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Clemson Libraries Inclusive Description Task Force Report

Jessica Serrao

Jim Cross

Scott Dutkiewicz

Charlotte Grubbs

Will Hiott

See next page for additional authors

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Authors

Jessica Serrao, Jim Cross, Scott Dutkiewicz, Charlotte Grubbs, Will Hiott, and Shannon Willis



Inclusive Description Task Force Report

December 2022

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Executive Summary

In his 2017 keynote speech to the Society of American Archivists, Chris Taylor states that inclusion requires intention or it won't happen. He frames inclusion as a business imperative, a strategy. To become more inclusive, the strategy is to "focus on process to impact product."¹ The Inclusive Description Task Force presents the following report with intention to identify the processes and systemic strategies to accomplish this work at Clemson Libraries.

This document serves as the final deliverable of the Inclusive Description Task Force. It outlines the work completed from July to December 2022, presents recommendations on how Clemson Libraries can implement inclusive description practices and lists prioritized tasks to complete.

Background

Inclusive description is a profession-wide development to address harmful histories and inherent human biases that have affected descriptive practices, systems and the user experience. Much of the literature is theoretical and describes why this work should be done. More recent literature presents practical examples from a variety of institutions. This work should be guided by precedents set within the library, archive and museum communities, but priorities and solutions must be approached from an institutional perspective to meet Clemson Libraries' unique needs. All human-generated descriptions and the diverse platforms in which they are created are inherently biased. This is a major argument for why Clemson Libraries should address inclusive description library-wide to prevent siloing efforts and to create a consistent framework.

Practical case studies often focus on only one area (ie. archival, bibliographic, or museums) and do not address inclusive description from a holistic perspective. The Task Force proposes Clemson Libraries sets a new precedent for cross-departmental, institutional and community-based collaboration. This will allow us to leverage multiple expertise on our diverse material types and descriptive standards for a more cohesive universal approach.

Framework

It is recommended that four principles underpin inclusive description of library, archival and museum materials at Clemson Libraries. They serve as a practical framework and foundation upon which we can build stronger more inclusive practices, remediate harm, and center marginalized, silenced, and underrepresented voices. They focus on a **Community-Based** practice, an iterative **Process not Project** mindset that is based on **Sustainability** and **Cultural Humility**.

Inclusive descriptive practices must be framed as iterative and systemic with sustainable changes at all levels. First, this requires establishing a permanent Libraries team to develop and maintain the work. This also requires Libraries administrative support for the resources required to succeed, from employees implementing the work and supporting users through cultural humility and training on new practices, and from departments and committees whose work and

¹ Chris Taylor, 2017, Getting Our House in Order: Moving from Diversity to Inclusion. *American Archivist*, 80(1), 19-29, <https://doi.org/10.17723/0360-9081.80.1.19>

expertise bring strength to the success of this work. This includes the EDI Committee, Organizational Development Committee, Digital Strategies, Marketing Communications Committee, Web Advisory Committee, and the Discovery Cross-Functional Team.

To implement inclusive description, the Libraries will require support from campus and community groups who bring additional perspectives to help center underrepresented communities in our practices. This means dedicating time and patience to build authentic reciprocal relationships that do not perpetuate histories of exploiting the labor of People of Color. For this work to be sustainable, it must be integrated into current or established in new processes and workflows. Because of the sensitive nature of this work, the Libraries must also be transparent about decisions that are made and projects that are completed. This requires communicating with the public and a website documenting the Libraries' activities.

Priority Actions

The Task Force presents a list of priority actions to complete in the short and long terms. Short term actions should be taken immediately based on potentially harmful descriptions identified during the initial audit, and which can make a significant impact. These consist of creating an inclusive and reparative description LibGuide, a harmful language warning web page, a harmful language disclaimer and reporting form, communication about the work, and inclusive description guidelines for all collections. It also includes identifying and beginning to build relationships with key partners and remediating the low hanging fruit found in the initial audit.

Long term actions can be addressed over time as they are complex and require time, personnel and thoughtfulness to implement. These consist of conducting in-depth audits for each collection area, incorporating inclusive description principles into each department's documentation, implementing employee training and improving digital accessibility. It also includes continued communication and maintaining and building new partnerships.

Conclusion

These recommendations are practical measures that create a framework for systemic and sustainable change. Inclusive description and the remediation of problematic and offensive description are integral to the Libraries' equity, diversity and inclusion initiatives and its [Mission, Values and Strategic Plan](#). They must remain so as the Libraries seeks to welcome, engage and better serve marginalized, underserved and diverse populations.

Introduction

Remediation of problematic and offensive description has become imperative for archives, libraries and museums grappling with a history of colonialism and oppression of marginalized communities. Yale University Library describes it as "a need to focus on the acknowledgement and repair of past harms caused by" description.² This imperative is further heightened in the

² Yale University Library, 2021, Library Committees: Reparative Archival Description Task Force (RAD), <https://web.library.yale.edu/committees/reparative-archival-description-task-force-rad>

Southeastern United States where institutions are addressing their histories of slavery and racism. Michelle Caswell and Marika Cifor propose that we must decolonize by dismantling white supremacist practices and recentering marginalized groups.³ The remediation work proposed in this report aims to center marginalized communities, decolonize and repair library-wide descriptions, make descriptive practices and problematic language more transparent to researchers and improve access to Clemson's collections. This work aligns with Clemson Libraries' strategic goals and [Commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion](#).

Dispersed conversations about inclusive description at Clemson Libraries came together on February 12, 2021 with a group of 16 employees who convened to discuss the [Introduction to Conscious Editing Series](#) hosted by the Sunshine State Digital Network. After a lively discussion about conscious descriptive practices, attendees agreed that the logical next step is to create a cross-functional group to direct this work at Clemson Libraries, using the UNC Libraries' Conscious Editing Steering Committee as a model. At the encouragement of supervisors and unit heads, the Metadata Librarian for Digital Collections drafted a committee proposal and presented it to the Libraries' leadership in March 2022. The Dean recommended a task force be created to research inclusive description practices in the field and provide recommendations for how to integrate this work at Clemson Libraries.

Task Force Charge

The Clemson Libraries Inclusive Description Task Force was charged in June 2022 by Dean Christopher Cox to research and present recommendations on a Libraries-wide framework for inclusive description practices for archival, bibliographic, and historical materials.

Specifically, the Task Force was tasked to:

- Recommend practices that guide cross-departmental creation of equitable, anti-oppressive and inclusive description.
- Research current practices at other academic institutions and compile an annotated bibliography of resources on the topic.
- Identify potential campus and community partners, including but not limited to marginalized community groups represented in current and future descriptions and subject experts from other Clemson University departments.
- Conduct initial audits to identify short- and long-term tasks to remediate harmful legacy description in library and museum catalog records, archival finding aids, and digital collections metadata.
- Recommend how this task force work will transition to a standing working group, steering committee, or cross-functional team. Who will be members of this team, what is their mission and goals?

Membership of the Task Force was defined as one faculty or staff from Special Collections and Archives, Metadata Services, Digitization Services, with possible membership from Historic

³ Michelle Caswell and Marika Cifor, 2016, From Human Rights to Feminist Ethics: Radical Empathy in the Archives, *Archivaria*, 82, 23-43. <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/687705>

Properties and University Press that conduct descriptive work. The Chair will be the Metadata Librarian for Digital Collections.

Positionality Statements

The positionality and identities of Task Force members and Clemson University directly affect the ways in which we approach inclusion and diversity. The following statements are provided as an act of transparency and accountability for the perspectives, experiences and conscious and unconscious biases we bring to this work and this final report.

The Task Force Members

The following seven Libraries' employees served as members of the Task Force:

James Cross, Manuscripts Archivist, Special Collections & Archives, is a white cisgender man of European descent in his sixth decade. He identifies as middle-class and is privileged to hold higher education degrees.

Scott Dutkiewicz, Metadata and Monographic Resources Coordinator, Metadata Services, is a white cisgender man. He identifies as middle-class and was privileged to hold higher education degrees.

Charlotte Grubbs, Metadata Specialist, Metadata Services, is a white nonbinary queer disabled person of Anglo and Western European descent. They identify as middle class and are privileged to hold a higher education degree.

Will Hiott, Executive Director and Chief Curator, Historic Properties, is a white cisgender heterosexual able-bodied man of Western European descent. He identifies as middle class and is privileged to hold higher education degrees.

Kirstin O'Keefe, Journals Production Editor and IR Manager, University Press, is a white cisgender heterosexual able-bodied woman of Western European descent. She identifies as middle class and is privileged to hold higher education degrees.

Jessica Serrao, Metadata Librarian for Digital Collections; Metadata Services (chair) is a white cisgender heterosexual able-bodied woman. She identifies as middle class and is privileged to hold three higher education degrees.

Shannon Willis, Director of Digitization, Digitization Services, is a white cisgender heterosexual able-bodied woman of Anglo and Western European descent. She identifies as middle class and is privileged to hold post-graduate degrees.

The Institution

We acknowledge that we are employees of an historically white public institution of higher education founded as a military college for men that continues to be predominantly white. We further acknowledge that this institution was built on the ancestral land of the Indigenous Cherokee People, and on the grounds of a plantation where enslaved people lived and worked.

Tasks Completed

From June to December 2022, the Task Force worked to complete its charge. First, members collectively created meeting norms, [Guiding Principles](#), and individual positionality statements to set a foundation of transparency, accountability, and courage to conduct this challenging and important work.

Annotated Bibliography

Members then researched current inclusive description practices and tools in the library, archive, museum and related fields. This resulted in an Annotated Bibliography ([see Appendix 1](#)) with summaries of around 90 resources on the topic. It is organized by identity groups addressed in the literature with additional sections for relevant resource lists compiled by other organizations, and tools, guides, and vocabularies in use within the field to address this work. There are also institutional case studies on implementing conscious, reparative, and inclusive practices.

Initial Collections Audits

The Task Force conducted baseline audits of Libraries collections to identify areas in need of improved description and help determine a priority list for short- and long-term remediation tasks. Each task force member audited specific collections in their area of expertise--Library catalog records in Alma, archival finding aids in ArchivesSpace, digital collections objects in WordPress, digital collections objects in TigerPrints institutional repository, museum objects in PastPerfect and Open Parks Network objects in WordPress--using a simple keyword search audit process. To facilitate this work, a Lexicon of Problematic Language ([see Appendix 2](#)) was created that consists of 104 terms identified in the literature as pejorative, outdated or offensive about women, BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, people with disabilities, working class or economically disadvantaged people, and over congratulatory or aggrandizing language.

The findings of the initial audit show a large presence of potentially problematic language, which is a strong case for the need for remediation. The following 22 terms each had over 500 instances of use at either the item-level, record-level or collection-level:

Problematic Term	Instances	Problematic Term	Instances
Indians of North America	7,404	The Projects	1,501
Seniors	4,505	Negro(es)	1,175
Hearing impaired	4,129	The Aged	1,113
Women in _____	3,742	Handicapped	823
Races of man	3,303	Illegal alien(s)	754
Colored	3,111	Indians of South America	703
Savage	2,964	Gays	661
Indian(s)	2,529	Indians of Mexico	631

Victim	1,941	Disabled	611
Oriental(s)	1,591	Manpower	574
Slave(s)	1,544	Mentally ill	550

For additional details about the audits, see [Appendix 3 - Audit Report Overview](#) or the full audit results in the [Initial Collections Audit Report - Inclusive Description](#).

Priority Actions and Partners

From the audit results, the Task Force then determined what actions should be prioritized based on the prevalence of certain offensive terms. Community and campus groups were then identified who could be supportive partners in this work.

Framework

Inclusive description must strike a balance between remediating harmful language and preserving colonialist description as evidence of historical thinking. This is a difficult balance that requires a framework to guide the practical work the Libraries needs to undertake. Inclusive description requires reparative remediation of existing descriptions as well as a forward thinking approach to the continued creation of inclusive descriptions. At the root of this work is the imperative to center the perspectives and needs of underrepresented creators of and subjects within the Libraries’ collection materials, and the patrons who use them. This framework is a starting point for why and how this work can be accomplished.

Background

Inclusive description is a profession-wide movement, and this work should be guided by precedents set within the library, archive and museum communities. The **Annotated Bibliography** (see [Appendix 1](#)) provides additional background about current problems, principles, practices and projects in the field. Much of the literature is theoretical and describes why this work should be done, with more practical articles arising in the last five or so years. Many of the practical case studies focus on one area of description or another (ie. archival, bibliographic, or museums) and do not address inclusive description from a holistic perspective. That is where the work at Clemson Libraries differs. The Task Force proposes we set a new precedent for cross-departmental and cross-institutional collaboration that leverages multiple expertise across descriptive standards for a variety of library materials.

Humans hold inherent biases, therefore all human-generated descriptions and the diverse platforms in which they are created are inherently biased. This is a major argument for why inclusive description should be addressed Libraries-wide and not siloed within each material type, department or platform. Clemson Libraries maintains descriptions of its resources in many different systems that have developed over time and adhere to a variety of standards. A brief history of each platform is provided to present a broader picture of what systems and practices will be affected by inclusive description work.

The oldest system is the **library catalog** managed by the Collections and Discovery division. The catalog originally was contained in a physical card catalog. In the 1980s, these records were converted to electronic form following the standards of MARC, Library of Congress (LC) Classification, LC Name Authorities, and LC Subject Headings. This electronic catalog has migrated twice: from NOTIS to Innovative Interfaces' Millennium in 2005, and recently to ExLibris' Alma in 2020. The standards have remained fundamentally the same.

Another type of unique records are managed by Special Collections and Archives. Descriptions of manuscripts and university records were recorded in print (later scanned) finding aids, and selected records were translated into MARC format for the library catalog, and for holdings to be discoverable in WorldCat. In 2009, Special Collections adopted the Archivists' Toolkit to digitally manage its finding aids and, in 2013, migrated to **ArchivesSpace**. This platform manages EAD finding aids and publishes them online via its user interface for patrons to search.

In 2008, the Libraries began developing digital collections based on the digitization of print materials and photographs. This was initiated by the Open Parks Grid, later named the Open Parks Network. Descriptive metadata for this project was first managed in CONTENTdm using Dublin Core. As the number of records exceeded the affordable instance of CONTENTdm, metadata creation and management were moved to an open-source program, **CollectiveAccess**. In 2016, digitization of Special Collections and Archives materials began, also using CollectiveAccess for metadata creation and management. Both programs, OPN and the Libraries' Digital Collections, utilize their own WordPress instance for content management and to deliver the materials to patrons in a searchable repository.

