

A photograph of a person leaning against a wall with graffiti that reads "NO PERSON IS ILLEGAL". The person is wearing a patterned sweater and blue jeans. The wall is blue and has some peeling paint. The text "NO PERSON IS ILLEGAL" is written in large, black, hand-painted letters. The person is standing on the right side of the wall, leaning against it with their hands in their pockets. The background is a light-colored wall with peeling paint.

Contested Subjects

Coalition-based Activism in the Library

May 12, 2017
ACRL/NEC Burlington, VT

Jill Baron
John DeSantis
Dartmouth College Library

Library of Congress to Cancel the Subject Heading “Illegal Aliens”

March 22, 2016

Executive Summary

*In response to constituent requests, the Policy and Standards Division of the Library of Congress, which maintains Library of Congress Subject Headings, has investigated the possibility of cancelling or revising the heading **Illegal aliens**. PSD also explored the possibility of revising the broader term **Aliens**. It concluded that the meaning of **Aliens** is often misunderstood and should be revised to **Noncitizens**, and that the phrase illegal aliens has become pejorative. The heading **Illegal aliens** will therefore be cancelled and replaced by two headings, **Noncitizens** and **Unauthorized immigration**, which may be assigned together to describe resources about people who illegally reside in a country.*

I. The encounter



Image courtesy of Melissa Padilla

**The Plan for Dartmouth's Freedom Budget:
Items for Transformative Justice at Dartmouth**

Attention:

Stephen F. Mandel Jr., Chair of the Trustees of Dartmouth College

Phil Hanlon, President of Dartmouth College

Martin Wybourne, Interim Provost

Charlotte Johnson, Dean of the College

Michael Mastanduno, Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Lynda Baker, Interim Vice President of Human Resources

Leslie Henderson, Senior Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs at the Geisel School of Medicine

Matthew Slaughter, Associate Dean for the Faculty at the Tuck School of Business

Joseph Helble, Dean of the Thayer School of Engineering

Maria Laskaris, Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid

Lisa Hogarty, Appointed Vice President for Campus Planning and Facilities

Alysson Satterlund, Sr. Assistant Dean of Student Academic Support Services, Director of OPAL, Co-Director of the Student Academic Support Center

Evelyn Ellis, Vice President for Institutional Diversity and Equity

We, the Concerned Asian, Black, Latin@, Native, Undocumented, Queer, and Differently-Abled students at Dartmouth College, seek to eradicate systems of oppression as they affect marginalized communities on this campus. These systems--which include racism, classism, sexism, heterosexism, and ableism--are deployed at Dartmouth and beyond as forms of institutional violence. We demand that Dartmouth challenge these systems by redistributing power and resources in a way that is radically equitable. We believe that dialogue and resistance are both legitimate and necessary ways of disturbing the status quo and forcing parties to deal with the roots of the issues.

Ban the use of “illegal aliens”, “illegal immigrants”, “wetback”, and any racially charged term on Dartmouth-sanctioned programming materials and locations.

➤ *The **library search catalog system** shall use undocumented instead of “illegal” in reference to immigrants.*

II. The alliance (part 1)

Subject: Your assistance sought in bringing change to the library catalog

The Library would be very happy to work toward the recent request to change information about undocumented immigrants in the Library catalog and we would like to invite students to help us do so. By working with the Library, students have the opportunity to bring change to libraries of all kinds across the United States. This is also a rare opportunity to understand how librarians work to change the way that scholarship is documented.



