Report of the Review & Planning Task Group on the LCSH Terms "Aliens" & "Illegal aliens"

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April 2019

Executive summary

Conversions of existing instances of the Library of Congress Subject Heading (LCSH) *Aliens* to the new local heading *Noncitizens*, and of the LCSH *Illegal aliens* to the combination of the new local headings *Noncitizens* and *Unauthorized immigration,* have been completed in the Michigan State University Libraries (MSUL) catalog, following the practice proposed and withdrawn by the Library of Congress in 2016. Subdivided instances of those headings have also been converted to their appropriate counterparts.

We recommend that MSUL catalogers (and those at partner institutions) continue current cataloging practices, including use of the deprecated LCSH terms in bibliographic records. Conversion of those terms to their local replacements will require ongoing maintenance in our catalog. We recommend that the MSUL Metadata Management team undertake conversions of these headings to their local replacements in the catalog on a monthly basis, to account for newly-cataloged materials. If these recommendations are implemented, it should be made clear to MSUL staff that this practice will result in the ongoing presence of the deprecated terms in our catalog, in much smaller numbers than before, as newly-cataloged materials await these monthly conversions.

There are a number of LCSH headings that contain the deprecated terms, and these remain in full use in the MSUL catalog (examples include *Church work with aliens* and *Women illegal aliens*). We have compiled a list of these headings, and have proposed local replacements in this report. In all cases we found it was possible to devise replacement headings that use the *noncitizen(s)-* and/or *unauthorized immigration*-based terminology. We believe that converting to these replacements would be straightforward, and that the concomitant ongoing maintenance would be manageable, and we recommend the conversions be implemented.

We conclude our report with some background detail and future considerations, primarily of interest to readers within MSUL Technical Services, and a method for undoing these changes should it ever be deemed necessary.

I.   Group charge

The Task Group will:
1. Identify and recommend mechanisms for transforming Michigan State University Libraries (MSUL) catalog instances of the Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH) terms *Aliens* and *Illegal aliens* into the forms recommended by the Library of Congress (LC) in 2016, including the resolution of any resulting invalid subdivisions of headings.
2. Identify other LCSH terms using *aliens* and *illegal aliens* language, and comment on means and MSUL capacity for transforming these additional headings. Are there readily available alternative terms? What scale would such a transformation project take and is it within our capacity to do so?
3. Comment on any prospective challenges for both before and after such a transformation project.

Deliverables:
1. A brief document (e.g. a bulleted list) summarizing the recommendations, findings and commentary charged to the Group.
2. Present an outline of the Group's recommendations, findings and commentary at the April 3 TS Council meeting.

II.   Catalog work completed thus far

Owing to a miscommunication that prompted the task group to act beyond its charge, the work of converting *Aliens* and *Illegal aliens* subject headings to local terms has been largely completed: *Aliens* subject headings in bibliographic records have been converted directly to *Noncitizens*, with appropriate subdivisions in all cases, affecting 3,543 records. In an additional 2,332 records, *Illegal aliens* subject headings were replaced by two subject headings: *Noncitizens* and *Unauthorized immigration*, with appropriate subdivisions in all cases. These changes align with the [Library of Congress 2016 plan](#), which was halted by Congress.

Approximately 1,500 *Unauthorized immigration* headings required manual attention: Because *Unauthorized immigration* is not a class of persons as *Noncitizens* and *Aliens* are, some subdivisions that are appropriate for *Noncitizens* are unsuitable for *Unauthorized immigration*. (For example, while a change from *Aliens—Mental health—United States* to *Noncitizens—Mental health—United States* is straightforward, *Unauthorized immigration—Mental health—United States* is not a logical combination. Therefore, we manually removed the subdivision *Mental health* from that heading in any bibliographic records containing it.)