In 2013, the **TigerPrints** institutional repository was launched. It utilizes another system, Digital Commons hosted by bepress, to store institutional records, scholarly works of faculty, staff and students, open access journals, and some digitized text-based materials from Special Collections and Archives. Its descriptive standards are flexible but map to Dublin Core.

Historic Properties joined the Libraries in 2021, bringing with it the museum catalog managed in **PastPerfect**. This system is used internally to document material condition, preservation and insurance valuation. The information also aids in the development of exhibits, risk management, and internal auditing. It is not used by patrons and is only accessible to employees.

Within these varied platforms, Clemson Libraries chooses which descriptive standards to follow and employees often describe the works, experiences, and identities of communities to which they do not belong. Inherent biases may drive assumptions about the items and what constitutes the discovery interests of patrons. Reflection on these biases requires an unrelenting effort by the Libraries to **remediate harmful descriptions** and **establish new, sustainable inclusive systems and practices**. Because of this, the Task Force recommends that inclusive description occurs collaboratively across all Libraries collections and platforms.

This work should be data driven based on the needs of the communities the Libraries serves and the harmful language found in our collections. The data collected during an initial search Audit (see [Appendix 3](#)) indicates approximately what descriptive conditions exist in our

metadata collections that may require remediation and give indications of what practices we may need to develop for future descriptions.

Guiding Principles

It is recommended that the following four principles underpin the work of Clemson Libraries employees who describe library, archival and museum materials. They serve as a practical framework and foundation upon which we can build stronger more inclusive descriptive practices, remediate harm, and center marginalized, silenced, and underrepresented voices in the collections we steward.

Community-Based

In order to be inclusive, our descriptive practices must be cognizant of the opinions and needs of the underrepresented communities we are describing and serving. Only by partnering with the community in the process and being respectful of diverse views will the Libraries produce truly inclusive descriptions.

Process not Project

While projects will be a part of what the Libraries does to remediate harmful legacy descriptions, inclusive description is not something that finishes once those projects are completed. It is an iterative process that is ongoing and should be embedded in our normal working practices because language and terminologies will continue to change and become obsolete. This is both retroactive reparative restorative work and a shift in current practices to continue inclusive and conscious description into the future.

Sustainability

Inclusive description needs to be a continuous practice that is not subject to the vicissitudes of funding, priorities, cultural norms or trends. There must be an institutional infrastructure of practices, procedures and workflows that support the process though the inevitable changes the Libraries will face. Decisions must be sustainable to maintain continuity despite changes in workforce and resources.

Cultural Humility

The Libraries must approach this work with cultural humility. As library and information professionals, we acknowledge we hold conscious and unconscious biases based on our own cultural backgrounds, identities and experiences. These affect how we describe library resources, unique collections and material culture, and we must be aware of and address the impact of our cultural preconceptions.

Systemic and Sustainable Change

This work must be framed as iterative and systemic with sustainable change at all levels of the system. Drawing from the [Guiding Principles](#) above of Process not Project and Sustainability, there is a need for iteration and continuity. Descriptive practices and terms will change over time and replacement of terms will require continual upkeep. This work can be made sustainable and

systemic through incorporation into current and creation of new procedures, guidelines, and workflows.

Continued, sustainable work on making descriptions at Clemson Libraries inclusive will not be possible without ongoing support from the Libraries and the University. The Libraries will need to incorporate and coordinate its inclusive description efforts as part of its wider EDI initiatives, rather than seeing inclusive description as something independent of them. This aligns with the Libraries efforts to bring its EDI initiatives under a single banner of the Division of Organizational Performance and Inclusion rather than such initiatives being disparate elements unrelated to a greater whole.

For this work to be truly systemic and sustainable, it requires ongoing support from the Libraries, including the creation of a permanent cross-departmental Team; changes to current processes and workflows; the involvement of the wider Clemson community; and transparency on the inclusive description work the Libraries is doing.

Permanent Libraries Team

The Task Force recommends the creation of the following permanent team.

Proposed name: Inclusive Description Team (IDT)

Appointed by: Dean of Libraries

Reports to: Libraries Cabinet

Rationale: All three divisions will be affected by the efforts of the Team and members will come from each division, therefore there should be regular communication to division leadership.

Liaises with: EDI Committee

Rationale: Based on the EDI Committee's charge: "The Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee oversees Clemson Libraries' equity, diversity, and inclusion program to ensure that we provide inclusive collections, programs, services, and technologies that support Clemson University's goals." The Team will be recommending policy regarding collections (description), services (discovery), technologies (alt text, etc.), and training, so there is logic in having the Team liaise with this committee. In addition, inclusive description requires partnerships with underrepresented communities, so the Team could benefit from the Committee's efforts in this area.

Membership: Nine members with three-year staggered terms. The Team chooses a leader(s).

One member (faculty or staff) each from Digitization Services, Historic Properties, Metadata Services, Special Collections and Archives, University Press and the Teaching and Learning Department. Ex officio: Director, Marketing and Communication; Digital Strategies representative; Chair, EDI Committee

Rationale: All library employees will be affected by the work of the Team, so all should have the opportunity to serve. Digitization Services, Historic Properties, Metadata Services, Special Collections and Archives, and the University Press will be the “boots on the ground” who implement descriptive work and need representation on the Team. Teaching and Learning relies on these descriptive efforts to provide services to patrons and are in a position to identify problems or offensive terms based on direct patron feedback. Some improvements such as content warnings on Libraries web pages will affect public-facing entities. This requires assistance from the Director, Marketing and Communication and the Digital Strategies representative, who bring expertise in marketing and assistive technologies. The EDI Committee Chair will aid in efficiently liaising with that Committee.

Charge: The Inclusive Description Team (IDT) will:

- Develop policies, guidelines, and standards for inclusive description practices across the Libraries;
- Maintain those policies, guidelines, and standards and institute a regular review cycle in order to update them as necessary;
- Develop and maintain public-facing information about the Libraries’ inclusive description efforts and act as a clearinghouse for issues found in the Libraries’ descriptions;
- Recommend reparative description projects for the Libraries;
- Coordinate and advise on inclusive description activities for the Libraries, such as employee training;
- Coordinate communication among Libraries employees about inclusive description;
- Work with the EDI Committee to develop partnerships with underrepresented communities on and off campus to improve the Libraries inclusive description efforts;
- Work with the Director of Marketing and Communications to communicate the Libraries’ inclusive description efforts to the University and wider communities;
- Onboard and train new committee members.

Libraries Support

The ALA Cataloging Code of Ethics states that, “To create systemic change, cataloguers require institutional support.” Inclusive description work and the proposed team will need the visible and authentic support from Libraries administration and leadership. The team will require regular check-ins with the Libraries Cabinet as well as periodic communication with and input from the Libraries Council. The success of the team and implementation of systemic inclusive description at Clemson will require an institution-wide effort starting at the top.

Additional employees may be needed for certain reparative description projects according to their scope and projected timelines for completion. As recommended by the literature, funding will also be needed to pay representatives from underrepresented communities who assist the Libraries with developing more inclusive descriptive practices. The Libraries will also need to support employee training on new inclusive description practices and procedures.

Ongoing inclusive description efforts will require the input, collaboration and support of other library committees. The proposed permanent team will require the support of the Libraries Cabinet for its formation and continuation. The team will also need to liaise on a regular basis

with the EDI Committee. The team will serve as a source of guidance for these efforts and will build authentic partnerships with underrepresented groups who can better inform our efforts.

The proposed team will also need support from: the Marketing Communications Committee, the Web Advisory Committee and Digital Strategies to communicate the Libraries' inclusive description efforts to the University, community and beyond, and with help designing specific communications such as harmful language web pages and inclusive description program web pages; the Organizational Development Committee regarding descriptive training, cultural competency and workplace culture improvements; and the Discovery Cross-Functional Team for any changes that may impact the Libraries' systems.

Processes and Workflows

To implement this work, it must be integrated into current or established in new processes and workflows. The proposed team should create new Libraries-wide guidelines for creating and maintaining inclusive descriptive practices across departments and platforms. Current workflows must also be assessed for sustainability. For example, some current workflows do not support immediate and timely changes to records online, which is a hindrance to remediating potentially damaging and sensitive content. The digital collections metadata in WordPress are manually updated with little to no automation. To fully support this work, it may be necessary to update current systems or find other solutions to these issues.

Feedback from patrons and employees are integral to inclusive description. A feedback mechanism should be implemented on all collections platforms so that users may report instances of harmful language. This will require a cross-departmental workflow to address the feedback, make necessary changes, and close the loop with the requester by informing them of the change. OPN is currently piloting a quarterly update process in which metadata change requests are made. This could be used as a starting point for this new workflow.

Partnerships

As Clemson Libraries begins to draft standards and practices for inclusive description work, it is vital that community partners are a part of the conversations surrounding these efforts. Rather than creating practices in a silo, the Libraries must involve community partners in the work, allow opportunities for feedback, input and collaborations to ensure that new description practices will reflect how people wish to be described.

Working with community partners could initially focus on various identity groups that align with Clemson University's priorities (such as race, ethnicity, LGBTQIA+, and disability). Partnerships could, and should, expand beyond these initial groups as the work continues. The proposed team can begin building partnerships by collaborating with other committees and employees that have extant relationships with community groups. Initial communications with groups to gather interest and input on this work could be done in the form of a survey that is distributable to a larger group of community members, but deeper relationship building will be required to build authentic transformational collaborations and find and recruit community consultants for more in-depth input (see [Appendix 4](#) for a list of potential campus and community partners).

It is *highly* recommended that community partners be valued and compensated for their time. Too often members of underrepresented groups are not compensated for their labor. It is also important to remember that groups are not a monolith and no one individual can or should speak for an entire group. This needs to be considered while gathering and utilizing community input. A variety of viewpoints from a given group should be sought. To do this work successfully and build transformational community partnerships, Clemson Libraries and the IDT must foster an inclusive welcoming space where people can feel safe to authentically share in this work.

Transparency and Communication

It is vital that, as Clemson Libraries engages in inclusive description projects, the work be made transparent. This work should not be done in the shadows. We need to be candid about the positionalities of individuals engaged in this work and upfront about the positionality of the Libraries and Clemson University. This requires honesty about the privileged position from which we are engaging in this work. We also need to make it known to users our reasoning for the adoption of certain practices and the context for certain descriptive decisions. To do so, we recommend publicly stating when, why and what we are changing. We should also be communicating the work we are doing within the Libraries, across campus and in the community more broadly. This approach will help build trust with our community of users and help us build future partnerships for the continuation of this work. A LibGuide on inclusive and reparative description (recommended under [Short Term Actions](#)) can aid with this transparency.

A feedback mechanism on Libraries websites, such as a reporting button, will foster lines of communication with users on what descriptions need changing. It will make inclusive description work more transparent and build trust with our patrons. To ensure our work is truly transparent and accountable, we need library systems and workflows that track changes in descriptions over time. This will clearly show our work and the evolution of descriptive records at Clemson.

Priority Actions for Reparative and Inclusive Description

This work is deeply intertwined with the positionality of Clemson University, its past and present, and the particular needs of the communities within and around the University. Precedents set within the field of library and information science can act as guides, but priorities must be approached from an institutional perspective. The Libraries should identify areas that are most prominent and harmful in our collections and consider solutions that meet our unique needs. This section is organized first into short term and long term actions. Within these sections, they are organized into larger actions to be completed at the Libraries level that affect all collections and platforms, and then collections-specific actions that relate to specific platforms or materials.

Short Term Actions

These are actions that should be taken immediately based on potentially harmful collections materials and descriptions identified during the initial audit. They are actions the Libraries can most readily achieve in the short term that can make a significant impact.

Libraries and Cross-Collection Projects

Create an **inclusive and reparative description LibGuide** that defines the work the Libraries is doing to repair harmful and offensive language, the framework being used, current and future plans, and documentation of projects completed. Link to the harmful language warning page and ensure the LibGuide is clearly visible on all collections websites.

Create a **harmful language warning page** on the Libraries website to warn users of offensive language in the collections and contextualize why this language exists. This should explain why some historical descriptions are left intact and others are remediated, as well as restrictions introduced by external organizations and standards that are not updated dynamically (such as catalog records reliant on OCLC updates and PASCAL). Include a statement on Clemson University's institutional positionality, link to the LibGuide and ensure the page is clearly visible on all collections websites.

Implement a **harmful language disclaimer** that links item and/or collection-level records to the harmful language warning page. Consider elevated warnings for particularly harmful materials.

Implement a **harmful language reporting form** for users to report instances of harmful and offensive language. This should be linked to the inclusive and reparative description LibGuide, the harmful language warning page, and item or collection-level web pages.

Communicate to Libraries employees, the University and the wider Clemson community the Libraries plan and intentions for inclusive description.

Create **Libraries inclusive description document(s)** that outline standards and guidelines on how this work will be done by employees responsible for description. This will create consistent description work across Libraries platforms and collections.

Continue identifying and begin building authentic connections with **key partners** based on priority action needs.

Remediate problematic language found in initial audit that is easily updated, paying particular attention to the most offensive terms and representations.

Collections-Specific Projects

Open Parks Network objects in WordPress

Work with OPN partners, if needed, to confirm **permission to remediate metadata**. Consider implementing an agreement with each Park to allow for more local control over metadata.

Remediate the [Carl Sandburg's Collection of Stereographs](#). This collection uses highly problematic stereograph captions as titles and offers no other descriptions or subject headings.

Create more inclusive titles, move captions to the description field and clearly indicate they are the original captions. Apply appropriate subject headings to increase discoverability.

Long Term Actions

These are actions to be addressed long term based on their complexity, demand on time and personnel, and required thoughtfulness in implementation.

Libraries and Cross-Collection Projects

Continue to conduct more **in-depth audits** for each collection area or platform, working through descriptions with careful reading to identify further redescription needs. Plan for periodic audits over time.

Ensure that **Libraries inclusive description principles** and practices are part of descriptive documentation for each system and/or collection area.

Create and implement **training** for both employees generating descriptions and those in public services on how to address patron complaints or inquiries about problematic descriptions.

