2400 interviews, aiming to document the life stories of a broad swath of individuals, reflecting the state's cultural, social, and economic diversity. Central to their approach is a commitment to conducting interviews that are not only informative but also reparative in nature. This approach acknowledges historical injustices and seeks to rectify them through the act of documenting personal narratives. However, this endeavor is not without its ethical and legal considerations, especially when interviewees entrust their life stories to the university.

The program's goals are multifaceted. Through the [OSU Diverse Sexuality and Gender Collection](#), they strive to better represent and protect LGBTQ narrators and topics within their archives, aiming to increase visibility and access for marginalized communities. To achieve consistency in their collection, they employ structured methodologies like utilizing alternative sources and ensuring careful management of potentially triggering topics. Some interviewees may request embargoes or even withdraw from the project, prompting the program to restrict access accordingly to respect these wishes.

The analysis of completed interview metadata is a crucial aspect of their work. This includes creating detailed descriptions, identifying key subjects and keywords, and reviewing language that may be problematic or in need of adaptation. They are also integrating tools like Homosaurus alongside traditional FAST headings to enhance access to LGBTQ-related content within their catalog.

In a step toward inclusivity, the program has also begun incorporating preferred pronouns into interviews. This small yet significant change acknowledges and respects interviewees' gender identities, contributing to a more accurate and respectful portrayal of their stories.

Throughout their initiatives, the Oral History Program remains dedicated not only to preserving the past but also to ensuring that their archives are ethically managed and accessible to all, reflecting a commitment to social justice and historical accuracy in their documentation efforts.

Key Takeaways

- Incorporating preferred pronouns acknowledges and respects interviewees' gender identities
- Respect interviewees' request to embargo or withdraw from the project
- Review the metadata for each interview for problematic language or other information in need of adaptation

Putting into Practice

When working on any project, oral history or otherwise, make reparative metadata a part of the process. Implement guidelines for ongoing evaluation and feedback from interviewees, community partners, and stakeholders. Use this feedback to continuously improve practices and address any concerns or issues that arise and actively engage with the different communities to build trust and encourage participation. By fostering these relationships with community organizations, LGBTQ groups, and cultural institutions diverse representation in interviews is ensured.

RESOURCES

- [Presentation Slides](#)

SPEAKER BIOS

Katanna Davis is a Public History master's student at Oklahoma State University who plans on continuing her education in the field of library science. Katanna's research interests include 20th century U.S. history, women and gender studies, activism, histories of health and the body, and reparative archive practices. Her main research focuses on addressing the missing themes in scholarship about the Beat Movement through lenses of labor, power, and accessibility. Katanna currently works as the Oral History Curation Assistant for the Oklahoma Oral History Research Program where she works to better define certain collections and their metadata for research and community use. This work also includes finding gaps, areas for improvement, and implementing reparative practices within specific collections, most recently being the OSU and Oklahoma Diverse Sexuality and Gender collections and the Oklahoma Native Artists collection. She earned her B.A. (2019) in history and English writing studies from Missouri Valley College.

Patrick Daglaris is the archivist for the Oklahoma Oral History Research Program at the Oklahoma State University Library, where he oversees the collection management and digital preservation of their 2,400+ interview holdings. He supervises the production of the Amplified Oklahoma podcast in which student interns highlight stories and narrators from the OOHRP collections for broader public consumption. He is interested in the discoverability of audiovisual materials and community engagement by archival institutions and holds a Digital Archives Specialist certificate from the Society of American Archivists. He is also a native gardening enthusiast who, like every other living thing in Oklahoma, strives to make a home in an inhospitable place.

Apparitional Representations: Disability History, Reparative Descriptions, and Ethical Failings in a Special Research Collection

Presented by Melissa Weiss

ABSTRACT

In this presentation, I discuss the process and outcomes of a reparative description project I undertook for my master's thesis at the University of Oklahoma. My thesis focused on remediating disability-related descriptions in the Western History Collections. I examined a variety of theoretical models and attempted to apply them as I remediated descriptions. My presentation covers the challenges of trying to remediate descriptions in an archive not dedicated to disability history and provides a methodology for doing remediations that might help archivists struggling with incomplete information about items in a collection.

