Engaging Student Employees with DEIA: 
Team-Driven Conscious Editing for Special Collections Metadata and Archival Description

Dr. Amanda Boczar (She/Her/Hers)  
Operations Manager, Special Collections

Sydney Jordan (She/Her/Hers)  
Coordinator, LGBTQ+ Collections, Special Collections

Mimi Coto (They/Them/Theirs)  
M.A. Student, English

Emma Frank (She/Her/Hers)  
Conscious Editing Intern, B.A. Student, History/English
Conscious Editing – Getting Started

• Holistic Collection Reconciliation
• Reevaluation of Strategic Collecting Areas
• ArchivesSpace Clean Up
• COVID-19
Conscious Editing in Practice - Internships

Project Description: The Special Collections Conscious Editing intern will assist with the evaluation and editing of catalog and finding aid descriptions for special collections books and archives. The intern will examine the item or collection documentation to suggest inclusive language and updated Library of Congress (LOC) subject headings to better reflect the diverse content of Special Collections materials. Specific areas of focus may include LBGTQ+ literature and archives, African American Experience in Florida, and diversity in Children and Young Adult Literature. Interns will also have the opportunity to support the department through promotion and outreach opportunities to share their experiences with these collections. Through this internship, students will help Special Collections better showcase the diverse nature of their holdings through improved discoverability and the promotion of diverse and inclusive research.

Describe anticipated student outcomes and benefits:
Students will learn about conscious editing in archives, cataloging principles related to assigning LOC subject headings, the process for proposing new LOC subject headings, archives processing, and library outreach. Each element of this project will allow students to hone their skills for research, critical thinking, and attention to detail.
Pedagogy – For All

• Syllabus:
  • Reading List
  • Project Suggestions
  • Outcomes to work with book, archival, and digital collections
  • Efforts to engage in outreach through social media and exhibits

• Open Dialog

• Adapt to Opportunity
  • Events
  • Instruction
# Project Breakdown

## Projects:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Learning Objective</th>
<th>Deliverable</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1: Reading Notebook</td>
<td>Theoretical understanding</td>
<td>Update notebook weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2: Book Subject Heading Analysis</td>
<td>Conscious Editing of LOC Subject Headings</td>
<td>Work on spreadsheet of subject headings in collection of choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3: Archival Finding Aid Review</td>
<td>Collection processing; Conscious editing.</td>
<td>Evaluate finding aids related to subject of choice; Or develop one for new collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4: Digital Collections Metadata Review</td>
<td>Metadata; Digital Preservation Lifecycle</td>
<td>Assess and update metadata for the Bobby Smith collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5: Report and Presentation on suggested changes to LOC</td>
<td>Conscious Editing of LOC Subject Headings</td>
<td>Prepare a report that outlines the submission options and process for changes to LOC terms and include list of terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6: Outreach</td>
<td>Library outreach and promotion; Participation in collaborative research</td>
<td>Submit 20 possible Instagram posts; Participate in conferences or webinars related to your work; pursue publishing opportunities</td>
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</tbody>
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Initial Evaluations

• Why now?
  • Business & Implementation Plans
  • Multiple software migrations
  • Embedded position for cataloging and archival processing
  • Restructured internship program
    • Practical work experience
    • Deliverables that enhance resumes
  • Newly emerging models of instruction
Needs Assessment

• What exists and what is needed?
  • Online research guides
  • Existing subject headings and definitions
• Library of Congress subject specific guidance
• Demonstrated successes
  • Asexuality (sexual orientation), Asexual people
• Literature review
• Radical and critical cataloging
• Serving the community
Methodology

- Multiple softwares = multiple approaches
- Identity-first language
- Historical context vs contemporary use
  - Access points for researchers
- Editing within existing frameworks
  - Controlled vocabularies of Library of Congress
  - 500 fields
- Improved tracing between archival and cataloged resources
- Uniformity of language to maximize search results
- Collaboration with subject specialists
- Flagging and tracking terms
The Ted Hipple Internship Experience: Balancing work as an Undergraduate

● Treated internship as another course (3 credits)
  ○ Turned in a “weekly journal assignment” on Canvas to advisor, Dr. Jessica Cook
  ○ Weekly meeting with Amanda
  ○ Ability to make a flexible schedule around my academic courses-- alleviating stress

● COVID-19 Flexibility and safety -- use of Microsoft Teams
  ○ Utilizing work from home and building on team skills, learning to ask for help!