Communicate to Libraries employees, the University and the wider Clemson community the Libraries actions and completed inclusive description projects. Establish regular communication channels that will most effectively distribute messaging.

Continue to build authentic reciprocal **partnerships** and collaborations that support inclusive description. Periodically assess these to determine how to improve and be more effective.

Work with Digital Strategies to improve **accessibility** within the collections. This includes establishing guidelines for how and when to create alt-text for images that consider current resources and implementation time.

Collections-Specific Projects

Library catalog records in Alma

Investigate and remediate the **five predominant problematic terms**—Hearing impaired, Slaves, Illegal aliens, Indians, and Mentally ill—and the **four offensive terms**—Savage, Oriental, Welfare queen, and Mongoloid—found in the audit.

Further investigate the cataloger-supplied **language in summary notes** in contrast to transcribed language. Watch for terminology that assumes users are North Americans, such as the use of U.S. for the United States.

Continue to lead efforts with PASCAL [Cataloging & Metadata Working Group](#) on **consortial cataloging** and determine how updated LCSH will be replaced in the Alma network zone.

Identify and remediate problematic headings by comparing known headings to an Alma Analytics-developed list of subject headings in use. Investigate Alma's Local Authority Definition to overcome the lag inherent in LCSH updates.

Investigate reclassifying materials that use offensive cutters for identities or are misclassified. This includes, but is not limited to: reclassifying .N4 cutters (for Negro) to .B cutters (for Blacks) and .O cutters (for Oriental) to .A cutters (for Asian/American); reclassifying histories of women, immigrants, People of Color, and LGBTQIA+ to Class D – History if currently buried in another class based on race/group; and reclassifying religious materials on Wiccan, Pagan and other non-dominant religions to Class B – Philosophy, Psychology, Religion if currently misclassified under mysticism or other objectionable areas.

Archival finding aids in ArchivesSpace

Conduct a **careful perusal of finding aids for harmful terms** not found in the initial audit and for harmful or aggrandizing wording. If found, remediate using policies established by the Libraries and Department.

As collections are used, processed or re-processed, **determine if there are harmful items** and flag accordingly.

Assess and identify collections with material on marginalized communities and determine if they are being centered in descriptions, balancing that centering with the amount of materials that represent them in a particular collection.

Digital collections objects in WordPress

Conduct a **full audit of ua100, Mss100, and Mss90**. Examine and repair potentially harmful description and subject classification, and also focus on improving accessibility (e.g. transcribing text in images).

Digital collections objects in TigerPrints institutional repository

Detailed assessment of the search audit results to determine which instances of terms were in fact derogatory. Terms with the highest number of instances which may be inoffensive are:

- Seniors (4,495)
- Colored (3,061)
- Projects, The (1,490)
- Oriental(s) (1,472)
- Aged, The (1,098)
- Victim (1,010)

Open Parks Network objects in WordPress

Further investigate the use of the term Indian as applied to Native Americans. Work with community partners to develop policies for more appropriate terms and descriptions.

Work with Digitization Services and Metadata Services to **create policies and guidelines** for metadata in the repository, aiming for more consistency across collections as well as formatting

and other standards that would help align the repository with inclusive description practices (see collection audit for more information on metadata improvements needed).

Conclusion

The framework and recommendations in this report are a mix of short- and long-term actions, incremental changes and bold steps. They represent a beginning to the collaborative work the Libraries must undertake to address an institutional history of slavery and structural racism. These recommendations are practical measures designed to correct past actions and create a framework for systemic and sustainable change.

Inclusive description and the remediation of past problematic and offensive description are an integral part of the Libraries' equity, diversity and inclusion initiatives, which themselves arise from the [Libraries' Mission, Values and Strategic Plan](#). They must remain so as the Libraries seeks to welcome, engage and better serve marginalized, underserved and diverse populations. We look forward to the next phase of translating these recommendations into action. With much appreciation for your consideration,

Inclusive Description Task Force

James Cross

Scott Dutkiewicz

Charlotte Grubbs

Will Hiott

Jessica Serrao (chair)

Shannon Willis

Appendix 1 - Annotated Bibliography

This is a snapshot of the bibliography for this report. This bibliography is a work in progress. It is considered a living document that will be updated periodically with new resources as we become aware of them. To view the living document, go to [Annotated Bibliography-Inclusive Description](#)

This bibliography was compiled by Clemson Libraries' Inclusive Description Task Force members: James Cross, Scott Dutkiewicz, Will Hiott, Kirstin O'Keefe, Jessica Serrao (chair), and Shannon Willis. The format roughly follows a first paragraph summarizing the article with a second paragraph about the practices the article discussed and supported.

Many thanks to the following people and groups for their work on creating similar resource lists from which this annotated bibliography started: Stephanie Luke and Sharon Mizota, SAA Reparative Description Webinar Resources; Sunshine State Digital Network Metadata Working Group, [Inclusive Metadata & Conscious Editing Resources](#); Digital Library Federation Cultural Assessment Working Group, [Annotated Bibliography for Cultural Assessment of Digital Collections](#); Archives for Black Lives in Philadelphia's Anti-Racist Description Working Group, [Anti-Racist Description Resources](#).

Literature Review

Ability

Moretti, A. (2021, December). Reparative Description for Disability Collections: Using a New Model of Complex Embodiment at Harvard's Houghton Library. *Archival Outlook*, 8–9, 21.
<https://mydigitalpublication.com/article/Reparative+Description+for+Disability+Collection+s%3A+Using+a+New+Model+of+Complex+Embodiment+at+Harvard%E2%80%99s+Houghton+Library/4160527/728963/article.html>

A brief case study on repairing the ways disability is described in the archival collections at Harvard University's Houghton Library. The author began with researching how disabilities are described in the archive, finding guidance from disability studies. They recommend avoiding euphemistic language and provide four tips for how to select language in describing disabled individuals: refer to people by name; seek to accurately describe their medical conditions when appropriate; engage in participatory appraisal with the subjects or creators; and be cognizant of language preferences within the disability community. Their next step in the process is to create written guidelines that will include the decision-making process for describing new materials, and how to repair older descriptions. [Entry authored by Jessica Serrao]

White, S. (2012). Crippling the Archives: Negotiating Notions of Disability in Appraisal and Arrangement and Description. *The American Archivist*, 75(1), 109–124.
<https://doi.org/10.17723/aarc.75.1.c53h4712017n4728>

This essay questions whether archivists have adequately documented people with disabilities by examining a framework from disability studies that could help archivists improve their understanding and documentation of disability. The author explores a variety of models and the theory of complex embodiment and its relation to archival theory. The main argument is that “embodiment can be applied to archival practice during appraisal and arrangement and description.”

The authors encourage archivists to question how their own feelings and beliefs about disability affect our description. They suggest we be more sensitive when describing new collections and consider re-indexing current collections. “Viewing disability from the vantage point of the theory of complex embodiment would allow archivists to find more collections than does understanding disability through either the medical or the social model” and should illustrate disability as an experience and not a medical or social issue. [Entry authored by Jessica Serrao]

Cataloging

American Library Association. (2021, December 16). *Tackling Racism and Bias in the Library Catalog* [Webinar]. ALA eLearning.
<https://elearning.ala.org/local/catalog/view/product.php?productid=226>

A case study on how the New York Public Library and Brooklyn Public Library identified and replaced the offensive Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH) of Illegal aliens and Aliens with Undocumented immigrants and Noncitizens. They chose to use alternative local headings instead of the contentious LCSH replacement heading of Illegal immigration. The headings were replaced entirely with local subject authorities in the catalog by means of scheduled vendor processing via Backstage Library Works in which they used the MARC 150 tag for the local subject and moved the LCSH to the 450 field, a 680 note to explain the process, and the 750 field to document equivalent LCSH. They provide a spreadsheet of the [local terms mapping](#) and a [LibGuide](#) that documents the project. They also used grant funding to support public programming and community engagement to share and learn how libraries can continue to work at the intersection of classification, language, and social justice. [Entry authored by Jessica Serrao]

Cataloging Ethics Steering Committee. (2021). *Cataloging Code of Ethics*. American Library Association. <https://sites.google.com/view/cataloging-ethics/home>

The Code of Ethics presents 10 Statements of Ethical Principles, much like a Bill of Rights, but in this case responsibilities for catalogers and metadata providers. In Principle 1, cataloguers are taught that “We catalogue resources in our collections with

the end-user in mind to facilitate access and promote discovery.” However, there is much more to ethical and critical cataloging. Principles 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7 are especially pertinent to inclusive description work.

Principle 3 states, “We acknowledge that we bring our biases to the workplace; therefore, we strive to overcome personal, institutional, and societal prejudices in our work.” This Task Force’s Cultural Humility Guiding Principle echoes the personal, institutional and societal dimensions.

Principle 4 states, “We recognise that interoperability and consistent application of standards help our users find and access materials. However, all standards are biased; we will approach them critically and advocate to make cataloguing more inclusive.” It is important to acknowledge that “All standards are biased.” It is very hard to see the biases in standards that catalogers are most familiar with or have been around longest, such as Library of Congress Subject Headings or LC Classification, but “all” means all—even newer (and potentially more inclusive) vocabularies and standards must be used with care. [Entry authored by Scott Dutkiewicz]

Hogan, Kristen. “Breaking Secrets” in the Catalog: Proposing the Black Queer Studies Collection at the University of Texas at Austin.” *Progressive Librarian* 34 (Fall 2010): 50-57, http://progressivelibrariansguild.org/PL/PL34_35/050.pdf

Hogan describes the need for an intersectional approach to critical cataloging, one that creates and preserves context and that removes barriers created by traditional information organization practices, especially categorization and naming. Creating virtual collections, a practice presented using the Black Queer Studies Collection at UT Austin, is an option that allows catalogers to create significant context for materials without physically removing them to one location, which limits them to a single category. Hogan also points out that displaying relationships in records about who assigned and created vocabularies would acknowledge the power of naming in the record itself. The essay provides a case study for those who would like to follow the model of virtual collections, and also points out the challenges that arose in proposing the project, illuminating that buy-in is essential to changing practice. [Entry from Archives for Black Lives in Philadelphia: Anti-Racist Description Resource]

Descriptive Practices

Bolam, M. R., Corbett, L. E., Ellero, N. P., Kenfield, A. S., Mitchell, E. T., Opasik, S. A., & Ryszka, D. (2018). Current work in diversity, inclusion and accessibility by metadata communities: A working report from the ALA/ALCTS Metadata Standards Committee. *Technical Services Quarterly*, 35(4), 367-376. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07317131.2018.1509439>

This article reports on a survey of 13 organizations and their current metadata practices. These include the use of VIAF and its platform that supports equal representation of

authority files from diverse domain experts, uses unicode to accept a variety of scripts and translates the interface into different languages, work on standards to track accessibility metadata in MARC to represent accessibility features to users, a PCC Task Group on Gender in Name Authorities that studied the use of gender in RDA, and the National Library Service's focus on lowering barriers of use to their user communities. It discusses how diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility can be thought of as a function of metadata quality. Measures may be mechanical or intellectual, as in mechanical metadata structures, data aggregation and normalization and Intellectually addressing ever-changing meanings of words in any one language.

The authors argue for multilingual metadata and more accessible metadata structuring. [Entry authored by Jessica Serrao]

Caswell, M. (2017). Teaching to Dismantle White Supremacy in Archives. *Library Quarterly* 78(3). <https://doi.org/10.1086/692299>

In this article, a professor of Information Science at UCLA shares a personal struggle following the 2016 U.S. presidential election that leads to fears in her students of changes after the election of “an explicitly racist protofascist as U.S. president.” The examples of changes included students were “worried that under a Trump presidency his same-sex marriage will be annulled, and a green card revoked.”

Berry describes an exercise conducted in her class using large post-it notes for ways to identify and dismantle white supremacy in archives. The process is broken down into five subcategories of Appraisal, Description, Access/Use, Professional Life and Education. One area under access and use delineates four components: “Fight like hell to maintain the privacy of users;” “Do not collect data that identifies users;” “Do not require the user to share an ID to access collections;” and “Do not treat users as thieves.” These characteristics resonate with the experiences of researchers in the archives. [Entry authored by Will Hiott]

Douglas, J. (2016). Toward More Honest Description. *American Archivist*, 79(1), 26-55. <https://doi.org/10.17723/0360-9081.79.1.26>

The author argues that archival descriptive practices have obscured the process by which an archive is shaped by the creator, other interested parties, and the archivists who acquire, arrange, and describe the archives. They suggest archivists embrace the “constructiveness” of the archives and provide more information on the processes involved in the finding aid.

Among the ideas suggested in the article are including the creator's voice in the description; documenting discussions with the donor regarding their collection in a systematic and structured way so it can be added to the description; making accession and processing files available to researchers; better use of descriptive elements by

emphasizing archival history that starts from creation of the material to its processing in the archives; recording the various orders of the material and acknowledging the imposition of archival order; appending “parallel texts” to record the types of knowledge archivists have about collections but have not been traditionally recorded in descriptions; user contributed content; and processing blogs that concentrate on the actual work of processing such as decisions made about appraisal, arrangement, and preservation. It should be noted that this study is restricted to writer’s papers, which are often given a higher level of description than other types of papers and practices such as “More Product, Less Process” (MPLP) are not discussed. [Entry authored by Jim Cross]

Hardesty, J. (2019). Bias and Inclusivity in Metadata: Awareness and Approaches. Digital Library Brown Bag Series. Indiana University Digital Collections Services. https://media.dlib.indiana.edu/media_objects/w3763c40d

This presentation gives an overview of the current landscape of bias in library descriptions and classification systems. The presenter discusses “classification as a social construct” emphasizing how identity labels are only assigned to what a society considers outside of the “normal default” (i.e., anything that is not White, male, Anglo, Christian, able-bodied, heterosexual, cisgendered, etc.). They discussed the historical and current issues with Dewey and LCC classifications, in particular the issues within these systems that place items related to Indigenous people in the past. Though few concrete solutions are offered in the presentation, the presenter did review both controlled vocabularies and classification systems that better describe and classify underrepresented groups. The presenter acknowledges the challenges facing metadata remediation, (the scale of extant metadata, few comprehensive resources, and a lack of knowledge of how to evaluate remediation needs) and offers a few potential ways forward. Much of the discussion post-presentation touches on the system-based challenges to remediation (the scale of records to be altered, the number of controlled vocabularies to learn/consult, LCSH, and the barriers that exist if you are sharing catalog records).

