

Controlled Vocabularies Working Group

Charge

This group will develop and implement strategies to promote inclusive practices around standard controlled vocabularies used by Cornell University Library. This may include local best practices for creating name authority records, application of subject headings, and taking action to address problematic language in extant controlled vocabularies. We regularly seek input from colleagues and users, consulting with appropriate subject matter experts in order to counter our own inherent biases and gaps in knowledge.

This is ongoing work, performed by members of this group. We welcome input and collaboration with any other interested staff members.

This work will include, but not be limited to the following:

- Promote a culture of questioning/interrogating controlled vocabularies and their application in bibliographic descriptions; Provide support for implementing the IDPTF Best Practices documents as they relate to controlled vocabularies
 - Cultivate relationships with patron facing library staff to facilitate identification of problematic language in the catalog
 - Document processes for responding to and addressing issues raised by CUL staff or patrons related to inaccurate, problematic, or harmful subject terms.
- Respond to issues that come to our attention around controlled vocabularies
 - Investigate
 - Consult with appropriate subject matter experts
 - Develop action plan and identify resources
 - Communicate results of investigations and actions we're taking with any stakeholders
- Promote and facilitate application of inclusive principles to named agents across various schemas.
- Identify, implement, and advance awareness of controlled vocabularies (e.g., Homosaurus, AAT) in addition to LCSH to enhance representation of marginalized communities, topics, or perspectives, and to combat LCSH's unspoken norms of heterosexuality, Christianity, maleness, whiteness, etc.
- Systematically identify and document areas where existing subject treatment is inadequate (e.g., women, underrepresented groups)
 - Prioritize which of these we are able to address actively in our data, and develop workflows to identify materials needing this attention (e.g., specific collections or call number ranges) in both regular and batch cataloging.
 - Regularly review our progress and priorities.

Membership

- [Whitney Christopher](#)
- [Jenn Colt](#)
- [Laura E. Daniels](#)
- [Steven Folsom](#)
- [Jackie Magagnosc](#)
- [Indica Mattson](#) (lead)
- [Margaret Nichols](#)
- [Nicholas Norton](#)