SESSION REPORT

By Katherine Witzig

Melissa Weiss shared practical experiences working with a collection within the Western History Collections at the University of Oklahoma. Weiss intentionally chose to use–and to highlight the use of–disability-first (also known as identity-first) language rather than person-first (or human-centered) language (for example, "autistic person" vs. "person with autism"). The use of one over the other is not consistent even in disability communities.

Weiss discussed the affective experiences of research. Problematic or harmful terminology is not just an issue for professionals from any specific community (for example, archivists with disabilities); negative feelings emerge for various kinds of researchers who had to use problematic terminology for any group.

The theoretical literature that Weiss referenced included the concepts of "radical empathy" and "complex embodiment theory"; foundational for the work, Gracen M. Brilmyer's disability frameworks were also discussed by Weiss. The frameworks emphasized that archivists should meet collections where they are and then introduce gradual shifts into more nuanced vocabulary. Unfortunately, a non-disability focused repository limits the amount of information available about relevant disabilities implied by or portrayed in individual items.

Key Takeaways

Weiss emphasized that for information workers, it is imperative to do your best at representing the collections with the most appropriate and community-reflective language available; that said, we need to be understanding and give ourselves (and our collections) grace because the resulting work will never be "perfect."

Putting into Practice

When engaging in description, think about it and review it like a translation–the vocabulary choices you make should be conscious and can be subtly shifted toward more appropriate or sensitive word choices, all while maintaining an accurate characterization of the item or collection.

RESOURCES
- Presentation Slides

SPEAKER BIO

Melissa Weiss recently graduated from the University of Oklahoma's MLIS program. While completing her MLIS, Melissa worked as a graduate assistant at the Western History Collections.

Unveiling Hidden Stories: Interactive Digital Humanities Resources Empower Research on Underrepresented Communities

Presented by Megan Macken, Sara Mautino, and Amy Hunt

ABSTRACT

In three case studies, we show how the transformation from a static bibliography to an interactive digital humanities resource connects student researchers to the cultural heritage of often overlooked communities, including Indigenous artists and Indigenous architects and architecture. In addition to modernizing pre-existing metadata on Indigenous artists and the built environment of Oklahoma, we created an entirely new bibliography dedicated to the under-represented field of Indigenous Architecture of Oklahoma. These case studies show how unearthing and enhancing existing resources can help researchers develop new narratives about the history and culture of Oklahoma.

SESSION REPORT

by Heather Scheele-Clark

Megan Macken, Sara Mautino, and Amy Hunt from Oklahoma State University presented on three detailed case studies that focused on transforming traditional bibliographies into dynamic digital humanities resources. This initiative involved modernizing existing metadata on Indigenous artists and spaces, while also creating a brand-new bibliography dedicated to Indigenous Architecture in Oklahoma.

By updating the Oklahoma Built Project bibliography, which catalogs architecture and architects in the state, the initiative brought this resource into the digital age using tools like Zotero. Each source was enriched with tags and metadata, including historic property sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places, enhancing accessibility and searchability through various filters.

The project uncovered a significant gap: despite the bibliography spanning 30 pages of resources, there was a notable absence of Indigenous perspectives. This underscored the need to start from scratch in compiling resources dedicated specifically to Indigenous Architecture, given the scarcity of traditionally published books on the subject (only six identified).

This effort was particularly significant at Oklahoma State University (OSU), which boasts the third-largest enrollment of Indigenous students in the nation. The project not only addressed this representation gap but also served as a proactive step toward acknowledging and elevating Indigenous voices and contributions within the academic and cultural landscape of Oklahoma.

Overall, these case studies illustrate how digital humanities initiatives can not only update and broaden existing scholarly resources but also foster deeper engagement with and representation of historically marginalized communities, ultimately enriching the understanding of Oklahoma's diverse cultural heritage.

Key Takeaways

- Incorporate geographic metadata to link architectural works with specific locations and historical contexts, such as sites on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Enrich bibliographic entries with descriptive metadata, including tags, keywords, and cultural context that highlights Indigenous perspectives and contributions.

Implementing digital humanities initiatives can help foster greater accessibility, representation, and scholarly engagement with cultural heritage that may have been historically overlooked even if you have to start from the ground up.

RESOURCES

- [Presentation Slides](#)

SPEAKER BIOS

Megan Macken is the Head of Digital Resources and Discovery Services at Oklahoma State's Edmon Low Library. Additionally, she serves as the library liaison to Art, Graphic Design and Art History and works with a variety of systems that support research and learning, including Open Research Oklahoma (ORO), Experts Directory, and Archive-It. Previously she worked as a digital scholarship librarian and digital archivist. She has master's degrees in Library Science and the History of Art from Indiana University. Macken is co-editor of the Art Libraries Society of North America's book review publication, ARLIS/NA Reviews.

