Proposal to LSP Governance Committee

Submitted by: Cataloging Work Group
Date: February 5, 2021
Topic: Change display of racist LCSH terms related to undocumented immigrants in NZ

Summary of problem:

Library of Congress Subject Headings include terms related to noncitizens and undocumented immigrants that are pejorative and offensive to many users of OneSearch. This problem has been well documented and discussed among librarians since 2016 when proposed changes to the terminology by the Library of Congress were rejected by Congress, and unable to be implemented. Since then, the American Library Association's Subject Analysis Committee has recommended specific changes to the terminology ([Report 2016](), [Attachment 6]()) and that libraries should make changes locally, rather than wait on the Library of Congress to act ([Report 2020, p 8]()).

Non-preferred terminology appears in several places in OneSearch, including topic facets and full record view details for subjects (see appendix, figure 1). Changes within our consortium are possible as follows:
- Network Zone linked bibliographic records can be changed centrally to use preferred terminology
- Local college or district Alma institutions can change
  - Subject display settings to transform or hide non-preferred terminology in full record display
  - Subjects in institution zone bibliographic records (any not linked to the NZ)

Changes cannot be made by our consortium or college/district institutions to portfolio records from electronic collections that are part of the Community Zone. Offensive terminology will still be visible in OneSearch depending on the source of the record. Although vendor records are increasingly being changed to use preferred vocabulary, it is not consistent. Advocating for change by vendors could be a next step on this front.

This proposal presents the Cataloging Work Group's recommendation for solving the problem through changes to subject headings made centrally within the Network Zone and/or in combination with local college or district Alma institutions. The changes will only affect Alma bibliographic records. Non-preferred terminology appearing in non-subject heading fields will not be replaced (e.g., 245 title, 505 content notes, etc.).

Recommendation:

Implement one of the two options outlined below, according to the priorities of the LSP Governance Committee. Preferred terminology is outlined in Table 1 of the Appendix.

Two options stand out as best possible solutions to this problem for our consortium. One solution, favored by most members of the Cataloging Work Group, prioritizes the user experience by removing offensive terminology from subjects and browseable topics altogether. The other, preferred by a minority of Cataloging Work Group members, prioritizes flexibility and catalog record integrity, by allowing college/district Alma institutions to make local decisions about how terminology will display. Additional pros and cons will be briefly outlined below.

See "Appendix, Section 2" for additional details about these and other options the Cataloging Work Group considered for this project.

Option: Prioritize the User Experience

How it works: Network Zone replaces non-preferred terminology found in MARC 6XX for all bibliographic records linked to the NZ. Essentially, non-preferred terminology is updated through a "find and replace" type function.

Pros:
- User experience is optimized--Non-preferred terminology will no longer appear[1] in display of record subjects or topic facets
- This option is the least burdensome to the LSP librarians. A centrally managed solution, means the work is completed at the NZ level. Individual colleges/districts need not make additional changes to NZ linked bibliographic records

Cons:
- Subject searches will no longer retrieve results for the non-preferred terminology, though keyword searches will. Subject authority records would not be updated to help provide "see" or "see also" results
- Network Zone linked records will no longer match OCLC master records or terminology found in subject authority files

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[1] Caveat: Local Institution Zone bibliographic records and Community Zone portfolio records from electronic collections may still include non-preferred terminology

- Batch cleanup work *may* be required when/if Library of Congress moves forward with universally updating this terminology

Option: Prioritize Flexibility

How it works: Network Zone inserts preferred terminology in MARC 69X for all NZ linked bibliographic AND colleges/districts make local subject display changes in their Alma institution. Essentially, preferred terminology is added to all impacted records, and local institutions may choose to hide or uniquely transform non-preferred terminology.

Pros:
- Non-preferred terminology is not displayed in full record details *only when subject display rules hide or transform it*
- Preferred *and non-preferred* terminology is always displayed in browseable topics/subject facets
- Colleges / districts prioritize how and which terminology to display locally
- Catalog record integrity is maintained by matching Alma bibliographic records to OCLC master record, and subject authority records
- Non-preferred terminology that aligns with legal definitions is indexed
- No batch record cleanup required when/if Library of Congress updates subject headings universally

Cons:
- Non-preferred terminology is always displayed in full record details *when no local subject display rules are put in place to hide or transform it*
- Non-preferred terminology is always displayed in browseable topics/subject facets
- Local changes are more flexible with this option but may be burdensome for institutions, which must independently do work to implement changes
- Appearance and display of terminology will be inconsistent across the consortium, which may have a negative impact on OneSearch users who use search at more than one college/institution. This may have implications when resource sharing between the colleges is expanded through interlibrary loan.

