Virtual AskQC Office Hours

Debiasing Dewey: Righting the past by rewriting the classification

OCLC Metadata Quality

July 2023
Housekeeping

This session is being recorded
Housekeeping

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All session recordings, slides, and notes are available at oc.lc/askqc
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Enter questions in chat to “Everyone” at any time during the presentation
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After the session, you will be directed to a brief, optional survey.

Virtual AskQC Office Hours feedback survey

Please take a moment to provide feedback on today's office hours. The responses are for informational purposes only and optional. Thank you for attending today's session.

1. What was the date of the session you would like to comment on? 

   Please input date in format of DD/MM/YYYY.

2. Did you find today's session useful?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Sort of

3. Why did you choose the answer you did in question 2?

4. Are there topics you would like us to cover in the future?
On the call today

Cynthia Whitacre
Senior Metadata Operations Manager

Alex Kyrios
Senior Dewey Editor

Kathryn Becker
Dewey Editor in Residence

Bryan Baldus
Senior Data Analyst
DEBIASING DEWEY

RIGHTING THE PAST BY REWRITING THE CLASSIFICATIONS
FIRST THINGS FIRST: HOW TO CHANGE THE DDC

- Continuous process
- Dewey editorial team
- Suggestions received from dewey@oclc.org
- Library of Congress classifiers
- Historic events
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHANGE PROCESS</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify the problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research the literary warrant and current knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decide—is this a new topic or a change to an existing topic?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create an exhibit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHANGE PROCESS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present to the editorial review committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make revisions and corrections</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make revisions and corrections</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Submit exhibit to Editorial Policy Committee

EPC is made of 10 international librarians meeting once a year in person, and at least once electronically

Back to the drawing board! Make revisions/corrections for resubmission via email or for the next EPC meeting.

Congratulations! Your exhibit has been approved and will be published!
THE BIG PICTURE: EARLY BRAINSTORMING

- Terms for groups of people
- Names of Indigenous peoples
- LGBTQIA+ topics
- Western bias
- Christian bias
EPC 143-T1.2
TERMINOLOGY FOR GROUPS OF PEOPLE

Led by Kelly West

Aliens → Noncitizens

Bisexuals → Bisexual people (etc.)

Investigated further terms
FOCUS: DEWEY CARE ABOUT PEOPLE?
YOU BET WE DO!

- Groups of people
- Suggested topic creation
- LGBTQIA+ topics
Inconsistences were found of reductive single-word terms, specifically “Blacks” instead of “Black people”

Ongoing debate about capitalization amongst publishers

“Caucasian race” needed to be addressed

“of African origin” qualifier and discussion on descent vs ancestry
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHERE TO BEGIN?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Historic bias</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underrepresentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicalizing people</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EPC I44-S79.1
“WE’RE ALL BORN NAKED, AND THE REST IS DRAG”
—RUPAUL

Born from a librarian request

792.028 Acting and performance, but that wasn’t quite right

306.778 Transvestism (hierarchy of sexual practices), isn’t right either

Created a new division under Stage presentation with 792.72 Drag
Drag included a lot of discussion on cross dressing.

306.778 Transvestism (Sexual practices hierarchy) became a catch-all for any works about cross dressing, regardless of the intention.

Current proposal relocates cross dressing to a new 391 division, while “sexual cross dressing” becomes a new term and is absorbed with 306.777.
If it was easy, it would have been done already.

616.8583 Sexual disorders and gender-identity disorders

Problematic for several reasons, to include proximity to sex addiction and sexual abuse of children

Instructions to class elsewhere, but it didn’t always happen

Changing and adding terms to current division making it 616.8527 Depressive disorder and dysphoria
### WHAT’S ON DECK?

- Use of outdated terms and what to do about them
- Separating sexual orientation and gender identity
- Examine other areas that may need attention
- Continuation of debiasing terms, headings, and divisions
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTDATED TERMS</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian race</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mongoloid race</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australoid race</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONFUSING TERMS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Orientation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender Identity</td>
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<tr>
<td>NEURODIVERSITY</td>
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<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autism, Asperger’s, and PDD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADHD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other differences</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Other Areas Needing Attention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous Peoples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200s Religion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400s Languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>800s Literature</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ANY QUESTIONS?

dewey@ocl.org
ddc.typepad.com
On the call today

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Thank you!

**August Virtual AskQC Office Hours**
Rapid Harm Reduction with Locally Preferred Subjects in WorldCat Discovery

Tuesday, 8 Aug. at 10:00 AM Eastern
Thursday, 17 Aug. at 4:00 PM Eastern

**Registration and session links available at** [oc.loc/askqc](http://oc.loc/askqc)

Send cataloging policy questions at any time to askqc@oclc.org

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