Sara Mautino is an Assistant Professor at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Oklahoma. She has been the architecture librarian for Oklahoma State University Libraries since 2021, managing the Cunningham Architecture Library for the OSU School of Architecture. Sara has been a librarian since 2015 when she graduated with her MSLIS from Drexel University in Philadelphia, PA. The bulk of her librarianship experience has been in K-12 schools. In addition to the day-to-day tasks required to operate a university branch library and her responsibilities as a faculty member, Sara focuses her architecture librarianship energies on engaging students from commonly overlooked communities and building a diverse collection that reflects the students, faculty, and staff served by the Cunningham Architecture Library.

Amy Hunt works as a library coordinator for Oklahoma State University. She graduated with her MLIS in 2023 from the University of Missouri and worked at the Guthrie Public Library while in school. In 2022, Amy began working for Oklahoma State University's library system, coordinating and supervising the circulation desk at the veterinary medicine and architecture branch libraries. In her spare time, she loves to travel with her husband and his bluegrass band, read, cross stitch, and watch 1950s-1970s tv shows and movies.

Inclusive Metadata through Bibliographic Control

Presented by Kirsten Bryson and Devin McGhee

ABSTRACT

As the Metropolitan Library System was implementing Aspen, an open-source discovery system, we decided to complete our first authority and bibliographic control project. An RFP was written, and two vendors responded with quotes. Backstage was chosen as the vendor, and we started the process in August 2023. A major focus of this project was to move from homegrown genre headings to Library of Congress genre headings. As we were working to update all our records to current cataloging standards, we also made inclusive metadata a top focus. Backstage provided headings from Homosaurus ; a local authority file for Indigenous peoples and incorporating the work of the Xwi7Xwa (whei-wha) Library and the Greater Victoria Public Library.

SESSION REPORT

By James Dodd

Kirsten Bryson and Devin McGhee spoke on behalf of Oklahoma County's Metropolitan Library System, which had developed local genre headings many years ago in order to promote library collections and help their users

to find the types of materials they wanted. Their local headings worked well enough for a time, but it was eventually apparent that a much more comprehensive project needed to take place to improve their bibliographic records. In 2018, the cataloging department decided to properly analyze and update outdated terminology and headings. The analysis was completed in 2020, though changes to records did not occur until 2022. 50 total genre headings were created (some of them were updates to outdated headings, and others were brand new).

In 2023, the library recognized the need for a new discovery layer for the catalog, which necessitated an overhaul of their bibliographic records across the board. The vendor, Backstage, was chosen to conduct the authority and bibliographic control project. Backstage processed all of the library's bibliographic records for print materials and matched appropriate Library of Congress genre headings to those records that had been assigned locally-coined terms in the past. Backstage also assigned headings from Homosaurus, a local authority file for Indigenous peoples, Xwi7Xwa (whei-wha), and the Greater Victoria Public Library. Metropolitan's implementation took only 3 weeks in total (including updates to 264,080 records). New item records added to their ILS will be sent off periodically for update/enhancement.

Not everything turned out perfectly; however, when librarians noticed inconsistencies in the updated records, they quickly identified specific "problem fields" that they went back and inspected more closely in their records. Bryson and McGhee encouraged anyone thinking of conducting a similar project to reach out to other libraries with the same ILS, or who have used similar services to update and enhance records, for tips and insights regarding their experiences.

KEY TAKEAWAYS
- Documenting local policies and procedures is crucial for contextualizing their implementation for future employees as well as revisiting local practices every so often can help a library continue to meet its users' needs and expectations.
- Maintaining awareness of library vendor offerings, as well as potentially freely available tools/scripts/plugins, can help you to enhance your users' experience and resource discoverability.
- Gathering as much information up front and putting that towards planning for multiple "what if" scenarios will ensure that large projects will go as smoothly as possible, and that any potential snags will be manageable.

PUTTING INTO PRACTICE
- Reach out to my current ILS vendor to ask what they do (or can do) to potentially enhance my library's bibliographic records.
- Revisit my library's cataloging procedures to ensure that local practices are accurately reflected (and discontinued practices are clearly noted as such).

