

#Freiraum2023

Was bedeutet "Dekolonialisierung" für Bibliotheken?

**Zitate-Auswahl aus den
„*Statements on bias in library and archives
description*“ zusammengestellt von der
Cataloginglab-Initiative
(<https://cataloginglab.org>)**

Yale University Library (USA), Statement on Harmful Language in Archival Description

Yale Library

FIND, REQUEST, AND USE

HELP AND RESEARCH SUPPORT

VISIT AND STUDY

EXPLORE COLLECTIONS

ABOUT US

Yale University Library Research Guides / Research Support and Library Services / Guide to Using Special Collections at Yale University /

Statement on Harmful Language in Archival Description

Guide to Using Special Collections at Yale University: Statement on Harmful Language in Archival Description

[Home](#) [Find & Request](#) [Register](#) [Reading Room Policies](#) [Visit](#) [Rights and Permissions](#) [Additional Collections at Yale](#) [Citation Guidelines](#)
[Statement on Harmful Language in Archival Description](#) [Information for Non-Yale Researchers](#) [Reproductions](#)

Statement on Harmful Language in Archival Description

Yale University aims to create archival description – including finding aids, catalog records, and other metadata – that is inclusive, respectful, and does not cause harm to those who interact with our collections. This includes those who create, use, and are represented in the collections we steward. We acknowledge that our existing description may contain language that is racist, sexist, colonialist, homophobic, or that uses other offensive terms that may cause harm. This language may result from archival description that has been created over the years by creators of collection material, previous stewards, or by Yale staff since acquisition.

Recognizing the need to address outdated and harmful archival description, the Archival and Manuscript Description Committee charged the [Reparative Archival Description \(RAD\) task force](#) with providing guidelines to remediate existing archival description and create anti-oppressive archival description in the future. This work includes ongoing research and integration of community-generated preferred terminology guides into our local descriptive practices in order to create archival description that uses language that communities use to describe themselves. We also recognize that in some instances, original, creator- or steward-provided description holds inherent research value, and we work to contextualize that information through the use of descriptive notes that address the need to leave the description in place.

Collection descriptions also incorporate controlled vocabularies and thesauri, including the Library of Congress Subject Headings. Some of the headings in these vocabularies and thesauri are outdated

<https://guides.library.yale.edu/specialcollections/statementondescription>

Yale University Library (USA), Statement on Harmful Language in Archival Description

“(...) We acknowledge that our existing description may contain language that is racist, sexist, colonialist, homophobic, or that uses other offensive terms that may cause harm. This language may result from archival description that has been created over the years by creators of collection material, previous stewards, or by Yale staff since acquisition. (...)”

“Some of the headings (...) vocabularies and thesauri are outdated and harmful.”

<https://guides.library.yale.edu/specialcollections/statementondescription>

Yale University Library (USA), Statement on Harmful Language in Archival Description

“You may make a suggestion in Archives at Yale by using the Suggest a Correction button (...). . Yale staff will review your suggestion and will work towards remediating harmful language in the description while balancing the need to preserve original context.”

<https://guides.library.yale.edu/specialcollections/statementondescription>

Western University Libraries (Canada), Problematic Language in the Library Catalogue: Statement of Acknowledgement

The screenshot shows the Western University Libraries website. At the top left is the logo 'Western Libraries' with a crest. To the right is a search bar with 'ENHANCED BY Google' and a 'Go' button. Below the logo is a purple navigation bar with links: 'CATALOGUE & COLLECTIONS', 'RESEARCH SUPPORT', 'VISIT US', 'EVENTS', 'MY LIBRARY ACCOUNT', and 'CONTACT'. Below the navigation bar is a breadcrumb trail: 'Home > Our Collections > Problematic Language in the Library Catalogue'. The main content area is split into two columns. The left column is a sidebar with a title 'Our Collections' and several menu items: 'Collections Strategy', 'Serials Review', 'Research Collections', 'Scholarship @ Western', 'Archives and Special Collections', 'Indigenous Collection Highlights', 'Collections Management', and 'Donations'. At the bottom of the sidebar is a 'Chat with a librarian' button with a speech bubble icon. The right column has a title 'Problematic Language in the Library Catalogue' and a subtitle 'Statement of Acknowledgement'. The text in the right column discusses the library's commitment to inclusive metadata, acknowledges historical biases, and lists three points: 1. Engaging in ongoing discussions dedicated to examining our legacy cataloguing practices. 2. Participating in larger initiatives of the Ontario Council of University Libraries (OCUL) to decolonize descriptive practices across all partner institutions, including Western Libraries. 3. Reviewing all feedback we receive, marking reported records as containing offensive descriptions. Below the list, it states that maintaining updated and accurate descriptions is an ongoing process and encourages feedback. At the bottom, it invites users to report discriminatory language or ask questions about metadata work.

Western Libraries

ENHANCED BY Google Go

CATALOGUE & COLLECTIONS RESEARCH SUPPORT VISIT US EVENTS MY LIBRARY ACCOUNT CONTACT

Home > Our Collections > Problematic Language in the Library Catalogue

Our Collections

- Collections Strategy
- Serials Review
- Research Collections
- Scholarship @ Western
- Archives and Special Collections
- Indigenous Collection Highlights
- Collections Management
- Donations

Problematic Language in the Library Catalogue

Problematic Language in the Library Catalogue

Statement of Acknowledgement

Western Libraries and the affiliated university college libraries hold a broad range of items in our shared collections. Part of organizing and describing these materials includes the use of standardized metadata that reflect the biases and norms of the time in which the items and/or descriptions were created. These metadata can include offensive wording, cultural references, and stereotypes.