Appendix

Section 1. Figures and Tables

Figure 1. Screenshots of non-preferred terminology as it appears in OneSearch

Cañada College OneSearch, full record display "Details" includes non-preferred terminology

Cañada College OneSearch, search results subject or topic facet includes non-preferred terminology

Table 1. Subject Headings to Change

The table lists the proposed changes to Library of Congress Subject Headings, and corresponds to alternate subject headings proposed by ALA's Subject Analysis Committee.

"Illegal aliens" and derivatives are replaced with "Undocumented immigrants." "Aliens" and derivatives are typically replaced with "Noncitizens." However, some variations apply.

LCSH	Preferred Terminology
Alien criminals	Noncitizen criminals
Alien detention centers	Immigrant detention centers
Alien property	Foreign-owned property
Aliens	Noncitizens
Aliens in art	Noncitizens in art
Aliens in literature	Noncitizens in literature
Aliens in mass media	Noncitizens in mass media
Aliens in motion pictures	Noncitizens in motion pictures
Relations with aliens	Relations with noncitizens
Taxation of aliens	Taxation of noncitizens
Church work with aliens	Church work with noncitizens
Deportation of aliens	Deportation of noncitizens
Illegal alien children	Undocumented immigrant children
Illegal aliens	Undocumented immigrants
Illegal aliens in literature	Undocumented immigrants in literature
Children of illegal aliens	Children of undocumented immigrants
Women illegal aliens	Women undocumented immigrants

Table notes: Terminology in **bold** is specifically named in [SAC Working Group's proposed revisions to LCSH](). Changes to derivatives can be inferred, and aligns with what other institutions, including CSUs are doing. The change from "Alien property" to "Foreign-owned property" is from changes implemented at SUNY.

Section 2. Cataloging Work Group considerations and options

The Cataloging Workgroup referred to the [resolution adopted by the American Library Association](#) and the [SAC Working Group document on Alternatives to LCSH "Illegal Aliens"](#) to replace the term "Illegal aliens" with "Undocumented immigrants."

The goal is to have the strongest impact on the user experience. If and when the Library of Congress makes universal changes, the Cataloging Work Group and representative NZ Task Force members who participated in the discussion believe that the additional technical work needed to clean up edited records would be worth the effort. For institutions to benefit from these changes, IZ records with OCLC numbers need to be linked to the NZ.

The NZ Administrator, when hired, could perform maintenance updates via a regularly scheduled job.

Four options considered by Cataloging Work Group (in no particular order)

Option 1: Network Zone MARC 69X & local subject display changes
Network Zone adds preferred terminology to NZ shared records: 1) Runs job to update existing MARC records in 69X, and 2) creates an import profile to handle adding preferred terminology in the local subject fields (69X) as new records are added or updated from OCLC. Additionally, institutions are strongly encouraged to add a local subject display rule to transform and hide non-preferred terminology, and to run jobs and add rules to make changes to any IZ records (not linked to NZ).
Result: Non-preferred terminology is not displayed, integrity is maintained in matching Alma bibliographic records to OCLC master record, and OneSearch functions properly, including indexing and facets for preferred terminology.
Caveat: Facets or topics area in Primo may display both preferred and non-preferred terminology. Local changes are more flexible with this option but may be burdensome for institutions. This leaves legally-mandated terms in place in the records. Allows institutions to select how they would like to address the issue.

Option 2: Network Zone MARC 69X only
Network Zone adds preferred terminology to NZ shared records: 1) Runs job to update existing MARC records in 69X, and 2) creates an import profile to handle adding preferred terminology in the local subject fields (69X) as new records are added or updated from OCLC.
Result: Displays of both preferred and non-preferred terminology. Integrity is maintained in matching Alma bibliographic records to OCLC master record. Local colleges (institutions) still have the option to implement display changes independently.

Option 3: Network Zone MARC 6XX only
Network Zone adds preferred terminology to NZ shared records by overwriting non-preferred terminology. 1) Network Zone runs job to update existing records, and creates an import profile to handle adding preferred terminology in the LC subject fields (6XX).
Result: Displays of only preferred terminology, results in loss of integrity in matching Alma bibliographic records to OCLC master records. Indexing and facets in OneSearch work properly, and do not display non-preferred terminology. Requires no changes at institution level. Cleanup of these altered records would be necessary if OCLC adopts the changes to its records. This option is the least burdensome to the LSP librarians. The work is completed at NZ level only. This option supports our LSP institution members. Keyword searches would only retrieve the non-preferred terms but subject searches would not retrieve results. Subject authorities would not be updated.

Option 4: Local changes only
Institutions add a local subject display rule to transform and hide non-preferred terminology in full record display details. This option is currently available to institutions. Indexing on preferred terminology does not occur, and non-preferred terminology still appears in topic facets.