Among the thesauri discussed were Xwi7xwa Library, Atria, National Indian Law Library, Mashantucket, and Homosaurus. Among the classification systems discussed were LLACE schema for LGBTQ materials and the Brian Deer schema for materials by or about Indigenous peoples. The presenter also advocated for providing subjects beyond LCSH, the potential of linked data, and offering front end retrieval aids. [Entry authored by Shannon Willis]

Hughes-Watkins, L. (2018). “Moving Toward a Reparative Archive: A Roadmap for a Holistic Approach to Disrupting Homogenous Histories in Academic Repositories and Creating Inclusive Spaces for Marginalized Voices.” *Journal of Contemporary and Archival Studies*, 5(6). <https://elischolar.library.yale.edu/jcas/vol5/iss1/6/>

This article provides a lengthy introduction and literature review looking at the history of archival practice. Hughes-Watkins discusses archives' tradition of preserving materials from the most powerful thereby excluding the voices and histories of marginalized communities. The author reviews the beginnings of archivists questioning traditional practices, starting in the 1970s, and the efforts continuing to today of archives and practitioners to repair and redress the previous exclusion of underrepresented groups. The article ends with a case study from Kent State University and their Black Campus Movement Collection Development Initiative. Hughes-Watkins promotes an approach to reparative archival work that includes diversification of collections, advocacy and promotion of those collections, and finally utilization of diverse collections in library instruction.

The article mainly focuses on collection development as a method of reparations. In discussing the Kent State case study, the author does promote the idea of working with community groups to create metadata and controlled vocabularies when describing collections about underrepresented groups. This also seems to be a method that might result in more thorough and precise descriptions if you involve those involved in the materials in the describing of them. [Entry authored by Shannon Willis]

Knowlton, S. A. (2005). Three Decades Since Prejudices and Antipathies: A Study of Changes in the Library of Congress Subject Headings. *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 40(2), 123-145. https://doi.org/10.1300/J104v40n02_08

Knowlton, in 2003, compared the LCSH headings that Sanford Berman found were biased in 1971. In the three decades, 39% were changed to Berman's suggestions, and another 24% were partially changed. From one standpoint, LCSH has made significant progress. On the other hand, 36% remained unchanged. "It appears that bias in subject headings, while a continuing source of concern, has been addressed in a serious manner by the compilers of LCSH" (p. 128). This is a balanced statement, which I think we need to remember. In my opinion, LCSH is constantly criticized because it is the dominant vocabulary. We have to remember that "All standards are biased."

It's easy to focus on headline subjects, such as Illegal aliens, and not acknowledge the progress LCSH has made. Technological and philosophical changes at the Library of Congress will increase the pace of change. The research plan of the article also does not explore the character of the *new* subjects added to LCSH since the 1970s. The "adoption of LCSH in libraries around the world" (p. 124) may also be slowed in preference for other vocabularies. In other words, there is competition. For example, the British Library recently adopted FAST to replace LCSH. Was that decision shaped by bias concerns? It's important to remember that Knowlton's work is almost 20 years old and his conclusions could use an update. [Entry authored by Scott Dutkiewicz]

Long, K., Thompson, S., Potvin, S. & Rivero, M. (2017). The “Wicked Problem” of Neutral Description: Toward a Documentation Approach to Metadata Standards.” *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 55(3): 107-128. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01639374.2016.1278419>

In this article, the authors use Horst W. J. Rittel and Melvin M. Webber’s framework of “wicked problems,” posits that problems and solutions are ever-changing, and instead of focusing on a static solution, people should focus on the best solution for the time. The authors urge librarians, archivists, and information scientists to be explicit and document their framing and assumptions when creating metadata standards to dispel the myth of neutrality. To further transparency in creating standards, they argue that creators should publish their framing alongside their standard. [Entry from Archives for Black Lives in Philadelphia: Anti-Racist Description Resource]

Lopatin, L. (2010). Metadata Practices in Academic and Non-Academic Libraries for Digital Projects: A Survey. *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 48(8), 716-742. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01639374.2010.509029>

Lopatin explores the types of metadata and vocabularies utilized in digital projects and issues of interoperability, end-user created metadata (crowdsourcing), and staffing. The author found that academic and non-academic libraries engage in similar metadata practices. The majority use Dublin Core, and the two most important criteria for choosing their metadata scheme are the type of materials to be digitized and the purpose of the project. Academic libraries use more metadata schemes, plan for interoperability more frequently, and create new positions responsible for metadata for digital projects. [Entry authored by Jessica Serrao]

Lougheed, B., Moran, R. & Callison, C. (2015). Reconciliation Through Description: Using Metadata to Realize the Vision of the National Research Centre for Truth and Reconciliation. *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly*, 53(5-6), 596-614. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01639374.2015.1008718>

This article describes the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada to digitize and compile into a single database materials related to the Residential Schools program. The Residential Schools program forcibly removed Indigenous children from their homes and communities and placed them in government run schools; the program ran for over 150 years. The Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement mandated the formation of a commission to gather statements and documents related to the program to create a complete historical record of the system and its impact. The TRC gathered oral histories and records from both government and private entities. The commission worked with various institutions to see that pertinent records were digitized. The resulting TRC database comprises seven individual databases from different institutions/organizations. The commission is committed to incorporating Indigenous knowledge into the structure and metadata of the database, but as of yet has not implemented many of the best practices they have

adopted and description remains a challenge. The article describes the commission's hopes and goals for the database.

Though not yet implemented, the article advocates for a participatory archive model for collections related to Indigenous persons. The article points to the Plateau Peoples' Web Portal, The Mukurtu project, and the Ara Irititja Project as models. Features of these models include allowing users (in a restricted context) to upload content, create collection or browsing categories, add metadata and tagging, and map existing content, the goal being a living archive that is shaped by the community. The authors also advocate for consulting and seeking guidance from communities on access issues and copyright as well as incorporating indigenous languages into the archive. [Entry authored by Shannon Willis]

Luke, S. & Mizota, S. (2022, June 8). Reparative Description [webinar]. Society of American Archivists.

This webinar hosted by SAA provides guidance on how to start reparative description work in your library.

The presenters recommend focusing reparative work on especially beneficial groups - women, BIPOC, LGBTQIA+ communities, people with disabilities, and working class or economically disadvantaged peoples. First, layout logistical details regarding time and staff. This will require more effort initially to redescribe past collections and create policies, but then should become part of the workflow. Next steps are to prepare a harmful language statement that is linked from every record and collection guide, identify and prioritize a list of collections to review (assign priority based on content, age of original description, and likelihood the collection may contain harmful language. This can be done by searching catalogs and finding aids to pinpoint materials (ie. search for illegal alien), survey materials related to underrepresented identity facets of creators, donors and subjects, and sample collections to determine what is in need of more immediate redescription (ie. older materials, those processed long ago, and under-described collections). Then develop a consistent strategy/process that is applied to each redescription project. 1. Identify language to redress; 2. Research people-first vs. identity-first language; 3. Plan a process for review and decision making; 4. Execute the plan with consistency and keep track of progress; 5. Assess the process to determine what did and didn't work. Finally, a system should be established to track these changes that includes both internal and external tracking. [Entry authored by Jessica Serrao]

Luster, D. (2018, June 16). "Archives Have the Power to Boost Marginalized Voices." TEDxPittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XsNPIBBi1IE>

This presentation discusses the bias implicit in archival practices and the presenter's approach to breaking down these "traditional archival practices." The presenter states "history is, in fact, a series of strategically curated decisions" which can "uplift some and

silence others.” Archives have the power to silence, to both erase and misrepresent people and groups from history. People tend to implicitly trust archives but are overlooking the bias and decisions of the archivists.

The presenter advocates for new theories of archival practice which include racially competent and culturally conscious practices, including kind, compassionate, mindful, empowering, respectful, and inclusive language. The presenter advocates for including as many of the following attributes as possible when describing the history of a people group: ability/disability, age, appearance, empowerment, ethnicity/race/nationality, gender/sex/sexuality, and health. Finally, the presenter promotes working with communities, asking how they would like to be remembered and recording their history to their standards and using their vocabularies, allowing people to “champion” for themselves. [Entry authored by Shannon Willis]

Samek, T. (2016, September 14). Mind the metadata [Web log post].
<https://cfe.ryerson.ca/blog/2016/09/mind-metadata>.

This article briefly discusses trends in cataloging and metadata, including the lack of movement of the addition of Library of Congress subject headings for more current topics, whether or not trigger warnings should be incorporated into records (there are differences of opinion in the field), and challenges and threats facing librarian positions. The post ends with an invitation to submit to a special issue of *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* on such topics.

The post does not prescribe any particular practices, though it does cite some resources that may be of interest. [Entry authored by Shannon Willis]

Srinivasan, R., Boast, R., Furner, J., & Becvar, K. M. (2009). Digital Museums and Diverse Cultural Knowledges: Moving Past the Traditional Catalog. *Information Society* 25(4), 265-278. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01972240903028714>

This article looks at the ramifications of Web 2.0 and Museums 2.0. In the discussion, they present “bottom-up initiatives that museums and distributed communities can take to facilitate the diffusion of” Web 2.0 technologies. The authors cite examples in which collection management systems and their metadata schema are rarely questioned, often causing biases, prejudices, and assumptions.

The examples focus on Indigenous case studies primarily in Canada. “The object, as a piece of tangible cultural heritage, is a gateway to a number of intangible, yet critically, connected, practices: the telling of a story, a prayer, the process of research, the history of the exhibition, the relation to other objects, and so on.” The case studies provide an example of a Reciprocal Research Network in British Columbia. Another study in Australia looks to share cultural knowledge based on the process of “self-determination and self-representation.” Another at UCLA in an NSF funded project looked at Zuni, New Mexico. Their conclusion is that collecting institutions should “accommodate multiple

voices and perspectives, making particular use of emerging social technologies (Web 2.0) that encourage participation while facilitating access to cultural objects.” [Entry authored by Will Hiott]

Taylor, C. (2017). Getting Our House in Order: Moving from Diversity to Inclusion. *American Archivist*, 80(1), 19-29. <https://doi.org/10.17723/0360-9081.80.1.19>

This article is the keynote address given at the 2016 joint annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists and the Council of State Archivists. In the address, Taylor argues that inclusion must be an internal effort to an organization first, which then affects external interactions and services. It is the mindset, experiences, backgrounds, and training of employees, which often represent the dominant culture, that shape how external work is done. Therefore, focusing on workplace inclusion will then improve external inclusion. The author gives examples of intentional inclusion work at the Minnesota Historical Society that helped them create an organization that embraces diversity and integrates inclusion into everyday practices. It starts with an inclusive work environment and inclusive work practices by “creating an inclusive organizational culture that embraces diversity within the organization” and “developing inclusive work practices through increasing intercultural competency of staff.”

Several practices are to treat inclusion as a moral imperative, but take it further into action by recognizing inclusion as a business imperative and a strategy. This requires taking stock of and allocating resources to this work. It requires activating authentic transformational partnerships within the communities we serve to value their expertise, and bring them in at the beginning of the process. Taylor states that the golden rule is not good enough and that we need to follow the platinum rule: to treat others as they would like to be treated. This requires asking them. To become more inclusive, the strategy is to “focus on process to impact product.

Turner, H. (2015). Decolonizing Ethnographic Documentation: A Critical History of the Early Museum Catalogs at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History. *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 53(5-6), 658-676. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01639374.2015.1010112>

In the introduction, Turner states “collaborative museum practice, a growing recognition of Indigenous rights, shifting social values favoring multiculturalism, inclusivity and access have sought to change the way museums interpret and display Indigenous material heritage”. The author posits that “a critical question for museum studies is whether or not museum catalogs can incorporate a kind of fluidity that is seen as necessary when dealing with diverse ways of knowing, particularly with Indigenous knowledge.” A reference is made to critical race theory “suggest distinctive worldviews can be uncovered by examining the normalized system of bias that classifies the material.” The traditional museum recordkeeping in ledgers and catalogs used nomenclatures derived to classify objects. This collection in the study includes various

collections acquired from multiple sources including the Patent office and the Bureau of American Ethnology.

Field guides would classify by type and groups “such as means of subsistence, habitations vessels and utensils, implements of general use and means of locomotion” for up to seventeen category classes. Later assemblies had “Museum number, accession number, original number, name, people, locality, how acquired, measurement, referred to, when entered, number of specimens and remarks.” In conclusion, the author reflects on the cultural construct and “worldview in Western science” and provides a framework to broaden the process. “Museums have become contentious and even harmful places for Indigenous peoples, and these communities have actively sought to retrieve and reconnect with lost objects and lost Knowledge.” [Entry authored by Will Hiott]

Watson, B. M. (2019, July/August). Bias and Inclusivity in Metadata. *Archival Outlook*, 11(21). <https://mydigitalpublication.com/publication/?i=601234&ver=html5>

A review and summary of the Hardesty presentation. See Hardesty entry. [Entry authored by Shannon Willis]

Gender and Sexual Orientation

Adler, M. (2013). Gender Expression in a Small World: Social Tagging of Transgender-Themed Books. *Proceedings of the Association for Information Science & Technology* 50(1), 1-8. <https://doi.org/10.1002/meet.14505001081>

This proceeding reports on the survey of social taggers of transgender-themed books in LibraryThing to catalog their personal book collections. It examines tagging to provide insight into the significance of folksonomies for information sharing within online communities. [Entry authored by Jessica Serrao]

Baucom, E. (2018). An exploration into archival descriptions of LGBTQ materials. *American Archivist* 81(1), 65-83.

The article discusses the development of LGBTQ community archives and terminology, the difficulties using LCSH terms to describe the community, the problem of discoverability of those collections because of this, and the importance of terminology in identity formation and the harm that can occur when incorrect, outdated, or derogatory terms are used to describe a member of a marginalized community. It then compares terms used by LGBTQ history project websites in different geographical areas in the U.S. and in Canada with those used by traditional archives in the same areas to describe gender and sexual identities, describing the research methodology and reports on the results of the comparisons and the overall findings of the project. The author then makes some suggestions as to how description of LGBTQ could be improved.