To ensure these attitudes and viewpoints are not erased from the historical record, and to preserve and accurately present historical materials, we acknowledge the value of historic terminologies in tandem with today's user discovery needs.

We also recognize that the national and international cataloguing standards we use to categorize these materials uphold the library's place as a colonial institution that contributes to ongoing oppression and white supremacy.

While we work within the parameters of these standards, we pledge to make metadata more inclusive by:

1. Engaging in ongoing discussions dedicated to examining our legacy cataloguing practices.
2. Participating in larger initiatives of the Ontario Council of University Libraries (OCUL) to decolonize descriptive practices across all partner institutions, including Western Libraries.
3. Reviewing all feedback we receive, marking reported records as containing offensive descriptions.

Maintaining updated and accurate description of materials is an ongoing process and we may not always make the right decisions. We encourage feedback from all members of the Western Libraries community, so that we can learn and adjust our practices.

If you encounter language that you find discriminatory in our research guides, catalogue records, digitized collections, exhibitions or elsewhere, or if you have questions about our metadata work, we welcome your feedback. Please email

https://www.lib.uwo.ca/collections/problematic_language_in_the_library_catalogue.html/

Western University Libraries (Canada), Problematic Language in the Library Catalogue: Statement of Acknowledgement

“Part of organizing and describing (...) includes the use of standardized metadata that reflect the biases and norms of the time in which the items and/or descriptions were created. These metadata can include offensive wording, cultural references, and stereotypes.”

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https://www.lib.uwo.ca/collections/problematic_language_in_the_library_catalogue.html/

Western University Libraries (Canada), Problematic Language in the Library Catalogue: Statement of Acknowledgement

“(...) we pledge to make metadata more inclusive by:

- Engaging in ongoing discussions dedicated to examining our legacy cataloguing practices.
- Participating in larger initiatives of the Ontario Council of University Libraries (OCUL) to decolonize descriptive practices across all partner institutions, including Western Libraries.
- Reviewing all feedback we receive, marking reported records as containing offensive descriptions.”


https://www.lib.uwo.ca/collections/problematic_language_in_the_library_catalogue.html/

Washington State University Libraries (USA), Acknowledgment of Bias and Harmful Content




WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY

Manuscripts, Archives & Special Collections

 Libraries
Home

MASC
Home

About
MASC 

Manuscripts

University
Archives

Photographs

Rare
Books

Digital
Collections

Acknowledgment of Bias and Harmful Content

Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections (MASC) at Washington State University Libraries recognizes there are materials in our collections that may be offensive or harmful, containing racist, sexist, Eurocentric, ableist or homophobic language or depictions. We retain such materials unaltered in order to document history and preserve context. MASC staff is making efforts to update our finding aids (collection descriptions) to acknowledge offensive content.

In addition, we recognize that there may be language in our collection descriptions written by staff that is outdated, problematic, and/or inaccurate. We are making efforts to identify such language and update terminology to be more respectful, accurate, and inclusive. Finding aids with problematic language will be retained for transparency purposes and will be available upon request. We also make a note of these changes in the "Processing Information" section of the finding aid or on the digital collection's home page. Going forward, we seek to use inclusive, accurate, and respectful language in describing newly acquired and newly processed collections.

This is an ongoing process, and we welcome feedback from MASC users. If you encounter harmful or offensive content or language in our collection descriptions, or have questions about our process, please email us at mascraf@wsu.edu. Staff will review suggestions and may make changes in accordance with institutional policy.

<https://libraries.wsu.edu/masc/acknowledgment-of-bias-and-harmful-content/>

Washington State University Libraries (USA), Acknowledgment of Bias and Harmful Content

“Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections (MASC) at Washington State University Libraries recognizes there are materials in our collections that may be offensive or harmful, containing racist, sexist, Eurocentric, ableist or homophobic language or depictions.”

“(…) we recognize that there may be language in our collection descriptions written by staff that is outdated, problematic, and/or inaccurate. We are making efforts to identify such language and update terminology to be more respectful, accurate, and inclusive.”

<https://libraries.wsu.edu/masc/acknowledgment-of-bias-and-harmful-content/>

University of Wisconsin Milwaukee Libraries, Digitized Archival and Special Collections: Potentially Offensive Materials



DIGITIZED ARCHIVAL AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS: POTENTIALLY OFFENSIVE MATERIALS

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Libraries established a digitization program in the fall of 2001. The primary mission of the program is to serve the UWM academic community and the general public by providing digital access to unique library resources. Digital collections in the form of text, images, sound, and video are openly available for a variety of purposes: teaching, research, learning, and even entertainment. The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee community values digital access to this growing body of unique materials that document the history of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and the Milwaukee community, as well as the wider world. These digitized archival collections provide evidence of institutional activities and decision-making, as well as the activities of individuals and organizations. Digital access to these materials enhances their use, ensures accountability, and provides broader access to historical records.