RESOURCES
- Presentation Slides

SPEAKER BIOS

Kirsten Bryson has been with the Metropolitan Library System for 4 years, serving as the Collection Services Manager. In this role, she oversees the Cataloging and Interlibrary Loan departments. Prior to coming to Oklahoma, Kirsten served as an Academic Librarian in Montana for 17.5 years. She received her MLS degree from Texas Woman's University in 2010. Kirsten is an active member and currently serves on the Learning Module committee for the Technical Services Roundtable. In addition to OLA, she is an active member of the Mountain Plains Library Association and was selected to attend the MPLA Leadership institute in 2012. When not at work, Kirsten enjoys traveling, fishing, kayaking, and other outdoor activities.

Devin McGhee has worked at Metropolitan Library System for the past 12 1/2 years as a library manager, cataloger and, currently, as Assistant Manager of Collection Services. She uses her knowledge of guest needs and searching habits to help her make sure materials are easily accessible to staff and guests. For the past few years, Devin has delved into the ethics surrounding cataloging, especially around accessibility, DEI-informed access points, and naming conventions. She received her MLIS from the University of Oklahoma.

Distributed Labour: Managing Harmful Language Work in A Canadian Library Partnership

Presented by Matthew Fesnak and Christina Zoriric

ABSTRACT

A major reason for the prevalence of harmful language in library catalogs is the hegemony of the Library of Congress. Recent threads in the AUTOCAT listserv show the resistance of catalogers to include their own voices, let alone the voices of marginalized groups that have been underrepresented in the profession, throwing their hands up and saying I'm just a cataloger, we have to follow the established rules, etc. At the same time, metadata staff have been cut from many university libraries, leaving those who are interested in doing metadata justice work overwhelmed. In order to address some of these challenges, Ontario Council of University Libraries (OCUL) Collaborative Futures (a shared library platform group) created the Decolonizing Descriptions Implementation Working Group to manage harmful language across the Collaborative Futures partnership. As members of this group, we would like to discuss our efforts to manage alternative vocabularies in an Alma network zone environment, and some of the issues and crossroads we have faced thus far. Our current approach is to replace and/or amend LCSH terms with other, already established vocabularies like Manitoba Archival Information Network Indigenous Subject Headings, Saskatchewan Indigenous Subject Headings, Canadian Subject Headings, Canadiana, and Homosaurus, but this may evolve over time. We will present what our partner libraries have been working on individually and our working group's efforts to centralize efforts and possibly implement a distributed labor model in OCUL CF. We are a nascent group and will be seeking feedback from colleagues.

SESSION REPORT

By Misty Long

In this session, the speakers discussed managing harmful language work in a broader librarianship context as well as in the context of the Ontario Council of University Libraries (OCUL) and talked about the steps they are working on in OCUL as well as the purpose of their work.

The first speaker, Matthew Fesnak, started out with talking about how cataloging is either not taught in library schools or is not mandatory and that cataloging and metadata jobs are undervalued and undermined at many institutions. Fesnak questions whether catalogers have influence when vendors control so much and printed sources and discussion is limited to a smaller group of professionals with little interaction with the end user. AUTOCAT was criticized as a listserv that hides behind neutrality and objectivity to maintain hegemonic control, saying it does not allow everybody to speak out equally and does not listen to people who tell them their practices are hurtful. AUTOCAT suspended the speaker for violating posting rules. Fesnak goes on to discuss the bias in Library Science. Fesnak also discussed the context of our work in terms of critical cataloging practices including: Anglo American politeness, neutrality, and policing; available vocabularies; how influencing LC (PCC/NACO/SACO) might not be possible or worth our time; consultation including outside purview of the catalogers role; and research and labor including how many OCUL schools have limited cataloging/metadata expertise, and minimal capacity to do the work.