This is an exploratory survey, so the results are not statistically significant. Baucom found that terms used by traditional archives and those of the LGBTQ history websites differed, with traditional archives usually not using the community-developed terms when describing their holdings. It is also noted that these community terms and the frequency of their use differed between regions. Highlights the need to talk to the community and donors about descriptive terminology to be used to describe collections; to create subject or keyword access points beyond LCSH; to allow for feedback on descriptions from the community and users to correct and add to the descriptions used; and the creation of subject guides and/or bibliographies to increase access as well. [Entry authored by Jim Cross]

Drabinski, E. (2013). Queering the catalog: Queer theory and the politics of correction. *Library Quarterly* 1(2), 94-111. <https://doi.org/10.1086/669547>

Drabinski applies Queer theory to the issues of problematic description and classification of library materials. The author argues that the idea that catalogs can be “corrected” is fundamentally flawed. Catalogs can never reflect any objective truth because they are constructing knowledge in a given time and place and thus reflect that. Instead, they argue that focus should be shifted from attempting to correct the catalog and instead should focus on helping users engage with the catalog, critiquing it and understanding how it represents the bias and inequalities inherent in society.

Since the article is largely focused on critiquing the idea of correcting problematic metadata, the author does not suggest many inclusive description practices. A few that are offered include providing local metadata and allowing for user tagging. They also warn against using modern ideas of gender and sexuality to describe past persons as they would not have used such ideas to describe themselves. And the article suggests that any edits should be transparent and shouldn't attempt to erase the past structures of the catalog which can be informative in and of themselves. The core of the article advocates for more work to be done by public services and instruction librarians to have users think more critically about the flaws in the catalog instead of trying to hide or fix them. [Entry authored by Shannon Willis]

Larade, S. & Pelletier, J. (1992). Mediating in a Neutral Environment: Gender-Inclusive or Neutral Language in Archival Descriptions. *Archivaria* 35: 99-109. <https://archivaria.ca/index.php/archivaria/article/view/11889/12842>

Rather than lay out a “blueprint for future ‘safe’ language” the authors create a discussion space for archivists to contemplate their responsibility and responses to linguistic changes. The authors provide an overview of how the United States and Canada have responded linguistically to second wave feminist critiques of sexist terminology and syntax. Yet, with all of these changes and challenges to language the question remains for archivists: do the criteria for implementing descriptive standards create invisible barriers to the process of incorporating new terminologies? As language

continues to evolve and more marginalized groups describe themselves in their own voice, how does the field move the responsibility off the shoulders of individual archives and archivists? [Entry from Archives for Black Lives in Philadelphia: Anti-Racist Description Resource]

Rawson, K. J. (2009). Accessing Transgender // Desiring Queer(er?) Archival Logics. *Archivaria* 68: 123-140, <https://archivaria.ca/index.php/archivaria/article/view/13234/14552>

Archival organizational systems tend to be slow to adapt to linguistic and categorical changes. When handling material from marginalized communities, such as the LGBTQIA community, archival terminology may in fact replicate societal bias and oppressive power structures. Rawson lays out the consequences of using the term transgender to describe collections that do not contain that language and vice versa. Due to the complex relationship between materials and their descriptions, access to certain collections may be frustrating to researchers; this is okay. At times it is more important to note the shifting of language that happens between the text itself and the record that claims to represent it. Questions archivists should ask include: “What language do the material speak? - What language do archives speak? - What language do researchers speak? - and finally Who does not speak the language of your archives?” [Entry from Archives for Black Lives in Philadelphia: Anti-Racist Description Resource]

Roberto, K. R. (2011). Inflexible Bodies: Metadata for Transgender Identities. *Journal of Information Ethics* 20(2), 56-64. <https://doi.org/10.3172/JIE.20.2.56>

“Inflexible Bodies” discusses the ways in which queer and transgender identities are misrepresented (or not represented at all) by LCSH, LCC, and DCC. While the subject headings and classification systems have been changed in recent decades in response to efforts by the gay and lesbian community to more accurately represent LGBT persons, these efforts did not sufficiently include those who identify as neither gay nor lesbian (“queer”) or who identify as transgender (a gender identity, not a sexual one). As well, the headings and systems do not allow for more fluid and/or transitional identities.

Although the author does not provide recommendations for how the headings or classification systems should be changed, he does give a helpful overview of the problems with LCSH, LCC, and DCC (which is largely that these other identities are misplaced, misidentified, or just entirely absent from the schemas). It should be noted that the article is now over 10 years old and changes may have been made to the schemas to address the issues discussed in this article. For instance, the author acknowledges that DCC (Dewey) was set to release an update to its classification system to better include trans identities the same year as the article's publication. [Entry authored by Shannon Willis]

Trans Metadata Collective (TMDC), Burns, Jasmine, Cronquist, Michelle, Huang, Jackson, Murphy, Devon, Rawson, K. J., Schaefer, Beck, Simons, Jamie, Watson, Brian M., &

Williams, Adrian. (2022). Metadata Best Practices for Trans and Gender Diverse Resources (p. 34). <https://zenodo.org/record/6686841#.YrS1DXbMJHU>

The *Best Practices* focuses on the Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH) and name authority records. It provides guidance on how to use existing LCSH when describing trans and gender diverse people (identities and concepts), discusses topics requiring special attention, indicates LCSH that should be avoided, identifies gaps in LCSH and suggests alternatives; discusses ways to improve LCSH, and suggests other vocabularies that could be used to describe trans and gender diverse people when LCSH proves inadequate. For name authority records it discusses recording gender and former names, including the ethics of former names in the catalog. There is also a glossary, a list of trans LCSH, and a list of sources and annotated bibliographies.

The *Best Practices* is based on the following general guidelines and principles: making the process of metadata creation transparent; using culturally and contextually appropriate labels for trans and gender diverse communities and subjects; correctly naming and identifying trans individuals; being explicit about transphobia in collections, items, and metadata; and identifying trans-related content and metadata through regular assessment and prioritizing for remediation. [Entry authored by Jim Cross]

Watson, B. (2019). Homosaurus and Digital Transgender Archive. *American Archivist Reviews*. <https://reviews.americanarchivist.org/2019/06/18/homosaurus-and-digital-transgender-archive/>

This is a 2019 review of both Homosaurus and the Digital *Transgender Archive*. Homosaurus is a linked data vocabulary of specific LGBTQIA+ terms. The Digital *Transgender Archive* uses Homosaurus as a controlled vocabulary for searching its collections. The reviewer wrote about these sites in tandem because the *Archive* is the most thorough application of Homosaurus. The review gives a short history of controlled vocabularies and thesauri for LGBTQIA+ terms, describes the design and content of both sites, and the strengths and weaknesses of each.

The Homosaurus is the result of a long-term community-based initiative that is still ongoing. Each term has the preferred version of the term, “use for” references, a definition, metadata, and links to broader, related, or narrower terms. The *Archive* is a good example of the use of linked data for controlled vocabulary searching and of good website design that considers the need to be both screen reader and colorblind-friendly. At the time of the review, Homosaurus was about to transition to Version 2, one that concentrated on only LGBTQIA+ terms. It is now in Version 3.2, so some of the criticisms in the review regarding sexuality (particularly asexuality) and romance orientation have been at least partially addressed with the addition of more terms. The same is true of the *Archive*; it now has a page relating to harmful languages and at least some of the items do have links back to the originating institution. Both websites have

made efforts to expand their coverage beyond White Europeans. [Entry authored by Jim Cross]

Institutional Case Studies

Beckman, et al. (2022). Ethical and Anti-Oppressive Metadata: A Collaboration Between Catalogers and Archivists at George Mason University Libraries. *Collaborative Librarianship* 13(1): 30-39.

<https://digitalcommons.du.edu/collaborativelibrarianship/vol13/iss1/5>

Bennett, A., Fairchild, M. J., Gilbert, H., Haykal, A., Hudson, K., Mayo, G., Minor, J., & Mobley, T. (2022, January 7). *Reparative Description: College of Charleston Archival Repositories*. College of Charleston Libraries.

<https://libguides.library.cofc.edu/reparativedescription>

This website outlines the College of Charleston's Archival Repositories Reparative Description Project. It states the primary mission, describes what descriptive language is and the context for its existence in the archival record, and links to a reporting form for user feedback.

Dean, J. "Conscious Editing of Archival Description at UNC-Chapel Hill." *Journal of the Society for North Carolina Archivists* 16 (2019): 41-55.

http://www.ncarchivists.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/jsnca_vol16_dean.pdf

Indiana University. (2022). Bias in Metadata Project. <https://github.com/jlhardes/metadataBias>

In-progress linked data initiative connecting the library catalog at Indiana University with Homosaurus, an international linked data vocabulary of community-supplied LGBTQ terms. Proof-of-concept project; the creator of the project posits that a similar code would work for linking other library catalogs with other community-based vocabularies from different marginalized groups. This is a GitHub site containing the code for the project.

Use of community-supplied terms to enhance access and improve description of marginalized communities by supplementing LCSH with those terms. Provides an alphabetical list of terms from the LGBTQ community. For selected terms, will show exactly matching LCSH terms; broader terms from the community; terms the selected term should be used for and related community terms; and narrower terms from the community. [Entry authored by Jim Cross]

Lellman, C. G. (2022). Guidelines for Inclusive and Conscientious Description. Harvard University Center for the History of Medicine: Policies & Procedures Manual.

<https://wiki.harvard.edu/confluence/display/hmschommanual/Guidelines+for+Inclusive+and+Conscientious+Description>

Luke, S. M., Pezzoni, S. & Russell, W. (2022). Towards More Equitable, Diverse, and Inclusive Representation in Metadata and Digitization: A Case Study. *Serials Librarian*, 82:1-4, 55-62. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0361526X.2022.2040241>

Schuba, A. (2022, December 6). Writing and Implementing a Statement to Remediate Harmful Language in the Library Catalog: Peer to Peer Review [blog]. *Library Journal*. <https://www.libraryjournal.com/story/Writing-and-Implementing-a-Statement-to-Remediate-Harmful-Language-in-the-Library-Catalog-Peer-to-Peer-Review>

This blog post describes the process of writing and implementing a statement of harmful language for the University of Maryland's library catalog. The author describes their experience and concludes with advice for others to write their own statement and encourages the implementation of a feedback method to solicit input from patrons. [Entry authored by Jessica Serrao]

Suárez, A. (2020, February 28). Inclusive Description Working Group [blog]. *This Side of Metadata: Princeton University Library Rare Books & Special Collections Technical Services*. <https://blogs.princeton.edu/techsvs/2020/02/28/inclusive-description-working-group/>

A post from the Princeton blog *This Side of Metadata* detailing their library's Inclusive Description Working Group. The blog briefly details the history of the group, the resources that have guided their work, the work they've done thus far, and lists a number of case studies from their Finding Aids that have been updated with more inclusive metadata.

It is noteworthy the number of years the group has been doing inclusive description work. They started with an audit in 2016 and are still working to assess and update metadata and practices. It reinforces the idea that this is continuing work. The case studies are useful in seeing the kinds of changes that can be made. They are also working to have their Statement of Language added to their Finding Aids page to be transparent with users about their work and its limitations, a practice we may wish to replicate. [Entry authored by Shannon Willis]

Thomas, T. (2020). A Case Study of the Louis Round Wilson Special Collections Library Conscious Editing Steering Committee. <https://doi.org/10.17615/xw79-5z55>

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. (2022). Technical Style Guide. <https://github.com/UNC-Libraries/TS-Archival-Procedures-Manual/blob/main/Style%20Guide.md>

Wilson Special Collections Library. (2022). A Guide to Conscious Editing at Wilson Special Collections Library. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. <https://library.unc.edu/2022/06/conscious-editing-guide/>

Yale University Library. (2021, May 27). Library Committees: Reparative Archival Description Task Force (RAD).

<https://web.library.yale.edu/committees/reparative-archival-description-task-force-rad>

Yale University Library. (2021, June 4). Reparative Archival Description Task Force: Home.

<https://guides.library.yale.edu/reparativearchivaldescription>

Race, Ethnicity and Indigenous People

A4BLiP Anti-Racist Description Working Group (Antracoli, A. A., Berdini, A., Bolding, K., Charlton, F., Ferrara, A., Johnson, V., Rawdon, K.) (January 2022)

A4BLiP Anti-Racist Description Resources User Survey Results

<https://github.com/a4blip/A4BLiP/blob/master/ARDRUserSurveyResults2022.pdf>

The article reports the results of a survey distributed in 2020 to determine the use and limitations of the Anti-Racist Description Resources. It includes the methodology, the participants, the survey development and distribution, the analysis process used, concerns about and limitations of the survey, the survey findings, and conclusion.

The bulk of the respondents were from academic libraries and archives; the survey was directed at those using the Resources and therefore did not incorporate information from those not using it. The survey also did not account for all possible background of participants and was clearly biased towards higher education which likely reflected how the survey was distributed (archival community listservs and social media). Respondents were engaged in proactive initiatives to improve future work (practices and guidelines) and retroactive remediation projects. Need for prioritization and routinization of reparative work at the institutional level for sustainability. Community collaboration currently is low, and additional guidance on collaboration that is ethical, mutually beneficial, and well-supported by institutions would be useful. Need to look at what community archives and others outside of academia have been doing (looking outward). Identified need for additional case studies, descriptive guidance specific to other marginalized groups, thesauri of harmful terms and their alternatives, regularly updated bibliography on the subject, and practical training. Report includes examples of reparative description by participants and additional resources mentioned by participants, including some more recent resources. [Entry authored by Jim Cross]

American Jewish Committee. (undated). #Translate Hate: Stopping Antisemitism Starts with Understanding It. https://global.ajc.org/files/ajc/upload/AJC_Glossary.pdf

This resource is a “glossary of antisemitic terms, phrases, conspiracies, cartoons, themes, and memes” that helps understand antisemitism so it may be combated. The glossary lists terms in alphabetical order, and for each term a definition is given as well as reasons for why it’s antisemitic. [Entry authored by Jessica Serrao]

Antracoli, A. A., Berdini, A., Bolding, K., Charlton, F., Ferrara, A., Johnson, V., Rawdon, K. (2019). Archives for Black Lives in Philadelphia: Anti-Racist Description Resources. Archives for Black Lives in Philadelphia's Anti-Racist Description Working Group. https://archivesforblacklives.files.wordpress.com/2019/10/ardr_final.pdf

A set of best practice recommendations for an anti-oppressive approach to creating and remediating archival description, compiled from archivists' research and case studies across the field. Its focus is on Black communities, but in many cases can be applied broadly to the description of records created by and about marginalized communities.

