Improving Subject Description of an LGBTQ+ Collection

CTP Session

March 16, 2023

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Our project

- Examine catalog records for ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives (approximately 33,000 items) to identify Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH) that are considered as problematic in terms of diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Incorporate more inclusive subject headings into the catalog records containing problematic LCSH, which will enable better discovery and access of these resources

Background–who we are

- Charged by USC Libraries' Dean
  - Dean's Challenge Grant
    - Co-PIs:

      Junjiro Nakatomi – Technical Services

      Michael Oliveira – ONE Archives
  - Members of
    - Technical Services (Cataloging)
    - ILS (Integrated Library Systems)
    - Public Services (ONE Archives)
    - Student worker with ONE Archives (1 semester only)

Background–ONE Archives

ONE Archives at the USC Libraries

- ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives (ONE Archives) is the largest repository of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ+) materials in the world
  - Contains: archives, books, serials, videos, audio recordings, posters, etc.
  - Holds approximately 33,000 items

LCSH: DEI perspectives

There is often a presumption of whiteness and maleness in LCSH; its default is frequently "straight, white, cis-gendered male," and anyone that doesn't fit into those categories can be seen as exceptional.

Signal Boost—Tales from Technical Services, Duke University Libraries (https://blogs.library.duke.edu/signalboost/2020/11/23/metadata-for-everyone-inclusive-description-at-the-duke-university-libraries/)

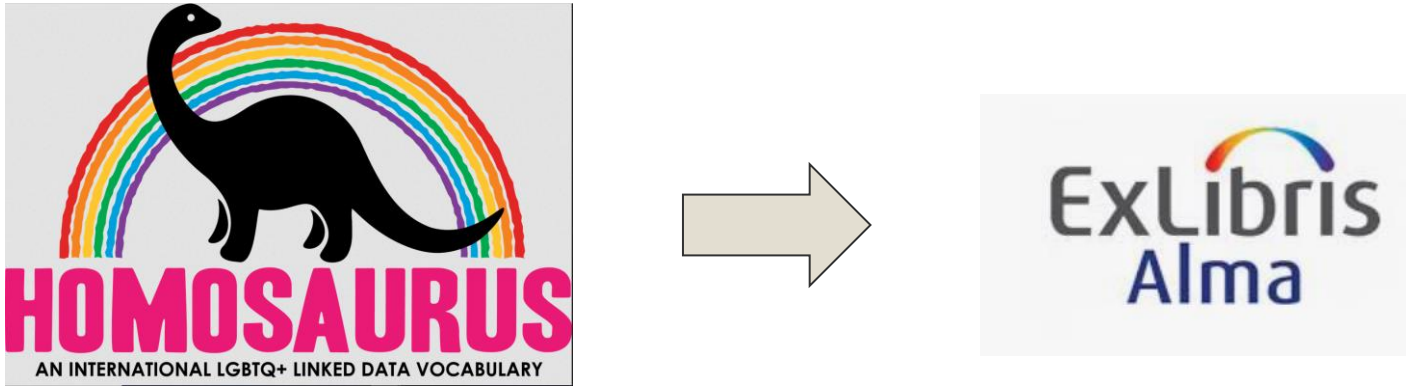
LCSH: DEI perspectives—continued

- LCSH contains biased, offensive terms and contains outdated assumptions:
  - Male default: Astronauts vs Women astronauts
    Authors vs Women authors
  - Heteronormative assumptions: Sexual minorities
    - UF: Gender minorities; GLBT people; GLBTQ people; Lesbigay people; LBG people; LGBT people; LGBTQ people; Non-heterosexual people ; Non-heterosexuals ; Sexual dissidents

Process

1. Step one: look at what we have:

1. Step two: improve what we have:



Process–continued

- Before:
  - 650 -0 $a Sexual minorities in art.
- After:
  - 650 -0 $a Sexual minorities in art.
  - 650 -7 $a LGBTQ+ people in art. $2 local

- Notes:
  - We chose not to delete or edit existing and valid LCSH in these records
  - The only headings we edited were old/out of date LCSH
  - While some of the terms were derived from Homosaurus, we chose to mark them as ‘local’ because of how we used them