The nature of historical materials is such that some material may represent positions, norms, and values that are no longer (or never were) consistent with the positions, norms, and values of the UWM Libraries or of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee as a whole. Some materials that are part of our digital collections may be considered offensive. The UWM Libraries strives to provide context for these items through descriptive records, and where considered necessary, statements attached to the digitized object that provide a

<https://uwm.edu/lib-collections/potentially-offensive-materials/>

University of Wisconsin Milwaukee Libraries, Digitized Archival and Special Collections: Potentially Offensive Materials

“The nature of historical materials is such that some material may represent positions, norms, and values that are no longer (or never were) consistent with the positions, norms, and values of the UWM Libraries or of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee as a whole. Some materials that are part of our digital collections may be considered offensive.”

<https://uwm.edu/lib-collections/potentially-offensive-materials/>

University of Washington Libraries (USA), Statement on Harmful Language in Catalog Records and Archival Finding Aids



[HOME](#) [START YOUR RESEARCH-](#) [USE THE LIBRARIES-](#) [HELP & SUPPORT-](#) [ABOUT-](#) [LIBRARIES-](#)

About the Libraries

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND ANTI-RACISM

Working Groups

Community Engagement

Critical Cataloging and Archival Description

[HOME](#) / [ABOUT THE LIBRARIES](#) / [EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND ANTI-RACISM](#) / [CRITICAL CATALOGING AND ARCHIVAL DESCRIPTION](#)

Critical Cataloging and Archival Description

UW Libraries statement on harmful language in catalog records and archival finding aids

If you encounter language in UW Libraries catalog records, archival finding aids, or digital collections that you find offensive or harmful, or if you have questions about the statement below or our work, we welcome your feedback via [this form](#) or uwlib-critcat@uw.edu. We are committed to reviewing and updating harmful language in catalog records and archival finding aids as appropriate and feasible.

INTRODUCTION

Catalogers, metadata specialists, and archivists at the UW support the **UW Libraries' commitment to anti-racist work** in sustaining diversity, creating an inclusive experience for our users, and confronting institutional bias and structural racism. We adhere to ideals embodied in our professional statements of values, ethics, and best practices, including the American Library Association's **Core Values of Librarianship** and **Code of Ethics** and the Society of American Archivists' **Core Values Statement and Code of Ethics**. We acknowledge that our profession and workplace

<https://www.lib.washington.edu/about/edi/critical-cataloging-and-archival-description>

University of Washington Libraries (USA), Statement on Harmful Language in Catalog Records and Archival Finding Aids

“If you encounter language in UW Libraries catalog records, archival finding aids, or digital collections that you find offensive or harmful, or if you have questions about the statement below or our work, we welcome your feedback (...). We are committed to reviewing and updating harmful language in catalog records and archival finding aids as appropriate and feasible.”

“Catalogers, metadata specialists, and archivists at the UW support the UW Libraries’ commitment to anti-racist work in sustaining diversity, creating an inclusive experience for our users, and confronting institutional bias and structural racism.”

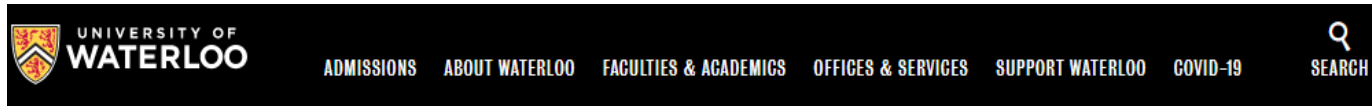
<https://www.lib.washington.edu/about/edi/critical-cataloging-and-archival-description>

University of Washington Libraries (USA), Statement on Harmful Language in Catalog Records and Archival Finding Aids

“For nearly a century, librarians have called attention to and pushed for changes to biased, outdated, and problematic LCSH terminology. However, the process to change a Library of Congress Subject Heading is complex, lengthy, not always successful, and can at times be politicized by external parties. The UW Libraries is actively involved in and supports the efforts underway throughout the profession to update and change LCSH terms to be more inclusive. We also support the creation and use of alternative controlled vocabularies, and partnering with communities to revise and enhance description of their resources and collections according to their preferences, knowledge, and practices.”

<https://www.lib.washington.edu/about/edi/critical-cataloging-and-archival-description>

University of Waterloo Library Special Collections & Archives (Canada), Language in Archival Descriptions



SPECIAL COLLECTIONS & ARCHIVES

Special Collections & Archives
home

About Special Collections &
Archives >

Collections >

Digital Exhibits

Services

Blog

News

Events

UWaterloo libraries

Special Collections & Archives » News » 2020 » April »

Language in archival descriptions changes

MONDAY, APRIL 27, 2020

Special Collections & Archives (SCA) has expanded its statement regarding language in archival descriptions to meaningfully integrate equity and reconciliation work into the department's archival practice. The changes reflect a formalization of on-going efforts made by staff to acknowledge known instances of discrimination that appear in archival records.

Reason for statement expansion

Over the past several months SCA staff have discussed how to balance upholding the context of records with putting principles of equity and reconciliation into action. A decision was made to move beyond blanket 'language of its time' statements to identifying instances of problematic language or imagery.