3/24/14 meeting: CoFIRED students, librarians, deans

Examples:

Handicapped



People with disabilities

Aged



Older people

Homosexuals



Gays

Negroes



Afro-Americans



African Americans
Blacks

Deaf



Hearing impaired (BT)

Blind



People with visual disabilities (BT)

Questionable / Offensive

Jewish question [DELETED]

Yellow peril [DELETED]

Gathering evidence

1. Media Outlets
2. Governmental Use
3. Reference Titles (Encyclopedias, etc.)
4. Subject Heading Systems/Thesauri
5. Worldwide Political Science Abstracts
6. Scholarly Articles

Resources on Migration Terminology

Compiled for CoFired by Claudia Anguiano

The list below is by no means inclusive but it hopefully will provide some argumentative in-roads with the proposal for why “illegal alien” should be banned, as well as the larger implications of the word use (organized by chronology and source type)

Selected News Coverage and Blog Commentary:

1. Illegal immigrant' no more, *Associated Press*. [URL: <http://blog.ap.org/2013/04/02/illegal-immigrant-no-more/>]
2. Jim Shelton, “Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor returns to Yale to give lectures.” *New Haven Register*, February 3, 2014, [URL: <http://www.nhregister.com/general-news/20140203/supreme-court-justice-sonia-sotomayor-returns-to-yale-to-give-lecture>]
3. In Immigration Debate, ‘Undocumented’ Vs. ‘Illegal’ Is More Than Just Semantics : NPR.” NPR.org. Accessed June 20, 2013 [URL: <http://www.npr.org/blogs/itsallpolitics/2013/01/30/170677880/in-immigration-debate-undocumented-vs-illegal-is-more-than-just-semantics>]

- ERIC = Undocumented Immigrants
(ERIC is an education-related index created by the US Dept. of Education)
<http://eric.ed.gov/?qt=undocumented+immigrants&ti=Undocumented+Immigrants>
- Sociological Abstracts = Undocumented Immigrants
- Worldwide Political Science Abstracts = Undocumented Immigrants
- Hispanic American Periodicals Index (HAPI) = Undocumented Immigrants

Dartmouth SACO Proposal

Proposed Subject Record

LC Subject Heading Proposal System

ID:	sp 85003553	Entered:	070502	Replaced:	20140923
008/06 Geo	i-Indirect	008/11 SH	a-LCSH	008/29 Ref Eval:	a-Eval
Subd:		System:			
008/07 Roman:	-No attempt	008/15 Subj Use:	a- Appropriate	008/31 Rec Upd:	a-Can be used
008/09 Kind	a-Estab hdg	008/17 Type	n-Not applic	008/33 Level	a-Fully
Rec:		Subd:		Estab:	

010 \$a sp 85003553
 035 \$a (DLC)sh 85003553
 035 \$a (DLC)5983260
 035 \$a (DLC)sp 85003553
 035 \$a (DLC)302085
 035 \$a (DLC)7168604
 035 \$a (DLC)358299
 040 \$a DLC \$c DLC \$d DLC \$d WaU \$d NhD
 150 \$a Undocumented immigrants
 450 \$a Aliens \$x Legal status, laws, etc.
 450 \$w nne \$a Aliens, Illegal
 450 \$w nne \$a Illegal aliens
 450 \$a Illegal aliens \$x Legal status, laws, etc.
 450 \$a Illegal immigrants

550 #w 9#a Aliens

LC Initial Response

Undocumented immigrants [and five related proposals]

This proposal was made to change the wording of the existing heading Illegal aliens to Undocumented immigrants. Illegal aliens is an inherently legal heading, and as such the preference is to use the legal terminology. The U.S. Code, Title 8, Aliens and Nationality, uses the terminology “illegal aliens.” In addition, the 9th edition of Black’s Law Dictionary includes the headword “illegal alien” with a cross-reference from “undocumented alien.” The Legislative Indexing Vocabulary used by the Congressional Research Service follows suit by authorizing the heading “Illegal aliens,” with a reference from “Undocumented aliens.” The meeting also notes that in some legal systems, a person may be an undocumented alien without being in a jurisdiction illegally; general works on undocumented legal aliens are covered by the heading Aliens. Finally, Immigrants – the proposed broader term for the revised heading – is not an inherently legal heading. Mixing an inherently legal concept with one that is not inherently legal leads to problems with the structure and maintenance of LCSH, and makes assignment of headings difficult.

All of the above argue against revising the heading. A UF Undocumented aliens was added to the record in 1993 to provide additional access, and reflects the fact that the common terminology is fluid.

The proposals were not approved.