Some subject headings added to records

Current language	add	local or homoit
Abused lesbians	Abused lesbian women	local
Abusive lesbian partners	Abusive lesbian women partners	local
African American gays	African American gay men	local
African American homosexuals	African American gay men and lesbian women	local
African American lesbians	African American lesbian women	local
African American lesbians in motion pictures	African American lesbian women in motion pictures	local
African American sexual minorities	African American LGBTQ+ people	local
Asian American gays	Asian American gay men	local
Asian American lesbians	Asian American lesbian women	local
Bible Gay interpretations	Bible LGBTQ+ interpretations	local
Bisexuals	Bisexual people	local
Catholic gays	Catholic gay men	local
Children of gay parents	Children of LGBTQ+ parents	local
Children of sexual minority parents	Children of LGBTQ+ parents	local
Children of gays	Children of LGBTQ+ people	local
Children of gays	children of gay men	homoit
Children of transsexual parents	Children of transgender people	homoit

Normalization rules in Alma

```
rule "copy 650 fields to ABC based on the contents of the 650"
# This copies over all 650s that we want to edit to a temp ABC field
salience 10
when
TRUE
then
copyField "650" to "ABC.{-,7}" if (exists "650.{*,0}.a.Abused lesbians*|Abusive lesbian partners*|African American gays*|African American homosexuals*|Africa
lesbians*|African American lesbians in motion pictures*|African American sexual minorities*|Middle-aged gays*|Middle-aged lesbians*|Asian American gays*|A
lesbians*|Bible Gay interpretations*|Gay interpretations*|Bisexuals*|Catholic gays*|Children of gay parents*|Children of sexual minority parents*|Children of ga
gays*|Church work with gays*|Church work with gays*|Closeted gays*|Closeted gays*|Deaf gays*|Deaf gays*|Etiquette for lesbians*|Ex-gay movement*|Homo
and lesbian dance parties*|Gay and lesbian fiction*|Gay and lesbian film festivals*|Gay and lesbian studies*|Homosexuals in literature*|Homosexuals in literatu
gays*|Hispanic American gays*|Hispanic American lesbians*|Hispanic American lesbians*|Jewish gays*|Jewish lesbians*|Legal assistance to gays*|Lesbian G
and femme (Lesbian culture)*|Lesbian high school students*|Lesbians in literature*|Lesbians in mass media*|Lesbians in motion pictures*|Lesbian librarians*|L
stamps*|Lesbian activists*|Lesbian actresses*|Lesbian actresses*|Lesbians and sports*|Lesbian anthropologists*|Lesbian artists in popular culture*|Lesbian co
athletes*|Lesbian authors*|Lesbian bars*|Lesbian business enterprises*|Lesbian cartoonists*|Lesbian clergy*|Lesbian college students*|Lesbian college teach