The second speaker, Christina Zoricic, talked about OCUL, a a consortium of 21 university libraries in Ontario, Canada. Unlike the State University of New York or the University of California systems, all OCUL universities and libraries are relatively independent public institutions. The Collaborative Futures Initiative, Omni, which includes 19 of the 21 OCUL partners, was also discussed. There are over 25 million items in their collaborative holdings. The OCUL-CF Metadata Management and Standards Subcommittee has a working group for implementing the decolonization of description. The final report of this working group included 10 recommendations divided into three larger themes/issues: relationship building and consultation, critical evaluation of library records/descriptive practices, and technical capabilities in Alma. Their recommendations as a way forward included five steps: acknowledge (acknowledge the problem; where we are at collectively); identify (connected to statement development; what we are actively doing to make a difference); consult (relationship building and showing up; locally, OCUL, and beyond); change (local vocabulary and CSH, LCSH, RVM, etc.); maintain (how is this going to look in the long term). Zoricic also discussed statements on problematic or harmful language and how they have implemented adding these statements at Omni libraries as well as best practices.

The session ended with a discussion among participants about librarianship and academic freedom with specific questions posted.

Key Takeaways

Catalogers should think critically about the work they are doing and think of ways to mitigate harm. This could look like adding a statement on problematic or harmful language to the library website, adding subject headings from lists other than LCSH, or proposing updated subject headings in LCSH.

Putting into Practice

I would like to look into creating a statement on problematic or harmful language in our catalog to add to our library website. This would allow our library users to know we acknowledge there is a problem, we have identified those problem areas, and we are working to repair them.

RESOURCES
- [Presentation Slides](#)

SPEAKER BIOS

Matthew Fesnak is the LSP and Discovery Services Librarian at McMaster University, a former cataloguer, and co-chair of the Ontario Council of University Libraries' Decolonizing Descriptions Implementation Working Group.

Christina Zoricic is a Metadata Management Librarian (since 2012) and the current Head of the Discovery, Description, and Metadata team (since 2018) at Western Libraries, University of Western Ontario, Canada. She was previously the Authority File Maintenance Librarian at the University of Waterloo and managed Authority Control on behalf of the Tri-University Group (TUG) Library Consortium. Her research interests include metadata matching legacy print material data in a shared library data environment, linked open data and MARC, and decolonizing library descriptions and metadata.

Multilingual Metadata: The Pan-American Authorities Initiative for Spanish Subject Headings

ABSTRACT

In 2020, a group of library information science specialists at the University of Florida Libraries (UF) formed the Pan-American Authorities (PANA) group, a bilingual (English/Spanish) metadata working group dedicated to standardizing the creation of Spanish-language metadata to improve discoverability and access to digital collection materials published in Spanish. Recognizing our growing non-English collections, we found it important to address biases in North American cataloging and metadata practices, changing them to be more inclusive and representative of materials in our collections, their creators, and their users. However, the primary challenge was finding reliable authority files for assigning Spanish metadata that captured national and regional variations of the Spanish language. Prior to the formation of PANA, UF's bilingual metadata specialist's primary resource for assigning Spanish metadata was lcsh-es.org, a bilingual English-Spanish database that aggregates six Spanish language authority files. While the convenience of accessing Spanish subject headings through a centralized platform was invaluable, over-reliance on this resource was problematic, notably because the authority files aggregated in lcsh-es.org predominantly originate from Europe or the United States. To address this, the PANA group began establishing a workflow that would allow for Latin American authority files to be utilized. Since its origin, the group has partnered with the University of Texas Austin Libraries, who have adapted the workflow to increase their Spanish metadata translation across several digital collections sites, representing materials from across Latin America, fostering greater accessibility for its users throughout the region. Collectively, the PANA group has successfully contributed approximately 700 terms to this resource, ranging from human rights themed-subject terms to genre forms. Currently, we are constructing a publicly accessible website, and the Pan-American Authorities (code: pana) is now an officially recognized subject heading source code by the Library of Congress.

SESSION REPORT

By Misty Long

In this session, the speakers, Rose Echeguren of the University of Florida (UF), and Devon Murphy of the University of Texas at Austin (UT), talked about the Pan-American Authorities initiatives for Spanish subject headings. During the session, they discussed what the Pan-American Authorities (PANA) initiatives are, the challenges they faced, the workflows at UF and UT, and the current status of the project as well as the future of the initiatives.

PANA is a bilingual English/Spanish subject headings list that is currently being developed by UF and UT. It is also the name of a workflow that was developed at UF for Spanish language metadata assignment. PANA started in response to a very large amount of Spanish language content from Latin America and the Caribbean that was being digitized to UF digital collections at the time. Two large collections served as catalysts for them wanting to form the group and do this work. Those collections included one large digital newspaper project in partnership with the University of Puerto Rico and another project called the Cuban American Dream Timeline Project that documented Cuban migration to Florida in partnership with the National Library of Cuba.