III. The alliance (part 2)

Tina Gross
Cataloging Librarian
St. Cloud State University Library



Resolution on Replacing the Library of Congress Subject Heading "Illegal Aliens" with "Undocumented Immigrants"

Whereas the ERIC (Education Resources Information Center) Thesaurus and MeSH (Medical Subject Headings) both use the term *Undocumented immigrants*, and both are produced by federal government agencies;

Whereas the ALA Policy B.3 (Diversity) states that "ALA recognizes the critical need for access to library and information resources, services, and technologies by all people, especially those who may experience... discrimination on the basis of appearance, ethnicity, immigrant status...;" and

Whereas the ALA Policy B.1.1 (Core Values of Librarianship) states that all library users should receive "accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests;" now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the American Library Association (ALA), on behalf of its members:

urges the Library of Congress to change the subject heading *Illegal aliens* to *Undocumented immigrants*.

Adopted by the Council of the American Library Association
Tuesday, January 12, 2016, in Boston, Massachusetts



Keith Michael Fiels
Executive Director and Secretary of the ALA Council

January 2016

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March 22, 2016

Executive Summary

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LC Final Solution

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS SUBJECT HEADINGS TENTATIVE MONTHLY LIST 06a (May 20, 2016)

This Tentative List contains proposals to 1. revise the heading **Aliens** to **Noncitizens**; 2. replace the heading **Illegal aliens** with the two headings, **Noncitizens** and **Unauthorized immigration**; and 3. revise accordingly the other headings that include the word *aliens* or the phrase *illegal aliens*.

The proposals on this Tentative List are *not yet approved*.

The Library of Congress is accepting comments from the library community and the general public through July 20, 2016. Comments will be accepted only through the online survey available at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/responses-to-illegal-aliens-proposal>.

- 150 Illegal aliens CANCEL HEADING [sp 85003553]
- 682 This authority record has been deleted because the heading is covered by the subject headings Noncitizens (DLC)sh 85003545 and Unauthorized immigration (DLC)sh2016000739

- 150 Aliens CHANGE HEADING
- 150 Noncitizens [May Subd Geog] [sp 85003545]
- 450 UF Aliens [Former heading]
- 450 UF Enemy aliens
- 450 UF Expatriates
- 450 UF Foreign population
- 450 UF Foreign residents
- 450 UF Foreigners
- 450 UF Illegal aliens [Former heading]
- 450 UF Illegal immigrants
- 450 UF Non-citizens
- 450 UF Noncitizens--Legal status, laws, etc.
- 450 UF Resident aliens
- 450 UF Unauthorized immigrants
- 450 UF Undocumented aliens
- 450 UF Undocumented immigrants
- 450 UF Unnaturalized foreign residents
- 550 BT Persons

Summary of LC Change

- Establishment of new LCSH **Noncitizens**
- Establishment of new LCSH **Unauthorized immigration**
- LCSH **Aliens** becomes a See reference to new LCSH **Noncitizens**
- LCSH **Illegal aliens** DELETED
- Repercussions for related LCSH vocabulary structure

IV. The response

Monday
June 13, 2016

Number 298

VALLEY NEWS

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Students Prompt Library of Congress Policy

By Rob Wolfe

Valley News Staff Writer

HANOVER — Thanks in large part to student activists at Dartmouth College, libraries all over the English-speaking world this summer will stop using the term “illegal alien” to describe noncitizens who lack legal residency status.

Dartmouth undergraduates had petitioned the Library of Congress, which sets the cataloging standards for countless other libraries, to abandon a phrase that they see as offensive and “dehumanizing.”

“No human is illegal,” said Oscar Cornejo Casares, a junior who helped lead the drive to “Drop the I-Word,” as advocates are calling it. “No human should be re-

garded as anything less in a community because they lack citizenship papers.”

After two years, an initial rejection and a recent intervention from the influential American Library Association, as of this month, the Library of Congress finally has seen things the students’ way.

Federal authorities will replace the term “illegal alien” with two separate subject headers, according to a March 22 Library of Congress news release: “Noncitizens” and “Unauthorized immigration,” which the release says “may be assigned together to describe resources about people who illegally reside in a country.”