As noted in the revised statement: "SCA staff view this manner of providing and expanding on the context of problematic records to be in keeping with the University of Waterloo's Principles of Inclusivity and Policy 33 - Ethical Behaviour, as well as the Association of Canadian Archivists' Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct and the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada."

Practice in action

<https://uwaterloo.ca/library/special-collections-archives/news/language-archival-descriptions>

University of Waterloo Library Special Collections & Archives (Canada), Language in Archival Descriptions

“(…) on-going efforts made by staff to acknowledge known instances of discrimination that appear in archival records.”

“Content notes will be added to fonds or collection level records indicating, where known, the prevalence of particular types of problematic language or imagery. One such example is the note accompanying digitized versions of The Dominion, which, in part, reads: "The Dominion contains language from the era in which it was written. This includes problematic wording, cultural references, and stereotypes that are no longer used or appropriate today such as racist and sexist jokes or points of view.”

<https://uwaterloo.ca/library/special-collections-archives/news/language-archival-descriptions>

University of Waterloo Library Special Collections & Archives (Canada), Language in Archival Descriptions

“General notes will be added at the item level regarding the content of certain photographs. The note accompanying negatives titled Waterloo Highschool Knitting Bee from the Kitchener-Waterloo Photographic Negative Collection is one example. It reads: "Boys' Slave Day poster with racist depiction of a Black person visible on wall behind knitting bee participants."

<https://uwaterloo.ca/library/special-collections-archives/news/language-archival-descriptions>

University of Waterloo Library Special Collections & Archives (Canada), Language in Archival Descriptions

“Records improvements and intentional description will be undertaken to allow for improved keyword searching and introduce more precise descriptive language. The finding aids for records in the E Palmer Patterson fonds are an example. They were recently updated to more appropriately refer to First Nations and Inuit, using current language. The work included documenting the changes in names used to refer to peoples over time, such as the Nisga’a or Tlingit, in corresponding authority records.”

<https://uwaterloo.ca/library/special-collections-archives/news/language-archival-descriptions>

University of Virginia Libraries (USA), Statement on Harmful Language in Cataloging and Archival Description



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[About](#) [Using the Library](#) [Teaching & publication support](#) [Get help](#)

[Home](#) / [Policies](#) / Statement on Harmful Language in Cataloging and Archival Description

Statement on Harmful Language in Cataloging and Archival Description

The staff of the University of Virginia Library recognize that many of our materials result from, are created by, or represent marginalized groups of people, and we are committed to describing those people accurately and respectfully. We welcome your questions or comments related to these approaches and the language we use to describe and provide access to collections. Please feel free to [submit comments](#) or contact us at lb-subj-enhance@virginia.edu with your feedback.

We recognize that descriptive practices have been based on systems and standards ingrained with white supremacy, misogyny, and homophobia. We are making efforts to redress this problematic history. Much of this descriptive work contains insensitive, outdated, or inappropriate language that reflects the harmful biases built into descriptive systems.

To begin to repair this harmful work, UVA Library is taking several approaches:

Using the Library

[Research: Search, borrow, request](#)

[Teaching & publication](#)

[Library spaces](#)

[Equipment & technology](#)

[Get help](#)

<https://www.library.virginia.edu/policies/statement-on-harmful-language>

University of Virginia Libraries (USA), Statement on Harmful Language in Cataloging and Archival Description

“The staff of the University of Virginia Library recognize that many of our materials result from, are created by, or represent marginalized groups of people, and we are committed to describing those people accurately and respectfully.”

“We recognize that descriptive practices have been based on systems and standards ingrained with white supremacy, misogyny, and homophobia. We are making efforts to redress this problematic history.”

<https://www.library.virginia.edu/policies/statement-on-harmful-language>

University of Virginia Libraries (USA), Statement on Harmful Language in Cataloging and Archival Description

“We are actively removing the harmful language in our legacy records. We have a large collection and this work will take time, but our staff and administration are committed to making these repairs.”

“(…) we acknowledge that many LCSH headings are biased and harmful. We are supporting efforts underway throughout the profession to change these terms, and we are also taking a localized approach to replacing some harmful and racist terms with acceptable local headings in our own catalog.”

<https://www.library.virginia.edu/policies/statement-on-harmful-language>

University of Texas at El Paso (USA), Statements on Archival Content and Description



The screenshot shows the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) Library website. The header features the UTEP logo on an orange background and the text 'UNIVERSITY LIBRARY' on a dark blue background. Below the header is a navigation menu with items: ABOUT, RESEARCH, SERVICES, SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, PEOPLE, TEXAS WESTERN PRESS, HELP, GIVING, a search icon, MY UTEP, RESOURCES FOR, and QUICK LINKS. A left sidebar lists various collections: Book Collections, Finding Aids, Image Collections, Manuscript Collections, Oral History Collection, Special Collections on Digital Commons, Special Collections Portal Texas History, and UTEP History. At the bottom of the sidebar are two dark blue buttons: 'LIBRARY SEARCH' and 'LIBRARY HOURS'. The main content area shows a breadcrumb trail: UTEP > UNIVERSITY LIBRARY > SPECIAL COLLECTIONS. The main heading is 'Statements on Archival Content and Description'. Below this, there are two sections: 'Statement on Content' and 'Statement on Archival Description'. The 'Statement on Content' text reads: 'These archival materials may contain scenes of violence or offensive language and imagery. While Special Collections does not endorse this content, we have made these items available to the public for purposes of transparency and research. In particular, we hope they provide evidence and context for understanding and examining war and violence and the long history of racism, sexism, anti-Semitism, genocide, and other forms of intolerance, discrimination, and hate.' The 'Statement on Archival Description' text reads: 'While archivists seek to retain creators' descriptions to preserve the context of records and allow critical historical assessment, we acknowledge that some language may be offensive. We try always to note our descriptive practices in our finding aids, such as putting notes by archivists in square brackets and letting researchers know when original folder titles were retained. Nevertheless, some finding aids created years ago and some creators' descriptions present in collections may contain offensive language. We are reviewing our finding aids, but in the meantime, please contact us with any concerns about description and descriptive practices.'