A Bilingual Metadata Working Group (now known as PANA group) started the project in 2020 at UF Libraries. The primary goal of PANA is to increase discoverability for Spanish speaking users within the UF community, but also for external users in Latin America and the Caribbean. In 2022, UF established a partnership with UT. UT's collections largely focus on Latin America as well and they had some legacy Spanish translations; however, all were locally derived and not consistent or in line with any authorities anywhere so they were looking to make their process consistent and authoritative. Both universities have encountered challenges while assigning Spanish subject headings such as the fact that most Spanish language authorities authorized by the Library of Congress

originated from Spain or the United States and they were not always representative of Spanish dialects spoken in Latin America and the Caribbean. In addition, some of the resources they used are not maintained, which meant some of the terms were outdated. They explained their workflows at both UF and UT for selecting Spanish subject headings, which included ranking terms found, using variations, translating from LCSH, and translating from FAST. They have completed 650 terms so far with another 338 in progress at the time of this session. They are in the process of making these terms available publicly online through their Omeka-S website. Using the Omeka-S website allows them to share the terms more efficiently with each other, reduce duplicates, and have a more powerful searching tool. It also allows external users to search and use their subject headings. UF applied for a Library of Congress source code and it was accepted this year with the source code being pana. And, finally, they are expanding into genre/form terms at UT and geographic terms at UF. In the future, they are looking to streamline and potentially automate the process using AutoHotKey for more repetitive parts of the process as well as possibly using Python scripts to automatically retrieve an item's URI from the resource. They are also looking to bring on new partners. If interested, you can email the speakers (emails linked below).

Key Takeaways

The PANA team at the University of Florida and the University of Texas at Austin have been doing great work creating a subject headings list of Spanish terms that use Spanish dialects from Latin America and the Caribbean. This increases discoverability and facilitates searching for materials with those origins. PANA complements LCSH-ES by including terms using Spanish dialects other than the ones found in terms created by Spain or the United States. The PANA website will be a great resource when cataloging or creating metadata for Spanish materials.

Putting into Practice

I would like to look into their Omeka-S website and see if there are terms that we could use in our catalog that would better serve our library users.

RESOURCES
- [Presentation Slides](#)
- [PANA website](#)

SPEAKER BIOS

Rose Echeguren is the Bilingual Metadata Specialist at the George A. Smathers Libraries at the University of Florida. In her role, she creates and improves metadata descriptions for the libraries' diverse collections in Spanish and English, ensuring optimal user access, and upholding data accuracy and consistency within the University of Florida Digital Collections (UFDC) and collaborative projects. Rose also coordinates the development and maintenance of the Pan-American Authorities (PANA) for the University of Florida PANA group.

Devon Murphy (they/them) is a metadata and digital collections professional, currently working as the Metadata Analyst at the University of Texas at Austin. In this role, Murphy oversees standards, policies, and data models for the Libraries' holdings. Murphy previously worked as the Metadata Librarian for Latin American Resources and as the TARO Metadata Analyst at UT Austin, and as a Getty Graduate Intern (2019-2020), creating Getty Vocabulary records and policies. They received dual masters degrees in Art History and Information Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (2019), examining information systems in art museums, including cataloging of Cherokee baskets by Native and non-Native institutions.

Searching the Past, Finding the Present: Identifying Contemporary Tribal Communities in Gilcrease Museum's Rare Books Collection

Presented by Jana Gowan, Dr. Billy Smith, and Dr. Ben Pokross

ABSTRACT

Gilcrease Museum staff and scholars embarked on a multi-year project in 2023-2024 to research, identify, and catalog Native American Tribal affiliations within Gilcrease's rare book collection. The Helmerich Center for American Research (HCAR) houses approximately 4,000 rare books from the Gilcrease Museum. First collected by Thomas Gilcrease (Muscogee Citizen) in the mid-20th century, the collection tells the hemispheric story of the Americas from 1494 to the mid-1900s. A small team at HCAR, including Dr. William (Billy) Smith, Associate Director, Dr. Benjamin Pokross, Duane H. King Post Doctoral Fellow, and Jana Gowan, Reference and Outreach Librarian, began surveying, researching, and documenting the presence of tribal communities and Indigenous creators in the museum's rare book collection in order to create more accurate and culturally sensitive catalog records while also increasing accessibility to and understanding of the Gilcrease collections. This presentation will provide a general overview of the project design and progress to date and specifically feature the use of the Tribal Nations in Oklahoma Metadata database in support of the project, while also inviting input from the cataloging community.