The release also said the word “alien” had become

outmoded and prone to misunderstanding, and in a number of instances would be replaced with “noncitizen.”

Beginning in May or June, relabeling will take place everywhere, in “every catalog that uses English language headings,” said John DeSantis, a Dartmouth librarian who helped the students with their petition. “The really nice thing is that not only did students make a change for the good here at Dartmouth, but they did it at all English-speaking libraries throughout the whole world.”

The revision does not go as far as the petitioners would have liked, however. Rather than use the students’ preferred term, “undocumented immigrants,”

SEE POLICY -

Library of Congress to stop using term 'illegal alien'

La Biblioteca del Congreso elimina el término "extranjero ilegal": ¿qué significa esto?

Junot Díaz

@junotdiaz.writer

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Junot Díaz
May 17, 2016 · 🌐

Because Republicans. "This March, the Library of Congress ceased usage of the term "illegal alien," arguing that it is demeaning. Republicans, bless 'em, want the term to be reinstated.

According to The Hill, the GOP is "trying to reverse a decision made by the Library...[to] replace the phrase with 'noncitizens' or 'unauthorized immigration.'" Moreover, the party demands that the use of "illegal alien" be mandated in the new bill determining Library funding. Democrats, "led by members of the Congressional Hispanic, Asian Pacific American, and Black caucuses" vehemently protest this measure.

"Dated and dehumanizing terms such as 'illegal alien' and 'alien' have taken on a highly negative connotation and perpetuate the denigration of immigrant communities," Reps. Linda Sanchez (D-Calif.), Judy Chu (D-Calif.), and G.K. Butterfield wrote in [a letter to members of the House Appropriations Committee] on Monday."



Jorge Ramos ✓
March 31, 2016 · 🌐

Like Page

"These students are heroes"



The Offensive Phrase "Illegal Aliens" is On The Way Out. Here's Why.

FUSION.NET | BY JORGE RIVAS

1.8K 73 Comments 167 Shares



H.R. 4926, “Stopping Partisan Policy at the Library of Congress Act”

The screenshot shows the official website of U.S. Congressman Diane Black. At the top, there is a header with a photo of Diane Black, her name, and the text "U.S. Congressman Diane Black Proudly Serving Tennessee's 6th District". To the right of the header is a search bar. Below the header is a navigation menu with links: "Contact Me", "About Me", "Serving You", "Media Center", "Legislative Work", "Our District", and "Resources".

The main content area features a breadcrumb trail: "Home » Media Center". Below this is the title of a news article: "Black Introduces Bill to Address Politically-Motivated Policy Change at Library of Congress". To the right of the title is a "SHARE" button with icons for Facebook, Twitter, and Email. The date "Apr 14, 2016" is displayed below the title.

The article text begins with: "Washington, D.C. – Congressman Diane Black (R-TN-06), a member of the House Border Security Caucus, announced the introduction of H.R. 4926, the *Stopping Partisan Policy at the Library of Congress Act*. The legislation is in response to a March 22, 2016 decision from the Library of Congress announcing that the terms “alien” and “illegal alien” would no longer be used as subject headings in their materials, deeming the terms “pejorative.” Black released the following statement:

On the right side of the page, there are social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram. Below these is a "Sign Up" section with the text "Sign up to receive email updates" and a form with a text input field containing "your@email.com" and a "Submit" button. At the bottom right, there is a "Media Center" section with a link for "In The News" and a link for "Press Releases".

114TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. _____

.....
(Original Signature of Member)

To direct the Librarian of Congress to retain the headings “Aliens” and “Illegal aliens” in the Library of Congress Subject Headings.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mrs. BLACK introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on

A BILL

To direct the Librarian of Congress to retain the headings “Aliens” and “Illegal aliens” in the Library of Congress Subject Headings.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Stopping Partisan Pol-
5 icy at the Library of Congress Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. RETENTION OF “ALIENS” AND “ILLEGAL ALIENS” IN**
2 **LIBRARY OF CONGRESS SUBJECT HEADINGS.**

3 The Librarian of Congress shall retain the headings
4 “Aliens” and “Illegal Aliens”, as well as related headings,
5 in the Library of Congress Subject Headings in the same
6 manner as the headings were in effect during 2015.