<https://www.utep.edu/library/special-collections/archival-statement.html>

University of Texas at El Paso (USA), Statements on Archival Content and Description

“These archival materials may contain scenes of violence or offensive language and imagery. While Special Collections does not endorse this content, we have made these items available to the public for purposes of transparency and research.

In particular, we hope they provide evidence and context for understanding and examining war and violence and the long history of racism, sexism, anti-Semitism, genocide, and other forms of intolerance, discrimination, and hate.”

<https://www.utep.edu/library/special-collections/archival-statement.html>

University of Texas at El Paso (USA), Statements on Archival Content and Description

“ (...) we acknowledge that some language may be offensive. We try always to note our descriptive practices in our finding aids, such as putting notes by archivists in square brackets and letting researchers know when original folder titles were retained.”

<https://www.utep.edu/library/special-collections/archival-statement.html>

University of Texas at El Paso (USA), Statements on Archival Content and Description

“As members of our global society, we at UTL both recognize and take seriously our responsibility to all who entrust us with providing access to the information resources we steward. (...) Descriptive work is not and never has been neutral: it is done by people with their own backgrounds, experiences, and biases. Societal and professional norms about what constitutes a respectful description vary over time.”

<https://www.utep.edu/library/special-collections/archival-statement.html>

University of Texas at El Paso (USA), Statements on Archival Content and Description

“We aspire to describe all people, organizations, and communities respectfully, with an aim to mitigate existing and future harm. We are committed to correcting past errors, overcoming current limitations, and are actively working to provide the necessary support for the collections in our care and those who engage with them.

We will review word choice, do our best to contextualize original language within its historical context, and provide supplemental terms that aid in research. We understand that this process requires continual work, self-reflection, and learning.”

<https://www.utep.edu/library/special-collections/archival-statement.html>

University of South Carolina Libraries Special Collections (USA), Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement



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Music Library

Oral History

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Special collections at University Libraries offer students and scholars a rich, hands-on research and learning experience. Explore our collections and discover something wonderful today.

Special Collections Departments



Digital Collections »

Examine hundreds of thousands of digitized rare, fragile, historic and unique books, pamphlets, posters, diaries, manuscripts, maps, music, newspapers

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement

University Libraries provides access to its collections as an unaltered, historical record. Some collection

https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/university_libraries/browse/index.php

University of South Carolina Libraries Special Collections (USA), Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement

“University Libraries provides access to its collections as an unaltered, historical record. Some collection materials include images or words that are offensive. We do not support or condone these harmful ideas, and we embrace a culture that prioritizes diversity and inclusion. We make these items available because they are critically important resources for education and research, while acknowledging their impact on various peoples and groups.”

https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/university_libraries/browse/index.php

University of Pennsylvania Libraries (USA), Statement of Harmful Language in Penn Libraries Catalogs

The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the University of Pennsylvania Libraries website. The navigation menu includes: Penn Libraries (with logo), Help with..., Libraries, Collections, News & events, About, and Giving. Below the navigation bar is a 'Guides' section with a search box and a 'Search Guides' button. The breadcrumb trail reads: Penn Libraries / Guides / Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion in Penn Libraries Collections Discovery / Statement of Harmful Language in Penn Libraries Catalogs. Below the breadcrumb trail is a title: Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion in Penn Libraries Collections Discovery: Statement of Harmful Language in Penn Libraries Catalogs. At the bottom of the screenshot is a navigation menu with buttons for: Home, Statement of Harmful Language in Penn Libraries Catalogs (highlighted), Resources, Updated Terms, and About Us.

Statement of Harmful Language in Penn Libraries Catalogs*

At Penn Libraries we are committed to describing our cataloged resources using inclusive, anti-racist, and non-derogatory language. However, we are aware that racist, homophobic, sexist, ableist or other offensive language can still sometimes be found in our search indexes, bibliographic records, and finding aids. We are working towards mitigating any harm by updating this language.