SESSION REPORT

By Heather Scheele-Clark

Jana Gowan, Dr. Billy Smith, and Dr. Ben Pokross presented on a project to identify potential tribal affiliations in their rare book collections that was started by the Gilcrease Museum staff at the Helmerich Center for American Research (HCAR) in the fall of 2023. Thomas Gilcrease started the collection, which now has over 4,000 books. The goal of the project is to ultimately create an easier and tangible path to find Indigenous and tribal resources in the collection. The project was inspired by the work of the Tribal Nations in Oklahoma Metadata Database, and the team at HCAR met with the database creators at the start of the project.

The first phase involved a pilot project to start on a small scale and see how to proceed based on the results. Staff would first find a way to get the text online, such as through Google Books or HathiTrust, and then search terms related to names of tribal communities. Information about the book, any potential tribal communities mentioned, and information not in the catalog record were tracked in a spreadsheet. A second examination used knowledge of the book's timeframe and conducted more specific searching. HCAR staff acknowledged that this was not a precise process and did pose challenges with largely western sources and dated language.

The second phase of the project created a second spreadsheet to organize the data, which showed that a survey of the whole collection would be worthwhile. In the short term, individual updates are being made to catalog records but there is still more to research. Community consultants have now been brought into the project, and HCAR staff are working to see how they can also make the project more beneficial to communities outside of Oklahoma. An undergraduate intern is also looking through the collection and recording use of non-English languages, which the HCAR team expanded upon during Q&A to note that indigenous languages are part of this.

HCAR staff posed the question to the conference attendees of where this information should live in the catalog record. Attendees in the chat recommended several options with subject headings or the 650s fields, such as the 653 (the MARC field used for index terms that have not been constructed by standard subject heading conventions).

Key Takeaways

HCAR staff at the Gilcrease Museum identified that they had a significant possible resource of indigenous research in their rare book collection and created a scalable survey project to identify tribal communities in the book. The Tribal Nations in Oklahoma Metadata Database has been a valuable resource in the process. As the project continues, HCAR staff are looking for ways to make this information accessible and searchable and possibly also useful to tribal communities outside of Oklahoma.

Putting into Practice

Identifying collections within a repository's holdings that potentially offer hidden research value for Indigenous communities, or other underrepresented communities, and creating a scalable project to survey that material is a way to find resources that might go missed otherwise.

RESOURCES
- [Presentation Slides](#)

SPEAKER BIOS

Jana Gowan (she/her) is the Reference and Outreach Librarian at the Helmerich Center for American Research at Gilcrease Museum/The University of Tulsa since August 2022. She currently serves on the Bibliographic Services Committee (BSC) and the Instruction and Outreach Committee for Rare Books and Manuscripts. She co-chairs the BSC's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Steering Group. Her professional interests include increasing accessibility of archival materials through reparative cataloging and promoting a welcoming and inclusive reading room culture. She received her MLIS from The University of Oklahoma in 2019 and holds degrees in English, Film Studies, and Gender Studies from The University of Tulsa and The University of Warwick.

Dr. William (Billy) Smith is Associate Director of the Helmerich Center for American Research at Gilcrease Museum, Applied Associate Professor of History, and Co-Director of the Museum Science and Management graduate program at the University of Tulsa. He is author of one published monograph and specializes in early American history and Atlantic studies. He teaches courses in American history and archival studies.

Dr. Benjamin Pokross is the outgoing Duane H. King Postdoctoral Fellow at the Helmerich Center for American Research at Gilcrease Museum. In August, he will begin as the National Park Service-Mellon Humanities Fellow at the Longfellow House-Washington's Headquarters National Historic Site in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Trained as a literary scholar, his research interests include nineteenth-century American literature, Native American literature, and the history of the book.