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 19, 2016

The Honorable David S. Mao
Acting Librarian of Congress
The Library of Congress
101 Independence Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20540

Dear Mr. Mao:

The Library of Congress, as the preeminent collection of books, recordings, photographs, and manuscripts in America and the largest library in the world, provides scholars of all disciplines access to research services. In order to effectively and efficiently navigate such an enormous wealth of material, researchers must often use subject headings to search the catalog of records at the Library and other institutions across the country. So we were surprised and disappointed to learn of the Library's decision to eliminate the terms "aliens" and "illegal aliens" from subject heading and search classifications.

The impact of this misguided decision will be substantial and widespread. The Library's own materials expressly state that the heading "aliens" is over 100 years old—indeed, it is one of the oldest headings used by the Library of Congress. And for good reason. The term "aliens" can be found in countless historical materials of enormous significance. William Blackstone, to give just one example, describes in his iconic common-law treatise *Commentaries on the Laws of England* the difference between "*aliens* and natural-born subjects." As you are also probably aware, Title 8 of the United States Code and the Immigration and Nationality Act extensively use these now-forbidden terms, as do numerous government agencies and those who access their services. Scholars of immigration, sociology, and other related disciplines will now face increased research barriers, as will jurists seeking to access your historical materials in order to understand the historical landscape of immigration law.

The Library candidly acknowledges the burden this internal restructuring will cause at its numerous facilities and the thousands of libraries nationwide that rely on its resources. And it concedes that while it regularly reviews requests to alter existing terms, revisions are rare, and even rarer for terms of legal and historical significance—*i.e.*, exactly the terms at issue here. Yet, it continues on this Orwellian trajectory, even though its Policy and Standards Division has apparently rejected similar requests for revisions in recent years.

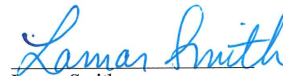
There is no other way to put this: the Library has bowed to the political pressure of the moment. Such an action is beneath the dignity of the Library of Congress. Rather than engage in revisionist history, the Library should base its decisions on sound judgment, taking actual history, present facts, and future research efforts into account.

Although we respect the Library's independence to make decisions involving routine operations, Congress is fundamentally an oversight body, and we strongly object to the Library's elimination of terms that Congress has exercised its authority to use and deploy in the United States Code. These are statutory legal terms of art, not throwaway words to be arbitrarily erased. If individuals or organizations want to revise terms in current law, they should petition Congress to consider appropriate legislation.

We respectfully urge the Library of Congress immediately to revoke these subject heading cancellations.

Thank you for your attention to our request. We look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,



Lamar Smith
Member of Congress



Jeff Sessions
United States Senator



John A. Culberson
Member of Congress



Ted Cruz
United States Senator

H. Rept. 114594
LEGISLATIVE BRANCH APPROPRIATIONS BILL,
2017



Rep. Joaquín Castro, (D-TX)

The latest: FY17 Omnibus Spending Bill

- ...the Library of Congress is directed to make publicly available its process for changing or adding subject headings...
- ...It is expected that the Library use a process to change or add subject headings that is clearly defined, transparent, and allows input from stakeholders including those in the congressional community...
- ... The process should consider appropriate sources of common terminology used to refer to a concept, including current statutory language and other legal reference sources; and other sources, such as reference materials; websites; and, titles in the Library of Congress' collection."

V. What's next?

Indians of North America

UF

Native Americans

More on this:

- *Timeline of “Illegal Aliens” Subject Heading Change Petition*
http://repository.stcloudstate.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1056&context=lrs_facpubs
- *Producing Discursive Change: From “Illegal Aliens” to “Unauthorized Immigration” in Library Catalogs*
http://academicworks.cuny.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2599&context=gc_etds
- “Undocumented Subjects” documentary

Questions? Comments?

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