Harmful or offensive language may appear for the following reasons:

- Our collections stretch back centuries and many records have not been updated recently
- Some derogatory terms used to describe oppressed people have been reclaimed and used by authors and creators from those communities
- Preferred terms used by communities to describe themselves can change over time and vary within and between communities
- We transcribed information directly from materials which contain the offensive language (for example, the title of a book)
- We retained offensive or harmful terms for historical accuracy or to document the issues and social context of a specific time and the attitudes of the people who created the material
- We are using records that were created by commercial vendors and other agencies external to the Libraries

<https://guides.library.upenn.edu/c.php?g=1163411&p=8791712>

University of Pennsylvania Libraries (USA), Statement of Harmful Language in Penn Libraries Catalogs

“At Penn Libraries we are committed to describing our cataloged resources using inclusive, anti-racist, and non-derogatory language. However, we are aware that racist, homophobic, sexist, ableist or other offensive language can still sometimes be found in our search indexes, bibliographic records, and finding aids. We are working towards mitigating any harm by updating this language.”

<https://guides.library.upenn.edu/c.php?g=1163411&p=8791712>

University of Pennsylvania Libraries (USA), Statement of Harmful Language in Penn Libraries Catalogs

“Penn Libraries’ staff understand that we often must describe communities that we are not members of ourselves, and that we have a responsibility to do this work with care and respect. We will revisit this statement as needed, recognizing that our understanding of the impact of our description decisions, and the effectiveness of our subsequent modifications, will and should continue to evolve.”

<https://guides.library.upenn.edu/c.php?g=1163411&p=8791712>

University of Oregon Libraries (USA), Statement Regarding Objectionable Content

“Too often, libraries are thought to be neutral spaces, providing unbiased access to information of all types. The reality is that many biases, including racism and white supremacy, have shaped numerous aspects of the library environment, from which voices are considered authoritative enough to be amplified by scholarly publishing, to how research materials are described and organized in our catalog and on our shelves, to how we interact face-to-face with our patrons. We must also take action to disrupt these systemic inequalities.”

<https://library.uoregon.edu/statement-regarding-objectionable-content>

University of Oregon Libraries (USA), Statement Regarding Objectionable Content

“We commit to a review of our collections, in particular the databases and other e-resources that the library licenses, and will allocate additional funding to ensure marginalized voices are represented.”

“We recognize the bias inherent in our infrastructure, notably in the White origins of the Library of Congress classifications and subject headings, and commit to allocating ongoing resources in personnel and money to identify and change them.”

<https://library.uoregon.edu/statement-regarding-objectionable-content>

University of Oregon Libraries (USA), Statement Regarding Objectionable Content

“We will cover the Knight Library murals that contain racist content by October 1st.”

“We will work with UO Administration, Campus Planning, students, faculty and staff to find a way to deal with (...) objects of study and reminders of the history of racism in our state and at our institution without further need to confront our community with the associated trauma in a place that is meant to welcome us all.”

<https://library.uoregon.edu/statement-regarding-objectionable-content>

University of Oregon Libraries (USA), Statement Regarding Objectionable Content

“We commit to changing our recruitment and hiring practices, ensuring direct outreach to candidates of color. As part of that commitment, going forward we will require search advocates for every search committee.”

“Beginning now, we will work hard to create an environment that is welcoming to those future colleagues by creating a training and education process for all library staff that focuses on the work we need to do both individually and collectively to bring about an end to discrimination, implicit bias and institutionalized racism.”

<https://library.uoregon.edu/statement-regarding-objectionable-content>

University of North Carolina (USA), Conscious Editing Initiative

“The Libraries’ Conscious Editing Initiative seeks to redress historical inequities and injustices in the ways language is used in archives and special collections. These efforts include replacing racist and derogatory language and removing biased language that assumes whiteness as a default.

It also involves updating unbalanced descriptions (for example, those that prioritize white enslavers over enslaved individuals and families) and bringing the voices and experiences of marginalized groups to the forefront. Hidden lives and erased histories thus become discoverable for researchers, in the classroom, and through exhibitions.”

https://library.uncg.edu/info/depts/scua/offensive_language.aspx

University of North Carolina (USA), Conscious Editing Initiative

“Conscious editing brings an active, critical awareness of bias, privilege, and power and an ethos of deliberate care to the assessment, creation, and refinement of descriptive archival texts.”

“The Conscious Editing Steering Committee has developed a guide to inform librarians and archivists doing this redescription work. The guide contains articles on numerous topics, including rectifying ableist language, gendering and misgendering, discontinuing the perpetuation of white supremacy by un hiding the invisible norm of whiteness, and warning users about racist and harmful content.”

https://library.uncg.edu/info/depts/scua/offensive_language.aspx

University of Nebraska Omaha Libraries (USA), Statement on Harmful Material



UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA OMAHA

Statement on Harmful Material

Materials in UNO Libraries' Archives and Special Collections are historical in nature and reflect the society in which they were produced. As such, they may contain racial, gender, sexual, religious, and other language and imagery that are offensive by today's standards. The documents, images, publications, and other materials have been retained in order to fully represent the materials in their original format. If the offensive text is not in the original, but in a finding aid, catalog record, or other description created by library employees, please contact Archives and Special Collections to bring this to our attention. Archives & Special Collections is guided by the [core values of the Society of American Archivists](#). If you have questions about this statement or about Archives and Special Collections' work, we welcome your feedback. Please contact us at unoasc@unomaha.edu or 402-554-6046.