Creating Occult Identities and Subjects, or, How New NACO and SACO Funnels Will Improve Access to Occult Resources

Presented by Guy Frost and Margaret Breidenbaugh

ABSTRACT

Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH) and authorities for names, covens, groups, organizations, and especially practitioners of New Religious Movements are lacking. Many of the existing LCSH terms omit scope notes, opening them up to being misassigned to cataloging records. In addition, many practitioners of these movements may be misassociated with the existing terms or unsatisfied with how their creative works have been labeled. Much of this conundrum lies with a lack of knowledge of the subject, but another issue may stem from prejudice. In early 2024, three people met online to consider addressing this problem with the aim of forming an

Occult SACO Funnel and a separate Occult NACO Funnel. Learn about the mission, vision, and immediate plans of this exciting project, including how to get involved.

SESSION REPORT

By Nicole Sump-Crethar

The presenters of this session were Guy Frost, Professor of Library Science/Catalog Librarian at Valdosta State University and Margaret Breidenbaugh, Resource Sharing Coordinator at Cincinnati State Technical and Community College and a secular tarot-practicing witch. Frost and Breidenbaugh engaged in this work to address the neglect of occult headings in Library of Congress Subject Headings and Library of Congress vocabularies.

The creation of funnels to address authorities is a first step. By creating funnels to address development and revision of terms associated with occult topics like Paganism, witchcraft, paranormal, esotericism and others. Some of the problems this will address are the narrow usefulness of current headings to non-Christian religions and missing or confusing headings. Headings can be created, revised or be given a scope note that provides greater clarity when a heading is confusing.

Worse than confusing or missing, some headings are inaccurate, misapplied or disrespectful. Other challenges include lumping old movements with new movements. Frost provided historical context for the changes over time and differences. The presentation provides multiple examples of problematic headings and options for correction.

Presenters also discussed the challenges that are unique to these movements. In particular, there is a stigma associated with the term cult and often groups are written about and their representations created by outsiders. The tendency of these groups to favor secrecy compounds the problems of poor representation.

Other challenges relate to the LCSH system which lacks granularity and doesn't allow for differences that may seem subtle to outsiders but are significant to practitioners. Another challenge is that LC is "trapped in a book mentality" which relies on literary warrant and doesn't account for photograph collections, for example.

Key Takeaways

The NACO work is just beginning. Researchers and catalogers are seeking to include the impacted communities and practitioners themselves. The presenters suggest a comprehensive approach by first identifying the sources of terms, collecting terms, organizing them and finding gaps, inaccuracies and other issues in authorized vocabularies. Communities of practice have been created and collaboration and submissions are being solicited and encouraged.

Putting into Practice

The presentation offered many resources and ways to get involved. Breidenbaugh and Frost encourage anyone who is interested to email occultfunnels@gmail.com to "join a community of practice, attend meetings or just lurk." This looks like a great place to start!

RESOURCES
- [Presentation Slides](#)

SPEAKER BIOS

Guy Frost is a Professor of Library Science/Catalog Librarian at Valdosta State University. He has given workshops on Resource Description and Access (RDA) in Georgia and the country Belize and is considered a leader in the state on RDA, BIBFRAME, and Linked Data. In 2016, he founded a Contemporary Pagan Archive at Valdosta, which

he dubbed the New Age Movements, Occultism, and Spiritualism Research Library (or NAMOSRL). NAMOSRL has grown to be a sizable archive of the creative work by religious leaders in the Goddess movement, Modern Paganism, Wicca, and other new or reformed religious traditions. These collections have generated a plethora of subjects and name headings in need of establishing in the SACO and NACO programs.

Margaret Breidenbaugh (she/her), MA (German History), is the Resource Sharing Coordinator at Cincinnati State Technical and Community College and a secular tarot-practicing witch. During last year's MJOKLA Symposium, Margaret spoke about her work as co-coordinator of the SACO Gender and Sexuality Funnel. She has also presented her critical cataloging work to the Library of Congress PCC Operations Committee and the OCLC Cataloging Community. Margaret's MLIS through the Luddy School of Informatics, Computing, and Engineering will be conferred later this summer. Her research interests--which include critical librarianship, witchcraft as a feminist practice, and the histories of everyday people--interrogate the power of words.

Credits

PROCEEDINGS CONTRIBUTORS
- **Bailey Hoffner**, Oklahoma State University
- **Katherine Witzig**, Chickasaw Nation Law Library at Oklahoma City University
- **Sana Masood**, Oklahoma State University
- **Heather Scheele-Clark**, University of Central Oklahoma
- **James Dodd**, Tulsa Community College
- **Misty Long**, Tulsa City-County Library System
- **Nicole Sump-Crethar**, University of Central Oklahoma

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