The authors argue for the need to unlearn neutral and passive voices, hire and promote Black archivists, self-educate on anti-oppressive terms, concepts and norms, and audit legacy descriptions to locate and describe hidden voices, remediate racist descriptions, and respectfully describe histories of Black communities. It also supports community collaboration and peer or community review, working with institutional scholars in relevant subject areas, crowdsourcing, multilingual metadata, minimizing archival jargon, using the same language the community uses to describe itself and alternative cataloging schemes created by subjects of the record being described. [Entry authored by Jessica Serrao]

Berry, D. (2018). Digitizing and Enhancing Description Across Collections to Make African American Materials More Discoverable on Umbra Search African American History. *The Design for Diversity Learning Toolkit*. <https://des4div.library.northeastern.edu/digitizing-and-enhancing-description-across-collections-to-make-african-american-materials-more-discoverable-on-umbra-search-african-american-history/>

Berry presents a case study on a project undertaken at University of Minnesota Libraries to digitize and enhance description of African American materials through the aggregated Umbra Search African American History platform. She describes challenges surrounding locating materials related to African Americans, making decisions about whether to use problematic subject headings in order to support access, rights management, MPLP processing approaches, and the need to sometimes defy traditional archival description practices in order to appropriately contextualize materials within search aggregator displays. Berry's case study also embodies a critique of the archival principle of provenance: she notes, the "digital landscape provides an opportunity to look at materials outside the context of their collections without having to physically re-order, disrupting concepts of respect des fonds which historically favor people with the power and privilege to securely store and collect materials over time." [Entry from Archives for Black Lives in Philadelphia: Anti-Racist Description Resource]

First Archivists Circle. (2007). Protocols for Native American Archival Materials. <http://www.firstarchivistscircle.org/files/index.html> (incorrect)

<https://www2.nau.edu/libnap-p/protocols.html>

The *Protocols* were developed in 2007 to identify best professional practices for the culturally responsive care and use of American Indian archival material. Being culturally responsive means that these practices are “tailored actions which demonstrate awareness and appreciation of the needs of a particular group, community, or nation.” They are based on various professional ethical codes and on the statuses and associated rights that are part of international, federal, and state laws. The Protocols cover building relationships of mutual respect; striving for balance in content and perspectives; accessibility and use; culturally sensitive materials; providing context, Native American intellectual property issues; the copying and repatriation of records to Native American communities; Native American research protocols; reciprocal education and training; and awareness of Native American communities and issues.

A key point from the *Protocols* is that Native American communities are sovereign governments that maintain their own laws and legal restrictions surrounding cultural issues, and that concepts of intellectual property are viewed very differently in such communities. Concepts such as cultural patrimony and culturally sensitive are important to keep in mind when dealing with Native American materials. The *Protocols* stress the need to consult with those communities regarding materials relating to them and to establish relationships of mutual respect and an awareness of the communities and their issues. In addition to the section on providing context, which includes the need for cultural sensitivity statements, looking at problematic terms, content warnings, and community involvement, the sections on accessibility and use, culturally sensitive materials, intellectual property issues, and Native American research protocols will all impact description in some way. The *Protocols* often include guidelines for action by Native American communities as well as those for archives and libraries, which can assist in helping us build those relationships of mutual respect. With suitable modification, they could be used with other underrepresented groups. [Entry authored by Jim Cross]

Littletree, S., & Metoyer, C. A. (2015). Knowledge Organization From an Indigenous Perspective: The Mashantucket Pequot Thesaurus of American Indian Terminology Project. *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 53(5-6), 640-657.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/01639374.2015.1010113>

The authors acknowledge that, “words, chosen carefully and mindfully, convey the mental, spiritual, social, and physical aspects of the world around us.” The project examined the Mashantucket Pequot terminology beginning in the mid-1990s. One example of biased or inappropriate language would be to change “massacre to incident.”

Significant examples described in the article speak to Indigenous perspectives of domains: the spiritual, the Physical, the Social, and the Mental represented by north, south, east, and west, although not in that order, but east, west, south and north. Each domain has further layers and subsections. Indigenous peoples, for example, have in

their lexicon plants as living things with traits. The subsequent elements are time, place, characters, events, and purpose. In an Indigenous perspective, “The truth about stories is that it is all we are. Without our stories, we are not connected to each other, to our work, to our knowledge. Stories help us remember who we are.” Artifacts such as Wampum Treaty Belts both are design and materials have “spiritual, social, and mental dimensions.” Likewise, the native worldview has four to six cardinal points: north, south, east, and west and sometimes above and below. Tobacco for example is categorized as spiritual domain, manifestation, sacred plants. “Tobacco is used to give thanks. As a form of communication, the smoke carries messages to the spirit world.” The authors conclude, “words are powerful.” The process of this thesaurus is organized in a library catalog. [Entry authored by Will Hiott]

Resource Lists

Cataloging Lab. “List of Statements on Bias in Library and Archives Descriptions.”

<https://cataloginglab.org/list-of-statements-on-bias-in-library-and-archives-description/>

Haduong, M., Fraimow, R., and McLaren, C. (undated). DEI Controlled Vocab Resource List. AMIA Cataloging and Metadata Committee.

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/19solOX6tQTYvIF4lr_JNz2WlcsA76Cck3bxvYZ8cHzg/edit#gid=0

New England Archivists. (2022). Anti-Racist and Anti-Oppressive Readings and Resources for Archivists.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1sg3mG2oPmmg9vgF3zou3Go-umfZgwtXTPhGbSkOUsxM/edit>

Sunshine State Digital Network Metadata Working Group. (2020). Inclusive Metadata & Conscious Editing Resources.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1APavAd1p1f9y1vBUudQlulsYnq56ypzNYJYgDA9RNbU/edit#heading=h.nq945w62b6fe>

A resource list compiled by the Sunshine State Digital Network Metadata Working Group in 2020. Divided into five sections: Research- and Theory-Oriented Works, Case Studies, Sites Incorporating Inclusive Description, Tools (thesauri, subject heading lists, best practices, etc.), and Resource Lists.

Provides a starting point for inclusive description, particularly the description of Indigenous peoples, LGBTQIA+ individuals, people of color, and women. Includes some early works on the limitations of subject cataloging/headings. The resource does not appear to have been updated recently so the articles are becoming somewhat dated, such as an article on replacements for the LCSH term “Illegal aliens,” which was replaced by “Noncitizens” and “Illegal immigration” in 2021. [Entry authored by Jim Cross]

Tools, Guides and Vocabularies

General

American Psychological Association. (2020). "Bias-Free Language." APA Style Guide, 7th edition. <https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/bias-free-language>

This style and grammar guideline from the APA Style Guide emphasizes how writers "must strive to use language that is free of bias and avoid perpetuating prejudicial beliefs or demeaning attitudes in their writing." The guide in general is used by writers around the world in a variety of disciplines to produce "concise, powerful, and persuasive scholarly communication." The Bias-Free Language guideline in particular addresses identities of age, disability, gender, racial and ethnic identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and intersectionality and suggests terms to use for each. [Entry authored by Jessica Serrao]

Category:Pejorative terms for people. (2022 May 4). In Wikipedia.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Pejorative_terms_for_people

This is a category page that lists all Wikipedia pages that have been categorized as pejorative terms for people. It includes 127 terms listed alphabetically and each term links to its Wikipedia page for more information. Many are slang terms that uphold harmful stereotypes and are considered offensive. This page also lists 12 subcategories of pejorative terms for people. [Entry authored by Jessica Serrao]

Kapitan, A. (2022). Radical Copyeditor. <https://radicalcopyeditor.com/>

Alex Kapitan's blog is dedicated to providing examples of radical copyediting: how to use more sensitive language, be more aware of context, and take greater care with description. The blog addresses topics like white supremacy, "person-first" language, self-identification, and also features a dedicated Transgender Style Guide. One of the primary principles of the blog is to acknowledge the impact of language and take the steps necessary to avoid harm. While not directly related to archival description, there are many useful examples that can be applied to finding aid narratives. The one weakness of the blog could be that it is difficult to tell where Kapitan is building their style guides from: personal experience, anecdotes, or directly from the communities they describe. [Entry from Archives for Black Lives in Philadelphia: Anti-Racist Description Resource]

Yin, K. (2022). Conscious Style Guide. <https://consciousstyleguide.com/>

This is a style guide written for writers and editors to help them think critically about the language used to represent and portray various communities. It presents "compassionate, mindful, empowering, respectful, and inclusive language"

recommendations and opposing perspectives so that writers can make educated choices on the terminology they use. The purpose is for the reader to immerse themselves in the ongoing conversations about equitable language and make their own conclusions about effective word choices for their audience.

Conscious language is defined as language that promotes equity. The Guide is organized into the following sections based on identities and topics: Ability + Disability; Age; Appearance; Empowerment; Ethnicity, Race + Nationality; Gender, Sex + Sexuality; Health; Plain Language; Socioeconomic Status; and Spirituality, Religion + Atheism. Each of these pages contains a general guide on that topic as well as articles discussing terminology with bulleted summaries if the issues each covers. [Contributed by Jessica Serrao]

Ability

Cooper Hewitt. (undated). Cooper Hewitt Guidelines for Image Description.

<https://www.cooperhewitt.org/cooper-hewitt-guidelines-for-image-description/>

Guidelines for providing alt text to improve digital inclusion. [Entry authored by Scott Dutkiewicz]

Finnegan, S. & Coklyat, B. (undated). Alt Text as Poetry. <https://alt-text-as-poetry.net/>

Alt Text as Poetry is an art project that advocates for the creation of alt text through the lens of accessibility and poetry rather than simple compliance. The website offers a workbook as well as links to other tools and resources for learning about and how to write effective alt text. The creators of the project also offer workshops on alt text writing.

The purpose of the project and workbook is to get people thinking about alt text and how to write it better. The main guiding principles for thinking about alt text as a kind of poetry are attention to language, word economy, and an experimental spirit. The workbook also points to Wikipedia's guidance for writing alt text which is to ask yourself why is this image here, what information is it presenting, and what purpose does it fulfill. Of note in the workbook, the resource calls into question the notion that alt text should be objective as it is not possible, and instead suggests that an objective approach does not lead to better descriptions and alt text is better for users when it is expressive. The workbook is said to take 1.5 to 2.5 hours to complete, and it is suggested that it be completed with a partner. [Entry authored by Shannon Willis]

National Center on Disability and Journalism. (2021, August). Disability Language Style Guide.

<https://ncdj.org/style-guide/>

This style guide for disability language in journalism contains basic guidelines, and a list of terms, each with background content, a recommendation on how to use the term and

how it conforms to AP style. This resource was written with journalists in mind, so the information is geared toward how to respectfully report on a story or interview people with disabilities. They once advocated for person-first language but because many people with disabilities have taken issue with this practice, they recommend, whenever possible, asking the individual how they would like to be described. Terminology should be selected on a case-by-case basis. [Entry authored by Jessica Serrao]

National Institute on Drug Abuse. (2021, November 29). Words Matter - Terms to Use and Avoid When Talking About Addiction.

<https://nida.nih.gov/nidamed-medical-health-professionals/health-professions-education/words-matter-terms-to-use-avoid-when-talking-about-addiction>

Web resource discussing language to use when describing persons or topics related to substance use disorder. It advocates for person-first language and avoiding pejorative or stigmatizing terms. Charts are provided outlining preferred terminology for different cases. [Entry authored by Shannon Willis]

North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities. (2021). Glossary of Disability Terms.

<https://nccdd.org/welcome/glossary-and-terms/category/glossary-of-disability-terms/3.html>

As its mission the “North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities works collaboratively, across the State, to assure that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families participate in the design of and have access to needed community services, individualized supports and other forms of assistance that promote self-determination, independence, productivity and inclusion in all areas of community life.” The website provides resources and information relating to the Council’s work, including a glossary.

The Glossary is an online combined A-Z listing of the contents of the Glossary of Disability Terms and the People First Glossary. The former contains terms often used in the disability community while the latter is a list of commonly accepted terms to be used in conjunction with People First language. Each separate glossary is also an A-Z list. There is also a brochure available on the website entitled “People First Language: A Guide for Writing and Speaking About People who Live with Disabilities” (https://nccdd.org/images/article/Forms-docs-brochures/2020/NCCDD_People-first_1702.pdf) which includes tips for reporting on people with disabilities and preferred expressions. [Entry authored by Jim Cross]

Gender and Sexual Orientation

Kronk, C. A. (2020). Gender, Sex, and Sexual Orientation Resource.

<https://gssso.research.cchmc.org/#/>

The GSSO is an ontology originally designed for use by healthcare professionals to improve communication between practitioners and LGBTQIA+ individuals. The controlled vocabulary of terms related to LGBTQIA+ persons and issues (specifically those that would be pertinent in the medical field) are searchable online and browsable from a list. Usage notes are included, both broader and narrower terms listed, and contemporary terms provided for outdated vocabulary. The GSSO is also downloadable for integration into other applications.

The resource is useful for understanding LGBTQIA+ terms with nuanced meanings and for finding more appropriate contemporary terms for outdated ones. The text detector tool can also suggest terms and annotations in the GSSO from provided text. [Entry authored by Shannon Willis]

Immigration

Immigrant Defense Project. (2022, March). Journalist Style Guide, 3rd edition.

<https://www.immigrantdefenseproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2021.07-CommUnity-Style-Guide-R4.pdf>

The *Guide* provides background on the criminal legal and immigration systems and how these two systems intersect when talking about illegal immigration, which disproportionately harms immigrants of color, especially Black immigrants. It contains charts of problematic terms to consider with proposed alternatives. It discusses when immigration status is an irrelevant factor in describing someone, Immigration and Customs Enforcement sensationalizing of cases, and problematic concepts when discussing criminal incarceration and immigration and alternative ways to frame the story. It also makes suggestions regarding interviews with those facing deportation or detention because of a conviction, the use of photographs, and additional sources of information, including the Marshall Project's research on preferred terms when referring to those in the criminal justice system

(<https://www.themarshallproject.org/2021/04/12/the-language-project>). The *Guide* hopes to be “a meaningful contribution to conversations in the newsrooms around language and storytelling regarding immigrants who have had contact with the criminal justice system.”