<https://www.unomaha.edu/criss-library/about-us/library-policies/archives-policies.php#harmful>

University of Missouri Kansas City Libraries. Harmful Content in Library and Archives Collections Policy

“The Libraries now try to balance the use of historical terms which provide context, but which are also accurate and respectful. This is an ongoing process of:

- Working directly with misrepresented and underrepresented communities to improve the ways they are represented.
- Informing users about the presence and origin of harmful content.
- Revising descriptions and standardized sets of descriptive terms, such as Library of Congress Subject Headings, supplementing description with humanizing and identity or person-first terms, or creating new standardized terms to describe materials.
- Researching the problem, listening to users, experimenting with solutions, and sharing our findings with each other.

<https://library.umkc.edu/policies/harmful-content>

University of Missouri Kansas City Libraries. Harmful Content in Library and Archives Collections Policy

“We retain harmful or offensive content and language for historical accuracy or to document the issues, social context, and attitudes of the material’s creators.

Some situations where this might occur include publication titles, names of organizations which contain outdated terms, and an individual’s use of self-identifying terms that are no longer favored by people within that group.”

<https://library.umkc.edu/policies/harmful-content>

University of Michigan, Bentley Historical Library (USA), Statement on Potentially Harmful Language and Content

“The Bentley Historical Library and its staff stand against marginalization, oppression, and bias in its many forms and one way we look to combat this is by addressing exclusionary collection descriptions. We acknowledge that the language and structures used to describe these collections are not neutral.”

“Currently many of our collection descriptions, including (but not limited to) catalog records, finding aids, databases, digitized collections, and exhibitions, are based on established systems and standards that often uphold and perpetuate many forms of oppression and bias.”

<https://bentley.umich.edu/research/statement-on-potentially-harmful-language-and-content/>

University of Michigan, Bentley Historical Library (USA), Statement on Potentially Harmful Language and Content

“(...) we are dedicated to revising and updating our descriptive language, and to describing archival materials in a manner that is respectful to the individuals and communities who create, use and are represented in the collections we manage.

We are in the process of correcting and remediating use of offensive and harmful language and content in existing descriptions of archival materials.”

<https://bentley.umich.edu/research/statement-on-potentially-harmful-language-and-content/>

University of Michigan Library (USA), Remediation of Harmful Language in Library Metadata

“We stand against marginalization, oppression, and bias in its many forms. One way we look to combat this is by addressing exclusionary descriptive collection metadata.”

<https://www.lib.umich.edu/about-us/policies/remediation-harmful-language-library-metadata>

University of Michigan Library (USA), Remediation of Harmful Language in Library Metadata

„(...) we strive to:

- Examine and remediate offensive or harmful language used in descriptions of resources where we as the University of Michigan Library have agency to make the change.
- Facilitate access to collection materials in a way that supports researchers and users.
- Push to eliminate oppression and bias embedded in national standards and metadata and support the use of alternative vocabularies in local and national metadata descriptions.
- Work with community partners on campus and off to help identify vocabulary in collection descriptions that causes harm and find replacement terminology.
- Coordinate diverse and anti-racist collection development strategies.”

<https://www.lib.umich.edu/about-us/policies/remediation-harmful-language-library-metadata>

Michigan State University Libraries, Harmful Language in Resource Descriptions

"Library description systems and structures are not universal or neutral and contain the inherent biases of their creators who operate from places of privilege and power (...)"

<https://lib.msu.edu/about/policy-harmful-language/>

Michigan State University Libraries, Harmful Language in Resource Descriptions

Cataloguing Code of Ethics:

"Cataloguing standards and practices are currently and historically characterized by racism, white supremacy, colonialism, othering, and oppression.

Traditionally, these knowledge organization systems and descriptive standards have been viewed as universal and neutral, but we (along with many libraries worldwide) recognize that they have always been problematic, offensive, and harmful. They are based in a nineteenth-century Eurocentric philosophy of information organization and management, and they have actively marginalized, demeaned, and erased groups outside the dominant culture."

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1IBz7nXQPfr3U1P6Xiar9cLAKzoNX_P9fq7eHvzfSIZ0/edit/

Duke University Libraries, Statement on Inclusive Description

"While we will continue to work within the parameters of national and international standards and organizations, we pledge as creators and managers to make metadata more inclusive by: [. . .]

- 5. Including descriptive metadata in the original script for works in languages that do not use the Latin alphabet. We will also seek to implement projects that remediate legacy metadata lacking non-Latin scripts, thereby creating a discovery environment in which users can more easily discover resources regardless of language or script."

<https://wiki.duke.edu/display/DTSP/Statement+on+Inclusive+Description/>

National Archives, NARA's Statement on Potentially Harmful Content



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[Updates on Reparative Description and Digitization at the National Archives](#)

[NARA's Statement on Potentially Harmful Content](#)

[Guiding Principles for Reparative Description](#)

NARA's Statement on Potentially Harmful Content

The Catalog and web pages of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) provide access to many millions of descriptions and digital copies of the permanent records of the United States federal government.

The Catalog and web pages contain some content that may be harmful or difficult to view. NARA's records span the history of the United States, and it is our charge to preserve and make available these historical records. As a result, some of the materials presented here may reflect outdated, biased, offensive, and possibly violent views and opinions. In addition, some of the materials may relate to violent or graphic events and are preserved for their historical significance.

The National Archives is committed to working with staff, communities, and peer institutions to assess and update descriptions that are harmful and to establish standards and policies to prevent future harmful language in staff-generated descriptions.