● How it paid off as a student and eventual graduate student
  ○ Undergraduate Research Conference, Story Map, LOC List, continuing library work
  ○ Expanding interests in the literary field, gained archival and library skills
Conscious Editing in Hipple: LGBTQ+ Inclusivity through Subject Headings

Conscious Editing
○ Actively monitoring and changing archival descriptions, allows archivists the ability to shape searches and descriptions that directly affect student research experience
○ Increase in LGBTQ+ inclusivity and diversity in the library system leads to ease of access when searching for LGBTQ+ materials

Editing Process (USF Library Online, GoodReads, WorldCat, Microsoft Excel)

1. Identify LGBTQ+ Content
2. Evaluate Current Subject Headings
3. Review Titles-- What’s Missing?
4. Important Labels Within Excel Doc
   ● Library of Congress term list
     ○ Transsexual replace with Transgender, Added terms: Asexual Youth, Genderqueer
Spring 2021 Undergraduate Research Conference

- Introduced to URC by Amanda, preparing while balancing Hipple/class
- Focus on Conscious Editing and its impact on LGBTQ+ community, library diversity
  - Introduce the conscious editing initiative
  - Process and methods of updating subject headings
  - Hipple Collection at Midterm point
  - Library of Congress list and future benefits
- Main tasks: poster and presentation (online)
- Best of Arts & Humanities Award
- Personal benefit: More preparation for graduate level work, connection to Hipple and LGBTQ+ academic interest, showcasing Hipple work
LGBTQ+ Inclusion through Conscious Editing

By Maria “Mimi” Coto
With Amanda Bocar (Department of English)

ABSTRACT
Throughout the Spring semester, I’ve been working with USF Library’s Ted Hippie Collection of Young Adult Literature to update LGBTQ+ subject headings and ultimately send an updated term list proposal to the Library of Congress. This process is done through conscious editing, which allows researchers to actively monitor and change archival descriptions, resulting in updated language and an increase in diversity. The importance of updating text’s subject headings includes removing offensive or outdated language, ease of access for research, as well as promoting inclusivity within the library. I intend to discuss the process of conscious editing, what the results look like, and how it can both diversify the collection and impact the LGBTQ+ community on a broader spectrum.

INTRODUCTION
The USF Ted Hippie Collection of Young Adult Literature contains pieces of LGBTQ+ literature that vary from original manuscripts, special edition archives, and popular young adult titles. Students are able to visit the archives located on the library’s fourth floor, to explore over 7,000 texts. The Ted Hippie Internship has consisted largely of closely examining existing subject headings, with intention to review any LGBTQ+ terms used. If LGBTQ+ terms used in subject headings are found to be offensive or outdated, they are replaced with updated and inclusive terms. If such subject headings don’t exist, appropriate terms would then be suggested and listed. This extensive process is known as conscious editing, which is “an active, critical awareness of bias, privilege, and power and an ethos of deliberate care used in the assessment, creation, and refinement of descriptive texts” (“Conscious Editing Initiative”). Conscious editing allows archivists the ability to shape searches and descriptions that effect user research experience (Berry). The intention of conscious editing of the Ted Hippie Collection is to increase LGBTQ+ language inclusion and diversity, while allowing researchers a more ease of access, when searching for LGBTQ+ materials.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Click here to insert your Methods and Materials text. Type it in or copy and paste from your Word document or other source.

This text box will automatically re-size to your text. To turn off that feature, right click inside this box and go to Format Shape, Text Box, AutoFit, and select the “Do Not AutoFit” radio button.

PROCEDURE/METHODS
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This text box will automatically re-size to your text. To turn off that feature, right click inside this box and go to Format Shape, Text Box, AutoFit, and select the “Do Not AutoFit” radio button.