community*|Lesbian composers*|Lesbian consumers*|Lesbian couples*|Lesbians in art*|Lesbian motion picture producers and directors*|Lesbian musicians*|L
partner abuse*|Lesbian police officers*|Lesbian private investigators*|Lesbian psychotherapists*|Lesbian separatism*|Lesbian students*|Lesbian teachers*|Les
theater*|Lesbian vampires*|Lesbian youth*|Lesbians' writings*|Lesbians' writings, American*|Lesbians' writings, Australian*|Lesbians' writings, Canadian*|Lest
English*|Lesbians' writings, French*|Lesbians' writings, German*|Lesbians' writings, Hispanic American (Spanish)*|Lesbians' writings, Hispanic American (Spa
culture*|Lesbian erotic art*|Lesbian erotic poetry, American*|Lesbian erotic poetry, Canadian*|Lesbian erotic poetry, English*|Lesbian erotic stories, American*
Canadian*|Lesbian erotica*|Lesbian feminism*|Lesbian feminist theory*|Lesbian artists*|Gay accommodations*|Gay activists*|Gay actors*|Gay adoption*|Gay
artists*|Gay artists in popular culture*|Gay athletes*|Gay authors*|Gay bars*|Gay bodybuilders*|Gay broadcasters*|Gay business enterprises*|Gay clergy*|Gay
(Athletics)*|Gay college students*|Sexual minority college students*|Gay college teachers*|Gay columns in newspapers*|Gay community*|Sexual minority com
conservatives*|Gay consumers*|Gay counselors*|Gay couples*|Gay critics*|Gay culture*|Gay culture in literature*|Gay deacons*|Gay detectives*|Gay discothe
erotic comic books, strips, etc*|Gay erotic drama, American*|Gay erotic drawing*|Gay erotic films*|Gay erotic literature*|Gay erotic literature, French*|Gay erot
poetry*|Gay erotic poetry, American*|Gay erotic poetry, English*|Gay erotic poetry, French*|Gay erotic poetry, Greek*|Gay erotic stories*|Gay erotic stories, A
Canadian*|Gay erotic stories, English*|Gay erotica*|Gay figure skaters*|Gay heroes*|Gay high school students*|Gay journalists*|Gay kings and rulers*|Gay lab
lawyers*|Gay legislators*|Gay liberation movement*|Gay librarians*|Gay military cadets*|Gay military personnel*|Gay motion picture actors and actresses*|Gay
and directors*|Gay musicians*|Gay online chat groups*|Gay parents*|Gays*|Sexual minorities*|Gays in higher education*|Gays in higher education*|Gays in lit
literature*|Gays in mass media*|Gays in mass media*|Gays in motion pictures*|Gays in motion pictures*|Gays in popular culture*|Gays in popular culture*|Gay
arts*|Gays in the performing arts*|Gays with disabilities*|Gays with disabilities*|Gays and rock music*|Gays and rock music*|Gays and sports*|Gays and sport
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Outcomes

- 300 subject headings were added. Main terms:
  - “bisexuals” → “bisexual people”
  - “gays” →“gay men” and “LGBTQ+ people”
  - “lesbians” →“lesbian women”
  - “sexual minority” and “sexual minorities” →“LGBTQ+” or “LGBTQ+ people”
  - “transsexual”→“transgender”
- Old LCSH were updated to current authorized terms
  - Transvestism→Cross-dressing
  - Transvestites →Cross-dressers
  - Homosexuals, Male→Gay men
- Approximately, 8,000 records have updated *local* terms added to their bib records

Headings added as part of this project

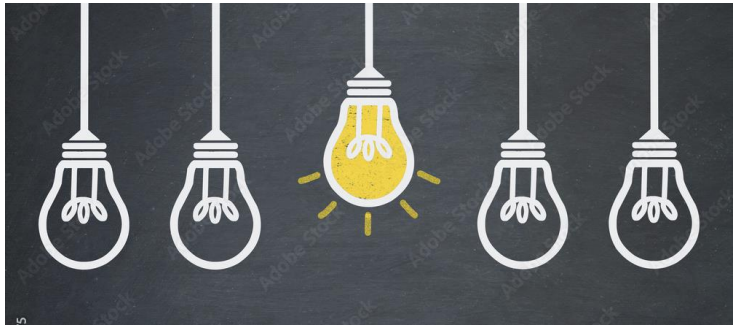
Frequency of words in local subject fields of ONE Archives, following enhancement	
Word	Number of occurrences
LGBTQ (including LGBTQ+)	6623
Lesbian	3931
Women	3857
Fiction	2512
People	2302

Assessment - initial feedback

- From collection curators and student assistants within the ONE Archives
  - Significant increase in results for "women" ⇨ More results for basic searches
  - Exciting that people will be able to identify more relevant materials in ONE Archives

Lessons learned

- Challenges in identifying inclusive terms
  - Homosaurus
    - ➢ Language is constantly in flux
    - ➢ We have selected the most inclusive language



- Cross-departmental collaboration
  - Normalization rules
  - Authority control task list
  - Primo configuration
  - MARC fields (690 vs 650)

650→ Homophobia in schools -- United States >
School violence -- United States >
Sexual minority students -- Violence against -- United States >
Gay rights -- United States >
650→ LGBTQ+ students -- Violence against -- United States >
690→ LGBTQ+ students Violence against United States >

Recommendations

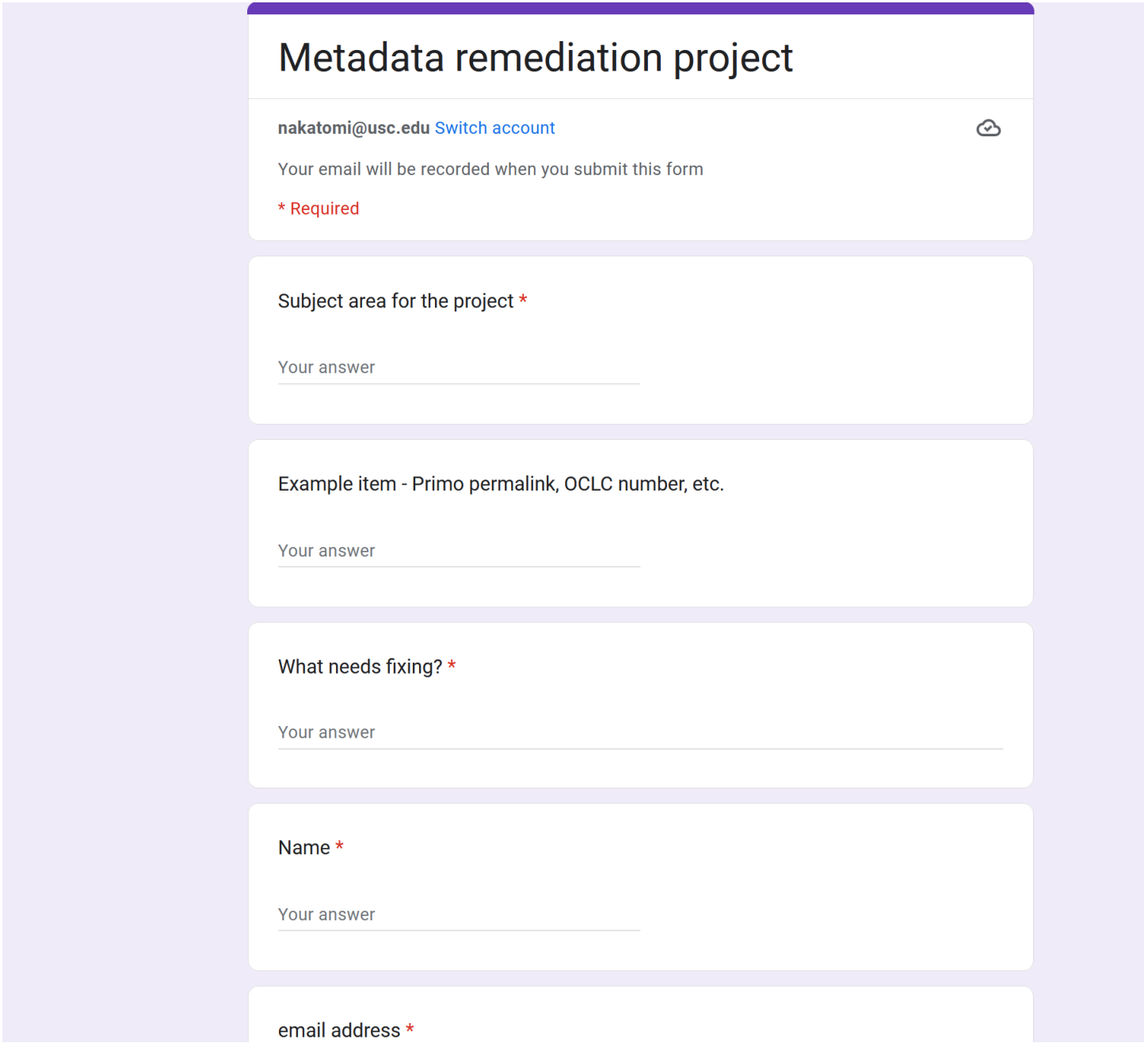
- Continuing to update catalog records for ONE Archives
  - Inclusive terms continue to be added to new items coming to ONE Archives
- Updating catalog records of materials related to LGBTQ+ in other libraries
  - Promote the positive outcomes of this project to library faculty and staff

Recommendations–continued

- Tackling other problematic LCSH
  - LCSH terms for marginalized people
  - Recent recommendations by the Program for Cooperative Cataloging (PCC) Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee include the addition of local terminology
  - Continue the dialogue with subject librarians*

*As part of our effort, Technical Services created a Google Form for faculty and staff to submit their request of remediating metadata

Metadata Community of Practice (MCOP) Committee was formed within USC Libraries in February 2023



Thank you!

For any questions, please contact me:

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