The *Guide* calls for “people-centered” language and provides preferred alternative terms. The section on when to refer to immigration status is also useful in helping to define descriptive practice. The link to the Marshall Project article in language points out the difficulties in determining what terms to use, since those detained or have been detained in the criminal justice system do not agree themselves on what terms should be preferred when referring to themselves. [Entry authored by Jim Cross]

Race, Ethnicity and Indigenous People

Foreman, P. G., et al. (2022). "Writing about Slavery/Teaching About Slavery: This Might Help" community-sourced document.

<https://naacpculpeper.org/resources/writing-about-slavery-this-might-help/>

A specific terminology perspective as stated in the introduction by "senior slavery scholars of color community-sourced" brief essay. The authors announce that, "this guide is a set of suggestions that raise questions and sensitivities rather than serving as a checklist that enforces any set of orthodoxies." The purpose is "to talk about enslaved people of African descent in these Americas prove insufficient, both for the brutality against them, and for their remarkable overcoming."

Examples recommended to consider adopting and preferred terms would include enslaved (as an adjective), captive, enslaver. Terms to avoid are "slave master", "slave mistress," "slaveholder", or "slave owner". Likewise, principles include using fugitives from slavery, self-liberated, or self-emancipated, rather than "runaway slave." Honor the humanity of millions of people treated as chattel property by naming enslaved people whenever possible. Additional practices to adopt are to capitalize Black, use "enslaver," consider "nation" over "tribe." [Entry authored by Will Hiott]

Japanese American Citizens League. (2020, December). The Power of Words.

<https://jacl.org/power-of-words>

Located in the "Education" section of the Japanese American Citizens League's (JACL) website, the Power of Words is an educational program to understand language euphemisms and preferred vocabulary for describing the Japanese American experience during World War II. The page includes links to the Power of Words handbook (created 2012, updated to version 4 in 2020), an implementation plan, and contact information for the National JACL Power of Words Committee.

The implementation plan discusses actions JACL chapters, districts, and the national organization can do to make the program more widely known. This could be useful to Clemson in that it gives potential points of contact with the JACL and the Japanese American community. The handbook provides a detailed listing and historical background of the euphemisms used to describe Japanese American mass incarceration during World War II and provides more accurate terms to replace these euphemisms. It also briefly discusses the care needed when using the preferred term "concentration camp" because of public confusion of this term with "death camps." [Entry authored by Jim Cross]

Japanese American Digital Archive. (2022). "Terminology." Densho.

<https://densho.org/terminology/>

Originally an organization to document the experience of Japanese American who were incarcerated during World War II, it now sees its mission to educate, preserve, collaborate and inspire action for equity. The website includes a digital repository of oral histories, photographs, documents, and other materials, an encyclopedia, a names registry that is a searchable version of the WRA Form 26 register and Final Accountability Rosters (FAR) providing information about individuals held at the ten War Relocation Authority camps during World War II; an encyclopedia; and educational resources, including those for teachers.

Densho is a community-based initiative. The terminology section discusses the history of the obscuring language used by the government to describe the enforced incarceration and recommends more accurate terms. It also briefly describes the different generations of Japanese immigrants and the terms used for them. The encyclopedia can provide background information, *provided by the community*, for the descriptions that Clemson may create that relate to this topic. In addition, the names registry could provide important biographical information should one of our collections relate to a Japanese American individual incarcerated during World War II. [Entry authored by Jim Cross]

National Archives (2021, April 20). The Archivists Task Force on Racism: Report to the Archivist. <https://www.archives.gov/files/news/archivists-task-force-on-racism-report.pdf>

The Archivist's Task Force on Racism was charged with identifying and recommending solutions to issues stemming from structural racism at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). The 2021 report looks at diversity and inclusion, the employee experience, race-based harassment (these three areas were handled by the main task force), descriptive practices, and museum practices (handled by subgroups). For each area the report recommends immediate and long-term measures for remediation of the issues found by the Task Force. The report also includes a detailed explanation of the process used, key themes from staff comments, glossaries of terms and concepts related to race and racial equality and professional terms, and the detailed reports of the main Task Force and the subgroups.

The Executive Summary identifies themes and recommendations across all the groups which include accountability, resources, internal reflection, outreach, and external partnerships. The Archival Description subgroup recommended alerts for harmful language, differentiating between creator- and NARA-supplied titles, reviewing the catalog for harmful terms and creating a group to address them, improve the basic technology and user interface to enhance discoverability, identify and correct over- and under-described records, ensure that external stakeholders participate in decision-making for description and digitization, provide language translation for the catalog and other NARA sites, and to develop a dedicated working group to ensure that the issues identified are continually addressed as a program rather than as a one-time process. While some of the recommendations are particular to the culture and structure of NARA the report provides a case study of how one organization navigated those

challenges unique to it. The key themes from staff comments were also illuminating since they included comments from those who did not see any problems regarding racism at NARA. [Entry authored by Jim Cross]

National Association of Hispanic Journalists. (2020, August). Cultural Competence Handbook. <https://nahj.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/NAHJ-Cultural-Competence-Handbook.pdf>

A handbook designed for journalists to more accurately and inclusively report on issues related to the Latino community. The manual covers five areas: migration, victims of violence and crime reporting, LGBTQ community, sexism, and medical reporting. Although published by the NAHJ and with a frame intended to elevate the reporting around Hispanic populations, most of the information in the chapters is applicable to all cultural and ethnic groups. The handbook's mission is to promote the idea of cultural competency in journalism.

Since the handbook was written with journalists in mind, the information is geared toward how to report on a story and/or conducting interviews. However, there is some mention of preferred language in some sections as well as promoting person-first language, particularly in the section on Migration and the section on Health Reporting. The section on Sexism also speaks to how to describe and write about women in an equal way (i.e., the same way one would write about a man). [Entry authored by Shannon Willis]

National Library of Australia. (2019). AustLang. <https://collection.aiatsis.gov.au/austlang/search>

Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander vocabularies created and maintained by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS). AustLang is a list of specific language codes that represent aboriginal and indigenous languages in GLAM collections. It was created for GLAM information professionals and community organizations that are preparing their data to ingest into Trove, a collaborative platform with 6 billion digital items on Australian art, culture, and history. [Entry authored by Jessica Serrao]

Racial Equity Tools. (2020). Racial Equity Tools Glossary. <https://www.racialequitytools.org/glossary>

This glossary is one of many resources provided by Racial Equity Tools to address racial inequality. It provides terms and their definitions that are often used when discussing issues related to race. Although racial equity is the glossary's primary focus, it also provides some terms and definitions for conversations related to other identity groups, such as LGBTQIA+, ability, and Native communities. Sources of each definition are provided. [Entry authored by Shannon Willis]

University of British Columbia. (undated). XWI7XWA Library. <https://xwi7xwa.library.ubc.ca/collections/indigenous-knowledge-organization/>

This is a British Columbia First Nations subject headings and classification system developed to classify and organize materials in the UBC library catalog. It uses First Nations House of Learning subject headings to better reflect self-identities of Indigenous Peoples, and traditional knowledge organization and modes of understanding. [Entry authored by Jessica Serrao]

Religion

Harvard University. (2022). The Pluralism Project. <https://pluralism.org/>

The Pluralism Project is an ongoing research effort at Harvard University that studies and interprets religious diversity and interfaith relations in the U.S. It includes a list of religions and links to essays on these religions as well as a glossary of religious groups and religion-related terms. [Entry authored by Jessica Serrao]

Pew Research Center. (). The World's Muslims: Unity and Diversity. <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2012/08/09/the-worlds-muslims-unity-and-diversity-glossary/>

A glossary of terms from the Muslim faith used around the world. It includes definitions for religious movements, sects, faith traditions, beliefs, events, and other Muslim-related terms. [Entry authored by Jessica Serrao]

Appendix 2 - Lexicon of Problematic Language

This lexicon was created by the Inclusive Description Task Force at Clemson Libraries in the fall of 2022. It includes pejorative, outdated and offensive terms about women, BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, people with disabilities, working class or economically disadvantaged people, and over congratulatory or aggrandizing language. These terms will be used to conduct a baseline audit of Libraries collections to determine the level of reparative work that is required and help identify and prioritize cleanup projects. This is not an exclusive list but a starting point to repair and make descriptions more inclusive. The terms were identified as problematic by resources referenced in the [Inclusive Description Annotated Bibliography](#).⁴

Key to Lexicon Color Categories by Identity or Type

Ability
Age
Aggrandizing
Gender
Race, Ethnicity, Indigeneity
Sexual Orientation
Socioeconomic Status

⁴ Most prominently: S. A. Knowlton, (2005), Three Decades Since Prejudices and Antipathies: A Study of Changes in the Library of Congress Subject Headings, *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 40(2), 123-145. https://doi.org/10.1300/J104v40n02_08; Wilson Special Collections Library, (2022), A Guide to Conscious Editing at Wilson Special Collections Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. <https://library.unc.edu/2022/06/conscious-editing-guide/>; National Center on Disability and Journalism. (2021, August). Disability Language Style Guide. <https://ncdj.org/style-guide/>; National Archives (2021, April 20). The Archivists Task Force on Racism: Report to the Archivist. <https://www.archives.gov/files/news/archivists-task-force-on-racism-report.pdf>

- Abnormal(ity)
- Afro-American(s)
- Aged, The
- Aliens
- Amputee
- Asperger's
- Barbarian
- Birth defects
- Blind, The
- Buffoon
- Caucasian
- Chinaman(men)
- Chinese in the U.S.⁵
- Chink(s)
- Colored
- Crazy
- Crippled
- Deaf, The
- Defect
- Deformed
- Delinquent
- Delinquency
- Deranged
- Disabled
- Disfigured
- Disorder
- Dumb
- Elderly, The
- Elderly people
- Elders
- Eskimo(s)
- Freak
- Gay
- Gays
- Ghetto
- Gook(s)
- Half-breed(s)
- Handicapped
- Hearing impaired
- Hispanic
- Homeless, The
- Homosexual(ity)
- Idiot(s)
- Illegal alien(s)
- Illegal immigrant(s)
- Impaired/Impairment
- Impediment
- Indian
- Indians of North America
- Inner-city
- Insane
- Invalid
- Jap(s)
- Japanese in the U.S.⁶
- Lame
- Loony
- Low class
- Mankind
- Manpower
- Mentally defective
- Mentally deficient
- Mentally disabled
- Mentally handicapped
- Mentally ill
- Mentally retarded
- Mexicans in the U.S.⁷
- Midget
- Mongoloid
- Native races
- Negro(es)
- Negroid
- Ni**er(s)
- Oriental(s)
- Paraplegic
- Poverty stricken
- Preeminent
- Primitive
- Projects, The
- Psycho
- Quadriplegic
- Races of man
- Renowned
- Retarded
- Seminal
- Savage
- Senile
- Senior citizens
- Seniors
- Sexual minorities
- Slave(s)
- Slave master
- Slave owner
- Slaveholder
- Spanish American
- Spaz/Spastic
- Special needs
- Squaw(s)
- Tetraplegic
- Transsexual
- Tribe
- Undocumented, The
- Victim
- Welfare mothers
- Welfare reliant
- Wetback(s)
- Wheelchair-bound
- Women in __

⁵ An outdated LCSH that was changed to Chinese American.

⁶ An outdated LCSH that was changed to Japanese American.

⁷ An outdated LCSH that was changed to Mexican American.

The following additional terms may identify sensitive material, but the terms themselves may not necessarily be derogatory or offensive.

Addict	Far East	Race
Alcoholic	Genocide	Race discrimination
Anti-Communist	Junkie	Rape
movements	Ku Klux Klan (KKK)	Slavery in the U.S.
Anti-Semitism/anti-Semitic	Lynching	Social problems
Blackface	Murder	States' rights
Discovery and exploration	Near East	User
Drunk	Poor	

Appendix 3 - Audit Report Overview

Summary

This appendix is an overview of the audits conducted on Libraries collections. For the complete report for each collection area, please see the [Initial Collections Audit Report - Inclusive Description](#).

Why conduct an audit

Remediation of harmful records cannot take place until the Libraries understands what exists in its collections. The Task Force conducted an initial baseline audit to identify areas for improvement. The findings of this audit helped generate the [Reparative Description Priority Actions](#) in this report.

How it was conducted

To conduct the initial audit, the Task Force developed a plan based on recommendations from Sharon Mizota's August 2021 webinar for the Society of American Archivists (SAA), *DEI and Collections Metadata/DEI Audit*. They first identified and created a list of 104 pejorative and offensive terms and their variants that need to be changed based on recommendations from the literature (see [Appendix 2 - Lexicon of Problematic Language](#)). Second, each member conducted a search of existing records in their area/platform of expertise to identify instances of materials that may use the problematic language. Search audits were completed for the finding aids in ArchivesSpace, the library catalog records in Alma, the museum catalog records in PastPerfect, the digital collections in TigerPrints and on the Digital Collections WordPress website, and the Open Parks Network digital collections in WordPress. A sample audit was also completed on a set of materials from the Clemson University Historical Images digital collection in WordPress. These were selected for a deeper audit because they are some of the first digital collections items described by the Libraries and contain older items. Both of these factors indicate that they likely follow more outdated practices and have a higher chance of containing offensive content.

Limitations

Note that not all of the materials identified in the audit are problematic or candidates for remediation. They only have the potential of being so. For example, some search results included instances of an offensive term represented in an organizational name like the South Carolina Association for Retarded Children or the 4-H Negro State Fair. These are unchangeable official names but present a strong use case for a harmful language warning. Because this was a basic initial effort, there are likely instances of terms counted that are used in inoffensive or unproblematic ways, and there are also likely materials that were missed.

Collections Audits

Library catalog records in Alma

The catalog contains two areas in which bias and offensive terms exist that require further examination and remediation: classification numbers and catalog records. Within the catalog

records, two fields--Library of Congress Subject Headings and Notes--were searched for this audit. This is because these are the two most common fields where bias may be introduced by catalogers. The audit revealed the presence of 40 of the 104 problematic terms. Based on the preliminary review of the usage of these, there are likely more instances of non-problematic usage than there are malicious, though it is recommended that further assessment is done to determine this. For example, many of the words are incorporated into complex subjects and do not stand alone. The five predominant problematic terms found are Indians and its variations (9,226 instances), Hearing impaired (4,122), Slaves (1,187), Illegal aliens (744), and Mentally ill (504). Other offensive terms that exist and should be remediated are Savage (2,687 instances, but many are surnames), Oriental (113 instances), Welfare queen (4) and Mongoloid (1).