To change the font style of this text box: Click on the border once to highlight the entire box, then select a different font or font size that suits you. This text is Calibri 32pt and is easily read up to 4 feet away on a 36x48 poster.

Zoom out to 100% to preview what this will look like on your printed poster.

Speaking of Results, yours will look better if you remember to run a spell-check on your poster! After you’ve added your content click on Review, Spelling, or press F7.

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FUTURE OUTCOME
Click here to insert your Conclusions text. Type it in or copy and paste from your Word document or other source.

This text box will automatically re-size to your text. To turn off that feature, right click inside this box and go to Format Shape, Text Box, AutoFit, and select the “Do Not AutoFit” radio button.

REFERENCES
1. Click here to insert your References. Type it in or copy and paste from your Word document or other source.
2. Click on the border once to highlight and select a different font or font size that suits you. This text is Calibri 32pt and is easily read up to 3 feet away.

1. Click here to insert your Discussion text. Type it in or copy and paste from your Word document or other source.

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To change the background color of any text box, click once on the box so it is outlined with a dashed border. Then select Shape Fill from the Drawing Tools, Format tab on the ribbon bar above. It’s the one with the “paint can” icon.

1. Click here to insert your Discussion text. Type it in or copy and paste from your Word document or other source.

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BEST OF
Arts &
Humanities

Maria Coto

LGBTQ+ Inclusion through Conscious Editing

Office of Undergraduate Research
University of South Florida

April 6, 2021 Undergraduate Research Conference Presentation Award
Looking Back: Digital Humanities Internship

- Brought on as the Digital Humanities Intern
  - "Queer Life and Literature in the 19th Century"
- Accessibility Barriers and Subject Headings
  - Ex: Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*
- Questions Going into This Semester
  1. Why have inaccurate subject headings (or none at all) when language does exist to describe these items?
  2. How do we fix this problem and make archival materials more accessible?

Pictured Right: *Leaves of Grass* (1900)
Systemic Issues: Conscious Editing Internship

- Queer Literature Collection
  - 2,000+ items, community created
- Systemic Issues with Subject Headings
  - Language inadequate and severely outdated (ie. "homosexuality" and "sexual minority")
  - Leads to inaccuracy and accessibility issues
- Limited by LOC Subject Heading System
  - How do we work around it?

## Proposed Solution: "Related Topics" Method

- **Erin Baucom and "An Exploration into Archival Descriptions of LGBTQ Materials"**
  - Add commonly used terms in "Related Topics"
  - Heightens accessibility and accuracy

- **A Work in Progress**
  - Making archives accessible while LOC system is being updated (lengthy process)

- **Community Created and Focused**
  - Look towards community members and in-field researchers for guidance

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Subject Headings</th>
<th>Proposed &quot;Related Topic&quot;</th>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Homosexuals,&quot; &quot;Gays,&quot; &quot;Sexual minority&quot;</td>
<td>LGBTQ+ individuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Homosexuality&quot;</td>
<td>Homoeroticism OR Same-gender attraction</td>
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</table>
Going Forward

• Assessment
• Course Curricula
• Fall Term Interns
Questions?

Contact us:

Dr. Amanda Boczar, Operations Manager - amandaboczar@usf.edu
Sydney Jordan, Collections Coordinator, sydneyjordan@usf.edu
Mimi Coto, M.A. Student, English
Emma Frank, Conscious Editing Intern, B.A. Student, History/English
Links

- Virtual Instruction Sessions: https://lib.usf.edu/special-collections/tampa/instruction-sessions/
- Internship Projects: https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/4a02c9b9aa8a4047a0029e0062a816ac
- Queer Life & Literature in the 19th Century (Emma Frank): https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/4a02c9b9aa8a4047a0029e0062a816ac?item=1
- USF's Ted Hipple Collection of Young Adult Literature (Mimi Coto): https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/4a02c9b9aa8a4047a0029e0062a816ac?item=2M
- LGBTQ+ Inclusion through Conscious Editing, USF 2021 Undergraduate Research Conference Presentation (Mimi Coto): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fzdImzR1uw4