To support this change, two local authority records have been created in the MSUL catalog: *Noncitizens* and *Unauthorized immigration*. The following 36 LCSH authority records have been deleted from the MSUL catalog (some of which were not in use on any bibliographic records):

- Aliens
- Illegal aliens
- Illegal aliens—Fiction
- Illegal aliens—Government policy—United States
- Illegal aliens—United States
- Aliens—Housing
- Aliens—Medical care
- Aliens—Medical care—Law and legislation
- Aliens—Medical examinations
- Aliens—Mental health
- Aliens—Political activity
- Aliens—Suffrage
- Aliens—Taxation
- Aliens—Taxation—Law and legislation
- Aliens—Taxation—Law and legislation—United States
- Aliens—Austria
- Aliens—Belgium
- Aliens—Brazil
- Aliens—China
- Aliens—Egypt
- Aliens—European Union countries
- Aliens—France
- Aliens—Germany (West)
- Aliens—Germany
- Aliens—Great Britain
- Aliens—Italy
- Aliens—Japan
- Aliens—Mexico
- Aliens—Netherlands
- Aliens—Russia (Federation)
- Aliens—Spain
- Aliens—Sweden
- Aliens—Switzerland
- Aliens—United States
- Aliens—United States—Identification
- Aliens—Turkey

The two new authority records inherit all of the "variant term" lists (450 fields, in MARC parlance) that were present in the deleted authority records, as well as entries for the deleted headings themselves. This generates cross-references in the MSUL catalog, such that users entering the

deleted terms (or their variants) in subject-based searches of the catalog will encounter links to the subject headings MSUL now uses:

- With the changes we have implemented, a subject search for *Aliens* now directs users to a link to "13 Related Subjects." Clicking that link directs users to "See *Noncitizens*," and/or to "See Also" twelve narrower terms. (These narrower terms were inherited from the deleted *Aliens* authority record.)
- Similarly, a subject search for *Illegal Aliens* now directs users to a link to "7 Related Subjects." Clicking that link directs users to "See *Noncitizens*" and "See *Unauthorized immigration*," and/or to "See Also" five narrower terms (which were inherited from the deleted *Illegal aliens* authority record.)
- The two new authority records for *Noncitizens* and *Unauthorized immigration* also include cross-references to one another. Thus, a subject search for the newly valid heading *Noncitizens* advises users to "See Also *Unauthorized immigration*," and vice-versa.

III.   Recommendations

- Catalogers
  - We recommend no change to past/current practice. Copy and original catalogers should continue to catalog using LCSH terms of *Aliens* and/or *Illegal aliens* in OCLC and Sierra, with second indicator 0 in MARC field 650. Conversions to MSUL's local terms will routinely be undertaken by Metadata Management staff. While this will result in the temporary presence of the deleted headings in our catalog (in records for new acquisitions), we expect that a systematic conversion of these headings will be much more easily implemented than any "at-the-point-of-cataloging" alternatives. It will also ensure that master records in WorldCat remain compliant with current national standards.
  - We recommend no changes to present practices regarding the use of LCSH, other controlled vocabularies, or uncontrolled vocabularies, in the descriptive fields of name authority records.

- Library of Michigan, MSU Law Library, MSU Archives
  - No change is necessary to current practice, with the caveat (discussed under "Concerns about AACP" below) that care should be taken not to import the LCSH authority record for *Aliens* into Sierra.

- Metadata Management team
  - Initial conversions to the local terms have been undertaken by Metadata Management staff. Going forward, we recommend that ongoing conversion of new instances of the LC terms should be done at least once a month, before bib records are sent to Backstage for authorities processing. Staff will also monitor

and report back to Kay Granskog on the number of new records needing changes each month, as well as any unforeseen challenges that arise.

- Additional changes to existing LCSH headings
  - Below are LCSH headings currently in use that contain the term *aliens* or derivatives. These were not addressed by LC's cancelled proposal. These have not been changed in the local catalog. Our recommendations for local changes to these headings are shown. We feel that a project to convert these headings would be feasible and straightforward, given the experience gained from our earlier conversions. Any such changes would require the creation of new local authority records similar to those described earlier for *Noncitizens* and *Unauthorized immigration.*

    Aliens (Islamic law) → *no change*
    Aliens (Jewish law) → *no change*
    Aliens (Roman law) → *no change*
    Aliens (Greek law) → *no change*
    Alien criminals →
      Noncitizen criminals
    Alien detention centers →
      Noncitizen detention centers
    Alien property →
      Noncitizen property
    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
    Children of illegal aliens →
      Children of noncitizens +
      Unauthorized immigration
    Children of illegal aliens—Education →
      Children of noncitizens—Education +
      Unauthorized immigration
    Children of illegal aliens—Education—Law and legislation →
      Children of noncitizens—Education—Law and legislation +
      Unauthorized immigration—Law and legislation