Archival finding aids in ArchivesSpace

A search for problematic terms was conducted across a list of exported subject terms from ArchivesSpace that are used in the finding aids as well as the ArchivesSpace public user interface (PUI) that searches across all descriptions in the finding aids. The subject terms search resulted in a list of 38 potentially problematic terms. A keyword search was done in the ArchivesSpace PUI across all content in the collections' finding aids. This resulted in a list of 113 collections that contained problematic terms, either in the collection level record or more frequently in folder titles. Eleven of these collections contain five or more terms, with the Strom Thurmond Papers containing the most terms at 37. The five most frequently found terms are Negro (29 collections), Handicapped (21), Senior citizens (17), Manpower (16), and Slave (16).

Digital collections objects in WordPress

Both a sample audit and search audit were conducted across digital collections materials published on the [Clemson Digital Collections](#) website in WordPress.

Sample audit

This sample audit assessed all 558 records in the first five boxes of Series 100, Clemson University Historical Images. Of these records, 13 were found to contain problematic descriptions or content and were not represented properly in the metadata. This includes two instances of blackface that are not described as such, six instances of Black people in photographs with no mention of their race, one instance of crutches with no description of them, and four instances of a woman with a known name that is not included in the metadata.

Search Audit

A search for problematic terms listed in the Lexicon of Problematic Language was conducted across all digital collections on the WordPress site. This audit found 12 potentially problematic terms used to describe subject material, including Jap(s), Indian(s), and Savage. The term with the most instances of use was Negro(es) (29 associated objects). Records using these terms will need to be further assessed to determine what reparative actions should be taken, if any.

Digital collections objects in TigerPrints institutional repository

A search for the problematic terms was conducted across all unique archival digital collections held in TigerPrints. The 12 most frequently occurring terms are:

- Seniors (4,495)
- Colored (3,061)
- The Projects (1,490)
- Oriental(s) (1,472)
- The Aged (1,098)
- Victim (1,010)
- Negro(es) (975)
- Handicapped (792)
- Indian(s) (767)
- Gays (660)
- Disabled (570)
- Crazy (527)

These digital collections are textual documents that contain searchable OCR (optical character recognition) transcripts. Because of this, the audit of these materials resulted in high instances of problematic language. For example, The Tiger student newspaper contained the majority of instances in the text of the articles. The initial audit results require further assessment to separate out cases of derogatory meaning from non-derogatory, and plans to address the problematic instances must be made. For published materials, such as the student newspaper, the terms cannot be changed but are a good use case for content warnings or a disclaimer.

Museum catalog records in PastPerfect

Historic Properties collections at Fort Hill Plantation, Hanover House, and Hopewell are managed in PastPerfect. The search audit of records resulted in minimal to no hits. The few terms that were found included Indian (a Cherokee basket), and African-American (hyphenated). This is due to the primary purpose of the database as a catalog of physical attributes, dimensions, conditions, locations, and provenance. It stores little descriptive information. Therefore, the museum objects require a more nuanced assessment for inclusive description and requires knowledge of existing offensive collection materials, understanding what materials should be displayed and preserved, and how the materials are interpreted. This is particularly true for objects related to the location's history of slavery, and Confederate items collected during the plantation's 60+ years of association with the United Daughters of the Confederacy.

Open Parks Network objects in WordPress

A full audit of metadata used to describe OPN material available in Wordpress was conducted using the Lexicon of Problematic Language as a guide. It should be understood that conducting a thorough audit of OPN metadata is difficult due to the limitations of the search interface. As well, the metadata in OPN does not distinguish between titles derived from the object itself (such as a book title), and titles applied by metadata practitioners. Therefore, not all problematic language found in the audit will need to be remediated. Instead, it might benefit from a disclaimer indicating offensive language and/or images in the objects themselves.

The audit found 30 potentially problematic terms. By far the most applied term was Indian(s) (1,400 records), including the subject heading Indians of North America (110). Not all uses of

Indian(s) are problematic: sometimes the term was in conjunction with an official tribal name (such as Cherokee Indians) or as part of a proper name (such as Indian Key Pass). However, the term was also used on its own to describe Native Americans. Other potentially problematic terms found include Negro(es) (89 records), Elderly people (79), Primitive (46), Slave(s) (34), and Native(s) (16).

It should be noted that a large number of potentially offensive terms and descriptions originated within one collection, [Carl Sandburg's Collection of Stereographs](#). Titles for objects in the collection were sourced from the language of the objects themselves, without this being indicated in the record and without any other description of the object being given. This collection is a good example of why consistent metadata practices for OPN materials should be established and maintained.

Search Audit Results

Problematic Term	Library Catalog ⁸	Archival Finding Aids ⁹	Digital Collections WordPress	Digital Collections IR	Open Parks Network	No. of Total Occurrence
Abnormal(ity)	0	0	0	118	0	118
Afro-American(s)	13	6	0	25	0	44
Aged, The	13	2	0	1,098	0	1,113
Aliens	0	1	0	292	0	293
Amputee	1	1	0	7	2	11
Asperger's	0	0	0	2	0	2
Barbarian	0	0	2	24	0	26
Birth defects	0	2	0	32	0	34
Blind, The	54	8	0	143	1	206
Buffoon	0	0	0	7	0	7
Caucasian	0	1	2	35	0	38
Chinaman(men)	0	0	0	23	6	29
Chinese in the U.S.	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chink(s)	0	0	0	53	0	53
Colored	38 ¹⁰	6	1	3,061	5	3,111
Crazy	6	4	0	527	0	537
Crippled	4	5	0	208	4	221
Deaf, The	20 ¹¹	6	0	24	5	55

⁸ A combination of Note and Subject fields search: Notes facet also appears to pick up subjects (as listed) and title occurrences. Numbers are very preliminary.

⁹ Number of collections in which the terms appear and not the number of individual instances.

¹⁰ Colored people (South Africa)

¹¹ Deaf

Defect	0	0	0	263	0	263
Deformed	0	0	0	36	0	36
Delinquent Delinquency	5 174 ¹²	0 4	0 0	168 0	0 0	173 178
Deranged	0	0	0	21	0	21
Disabled	34 ¹³	6	0	570	1	611
Disfigured	0	0	0	18	0	18
Disorder	12 ¹⁴	1	0	447	1	461
Dumb	7	2	0	272	0	281
Elderly, The	5	5	0	177	4	191
Elderly people	0	1	0	13	79	93
Elders	5	0	0	488	0	493
Eskimo(s)	0	0	0	38	3	41
Freak	0	1	0	162	0	163
Gays	0	1	0	660	0	661
Ghetto	0	0	4	48	0	52
Gook(s)	0	0	0	7	0	7
Half-breed(s)	0	0	0	6 ¹⁵	0	6
Handicapped	0	21	0	792	10	823
Hearing impaired	4,122 ¹⁶	0	0	7	0	4,129
Hispanic	0	5	0	123	1	129
Homeless, The	12 ¹⁷	2	0	46	2	62
Homosexual(ity)	0	0	0	163	0	163
Idiot(s)	0	0	0	179	0	179
Illegal alien(s)	744 ¹⁸	1	0	9	0	754
Illegal immigrant(s)	0	0	1	33	0	34
Impaired/Impairment	6 ¹⁹	0	1	232	0	239
Impediment	0	0	0	39	0	39
Indian(s)	345 ²⁰	13	4	767	1,400	2,529
Indians of North America	7,293 ²¹	0	0	1	110	7,404

¹² Juvenile delinquency

¹³ Disabled veterans

¹⁴ Disorder occurs in LCSH headings

¹⁵ Half-breed and variations

¹⁶ There are 3 instances in LCSH and 4,119 instances in LCGFT related to video recordings for the hearing impaired.

¹⁷ LCSH uses Homeless

¹⁸ Illegal aliens is an obsolete LCSH. There are 744 instances of this in the catalog.

¹⁹ See Hearing impaired

²⁰ There are 324 instances of Indian and 21 instances of Indians.

²¹ 0 occurrences in Notes, but 7293 occur as LCSH

Indians of South America	703	0	0	0	0	703
Indians of Mexico	631	0	0	0	0	631
Indians of Central America	200	0	0	0	0	200
Indians of the West Indies	54	0	0	0	0	54
Inner-city	0	0	0	46	2	48
Insane	0	1	0	190	0	191
Invalid (noun)	0	0	0	160	0	160
Jap(s)	0	2	4	117	1	124
Japanese in the U.S.	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lame	0	0	0	154	0	154
Loony	0	0	0	13	0	13
Low class	0	0	0	8	0	8
Mankind	0	1	0	418	0	419
Manpower	341 ²²	16	0	214	3	574
Mentally defective	0	0	0	2	0	2
Mentally deficient	0	0	0	7	0	7
Mentally disabled	1 ²³	1	0	11	0	13
Mentally handicapped	1 ²⁴	2	0	14	0	17
Mentally ill	504 ²⁵	3	0	43	0	550
Mentally retarded	0	4	0	47	0	51
Mexicans in the U.S.	0	0	0	0	0	0
Midget	0	1	0	64	0	66
Mongoloid	1 ²⁶	0	0	1	0	2
Native races	32 ²⁷	0	0	0	16	48
Negro(es)	59 ²⁸	29	23	975	89	1,175
Negroid	0	0	0	1	0	1
Ni**er(s)	0	0	0	88	1	89
Oriental(s)	113 ²⁹	0	0	1,472	6	1,591
Paraplegic	0	0	0	9	0	9
Poverty stricken	0	0	0	23	0	23
Preeminent	0	1	0	28	0	29
Primitive	339	0	0	95	46	480

²² Manpower policy

²³ Learning disabled children

²⁴ 1 Occurrence as a subdivision

²⁵ Mental illness

²⁶ Mongoloid race

²⁷ Occurs as a subdivision

²⁸ Negro Leagues other title or organizational references

²⁹ Oriental as adjective

Projects, The	0	0	0	1,490	11	1,501
Psycho	0	0	0	68	0	68
Quadriplegic	0	0	0	4	0	4
Races of man	3,301 ³⁰	0	0	2	0	3,303
Renowned	0	1	0	319	0	320
Retarded	0	5	0	206	2	67
Savage	2,687 ³¹	0	2	277	8	2,964
Seminal	0	0	0	40	0	40
Senile	32 ³²	0	0	21	0	53
Senior citizens	0	17	0	116	0	133
Seniors	11 ³³	3	0	4,495	0	4,506
Sexual minorities	62	0	0	1	0	63
Slave(s)	1,187 ³⁴	16	0	307	34	1,544
Slave master(s)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Slave owner(s)	0	0	0	7	0	7
Slaveholder(s)	66	1	0	3	0	70
Spanish American(s)	61 ³⁵	0	0	40	0	101
Spaz	0	0	0	2	0	2
Spastic	0	0	0	6	0	6
Special needs	1 ³⁶	2	0	92	1	96
Squaw(s)	0	0	0	14	2	16
Tetraplegic	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transsexual	0	0	0	5	0	5
Tribe	0	4	6	136	14	160
Undocumented, The	0	0	0	1	0	1
Victim	925 ³⁷	2	0	1,010	4	1,941
Welfare mother(s)	0	0	0	6	0	6
Welfare queen(s)	4	0	0	1	0	5
Welfare reliant	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wetback(s)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wheelchair-bound	0	0	0	2	3	5
Women in __	3,313	0	2	429	0	3,742

³⁰ Race relations

³¹ Occurs 2,687 times as subject, including authority names with last name of Savage.

³² Senile dementia

³³ As grade level!

³⁴ 4 Occurrences of Slave in Notes, 398 as subjects. 785 occurrences of Slaves (plural) as subject.

³⁵ 4 Occurrences of Spanish American in Notes. 57 occurrences of Spanish Americans (plural) in subjects.

³⁶ Special needs adoption

³⁷ In various LCSH

Appendix 4 - List of Potential Campus and Community Partners

This is a preliminary list of potential campus and community partners that could be integral in this work. These may be individual experts, community groups, committees, student groups, or other entities that represent underrepresented groups based on the identities below. This list is not exhaustive and in no particular order. An additional list can be found on the [Living in the Upstate LibGuide](#).

General University Contact

- Harvey and Lucinda Gantt Multicultural Center, Clemson University (campus)

Ability

- Able South Carolina (community)
- Clemson University Accessibility Commission (campus)
- American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, [South Carolina Chapter](#) resource list (community)
- ClemsonLIFE (campus)
- Clemson Autism Advocacy and Inclusion (campus)
- Delta Alpha Pi (campus)
- [SCIWay](#) disability resources (community)
- [South Carolina Disability Services](#) list of resources (community)
- Spectrum Program (campus)

Age

- AARP in South Carolina (community)
- Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (community)
- Clemson Institute for Engaged Aging (campus)

Gender and Sexual Orientation

- Clemson University Commission on Women (campus)
- Clemson University LGBTQ Commission (campus)
- Clemson University Sexuality & Gender Alliance (campus)
- Clemson Queer Students of Color Association (campus)
- [South Carolina Black Pride](#) (community)
- [South Carolina Equality Coalition](#) (community)
- [PFLAG Greenville](#) | [PFLAG Spartanburg](#) (community)

Race, Ethnicity and Indigenous Peoples

- Clemson University Asian Pacific Islander Desi American Commission (campus)
- Asian Student Association (campus)
- Clemson University Commission on the Black Experience (campus)
- Dr. Rhondda Thomas, Call My Name Project, Clemson University (campus)
- Clemson Black Student Union (campus)
- Angela Agard and William Frost, Clemson Area African American Museum (community)
- Decolonize Clemson (community)
- Federally recognized tribal groups (community)
 - Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians

- Cherokee Nation
- State recognized tribal groups (community)
 - Piedmont American Indian Association - Lower Eastern Cherokee Nation SC
 - Eastern Cherokee, Southern Iroquois, and United Tribes of South Carolina
- Christine Anderson, Director of Archives for the Native Studies Center, University of South Carolina-Lancaster (community)
- Clemson University Commission on Latino Affairs (campus)
- Latinos Unidos at Clemson University (campus)
- International Student Association (campus)
- Clemson Indian Students' Association (campus)
- Chinese Students and Scholars Association (campus)
- Bangladesh Association Clemson (campus)
- Clemson Iranian Students Organization (campus)
- Clemson Area International Friendship (community)