<https://www.archives.gov/research/reparative-description/harmful-content>

Philadelphia Museum of Art, Ethical Cataloging Statement



[PMA Library](#) / [PMA LibGuides](#) / [Home](#) / [Ethical Cataloging](#)

Home

- Welcome
- Explore Our Resources
- Research Guides
- Library
- Archives
- About Us
 - Contact Us
 - Ethical Cataloging**
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Making space for marginalized artists, authors, and creators in our records.

Ethical Cataloging Statement

Cultural heritage organizations around the world continually reevaluate their practices in order to foster inclusion and more accurately describe the people and cultures represented in their collections. We acknowledge that the language we use to catalog and describe our materials needs improvement. Standardized vocabularies, such as those managed by the Library of Congress or the Getty Research Institute, are constantly reviewed and updated to expand representation and correct biases. But we still sometimes lack authorized terms to accurately capture the experiences of women, people of color, members of the LGBTQ community, or artists from non-Western countries. And some existing terms might use outdated language that we now understand to be harmful.

Many of our records are missing information about an artist's race, gender, and culture. This makes it difficult for us to determine which or how many of our resources pertain to underrepresented groups. It is our responsibility to prevent artists from marginalized cultures from being misrepresented, overlooked, or forgotten in our collections.

We are keeping abreast of ethical cataloging practices within the scholarly community and confronting and rectifying problems in our records when they arise. We commit to maintaining transparency regarding our policies and procedures. We invite community input and welcome your feedback. Please let us know if you encounter offensive or harmful language or if you have concerns about representation in our finding aids, catalog records, digital collections, exhibitions, publications, social media, or elsewhere. Email us at library@philamuseum.org or call 215-684-7650.

<https://philamuseum.libguides.com/c.php?g=929979&p=7463787>

Schaumburg Township District Library, Harmful Content Statement



We are a leader in our community and libraries nationwide. We promote innovation and creativity and foster strong community relationships.

[About](#) ▾ [E-Library](#) ▾ [Events](#) ▾ [Services](#) ▾



Harmful Content Statement

Language in our library catalog

Our collection, much like our community, is diverse and dynamic. Part of organizing materials in our collection includes the use of standardized metadata and descriptions in our catalog. At the Library, we are committed to creating inclusive descriptions that accurately describe our materials. However, we recognize that there may be language in our collection descriptions that are outdated, insensitive or inaccurate. Such descriptions do not reflect the Library's viewpoint, but rather the social attitudes and circumstances of the period or place in which it was created. We are dedicated to finding ways to mitigate use of harmful language in descriptions in our catalog.

<https://www.schaumburglibrary.org/about/about-us#harmful>

Princeton University Library, Statement on Language in Archival Description

"When we encounter problematic language that we believe an archivist created, we update it.

Language that comes from the original archival material can provide information about the people who created it.

In such cases, the work of the archivist is to provide additional context."

<https://library.princeton.edu/special-collections/statement-language-archival-description>

Stanford Special Collections and University Archives, Statement on Potentially Harmful Language in Cataloging and Archival Description

"We carefully consider potentially offensive or harmful language in our own descriptions, as well as in the materials we are describing.

We do not censor the materials in our care, but when they touch on potentially harmful subjects or use potentially harmful language, we work to provide historical context."

<https://library.stanford.edu/spc/using-our-collections/stanford-special-collections-and-university-archives-statement-potentially>

State Library of Western Australia. [Statement at the top of each catalog page]

"All users should be aware that certain words, terms, or descriptions may be culturally sensitive and considered inappropriate today, but reflect the period in which they were written."

<https://encore.slwa.wa.gov.au/iii/encore/?lang=eng>

University of California Los Angeles Clark Memorial Library. Statement on Cataloging

William Andrews Clark Memorial Library Statement on Cataloging



Photo credit: Rebecca Fenning Marschall

On June 1, 2020, the Clark Library made [a commitment to our patrons](#).

When we said it is important to create “a space in the cultural record for new voices, including those obscured, under-told, or excluded from our library in the past” we meant it.

A library catalog has never been a neutral space¹. It is also more than just a tool for collection discovery. The catalog reflects current and past attitudes towards the authority to name² and describe³, the power to organize and classify⁴. Its structure influences what you can find and how it can be discovered.

While we strive to catalog our collections as carefully and thoroughly as possible, we acknowledge that previous descriptive practices and outdated metadata conventions sometimes produce entries and information that are not historically accurate, or are offensive or discriminatory.^{5,6}

<https://clarklibrary.ucla.edu/research/statementoncataloging/>

University of California Los Angeles - Clark Memorial Library, Statement on Cataloging

"Our catalog, much like our community, is diverse and dynamic. The library's catalog is both a product and a process. We recognize long-standing professional biases, national and international standards that create problematic metadata, and our need for further education and reflection on how to recognize inequities in the language and practice of cataloging and archival description."

<https://clarklibrary.ucla.edu/research/statementoncataloging/>

Zusammengestellt vom „Netzwerk Dekolonialisierung in wissenschaftlichen Bibliotheken im DACH Raum“

Wiki des Netzwerks siehe: <https://decolonizethelibrary.miraheze.org/wiki/Aktuelles>