China—Officials and employees, Alien →
    China—Officials and employees, Noncitizen
Church work with aliens →
    Church work with noncitizens
Church work with aliens—Baptists, [Catholic Church, etc.] →
    Church work with noncitizens—Baptists, [Catholic Church, etc.]
Illegal aliens in literature →
    Noncitizens in literature +
    Unauthorized immigration
Women illegal aliens →
    Women noncitizens +
    Unauthorized immigration

IV.   Discussion

- The deprecated headings will continue to appear in our catalog.
  - If our recommendations for catalogers are implemented, it should be emphasized to MSUL staff at large that the deleted headings will continue to be present in the catalog temporarily, in much smaller numbers than before, pending their monthly conversion to their replacements. These need not be reported to Metadata Management.

- Concerns about AACP (Automated Authority Control Program)
  - AACP is a module in Sierra that is designed to automatically update headings in bib records based on the cross-references found in the authority records loaded to Sierra. We have no way to stop or modify AACP's actions. A concern is that AACP could be triggered into undoing all of our changes to local headings if the national authority records for *Aliens* or *Illegal aliens* were to be loaded or exported into Sierra. Fortunately, the national authority record for *Illegal aliens* does not currently have a cross-reference for *Noncitizens,* so its inadvertent reintroduction into our catalog would not, at this time, trigger this unwanted change. Unfortunately, the national authority record for *Aliens* does contain a cross-reference for *Noncitizens,* so if the authority record for *Aliens* were to be loaded or exported into Sierra, AACP would undo at least some of our local changes, and could potentially undo all of them. As it happens, AACP is faulty and unreliable, in that it does not always make all the record changes it is supposed to make. We have not yet detected a pattern to these failures, so we cannot know how many records AACP will change if it is triggered to flip *Aliens.*
  - To mitigate these risks, we suggest:
    - It should be made clear to cataloging staff at all partner libraries (MSU, Library of Michigan, MSU Law Library, Archives) that the national authority record for *Aliens* must never be imported into Sierra.

- ■ Metadata Management must ensure that the bib records sent to Backstage each month do not contain the subject *Aliens.*
  - ■ If AACP does an unwanted flip of *Noncitizens* to *Aliens,* Metadata Management will reverse the changes with global updates.
  - ■ Metadata Management and Technical Services managers should weigh the benefits and risks of continuing to use AACP under these new circumstances (and given its recent unreliability), and consider whether AACP should be turned off.

- Backstage processing
  - ○ We have sent Backstage a copy of all our local authority records, which includes the two created for this project (*Noncitizens* and *Unauthorized immigration*). These local authority records, in conjunction with the use of second indicator 4 for the local headings *Noncitizens* and *Unauthorized immigration,* are expected to prevent Backstage from inadvertently changing our local headings back to their national forms of heading. This combination of local authority record plus MARC coding has been reliably successful for all our other local headings for the past three years.

- Ongoing maintenance issues for Metadata Management team (Lisa Robinson and Lark Braten)
  - ○ Metadata Management should expect to have to manually change some records every month. It will be necessary to do so prior to bib record authorities processing. As of April 1st, Lisa had changed 58 additional bib records, reflecting approximately two months of new MSUL cataloging activity. (We do not yet know if this number reflects typical numbers for a two-month period.) Lisa will continue to keep track of the number of manual changes needed each month.
  - ○ In cases of Lisa's absence, it would be ideal if Lark can be trained to make these record updates. Alternatively, authorities processing can be delayed until Lisa is present.

- FAST headings (Faceted Application of Subject Terminology)
  - ○ This task group has not dealt with FAST subject headings, which currently are inconsistently present in MSUL catalog records, and are neither indexed in the MSUL catalog, nor publicly displayed in its default view. (FAST subject headings differ in this regard from FAST genre headings, which are presently indexed and displayed.) While the FAST headings *Aliens* and *Illegal aliens,* where present, will continue to be displayed in the MARC and Sierra views of catalog records (see for instance the MARC view of [this record](#)), the likelihood, for now, of unwanted public display is minimal.
  - ○ If we make no changes to local FAST headings, and MSUL were to opt to make use of FAST subject headings in our public catalog interface in the future — as part of, or independent of, an ILS migration, for instance — it would result in the

sudden reappearance of these subject terms in our catalog. We recommend that the display of the *Aliens* and *Illegal aliens* FAST headings be part of any consideration of future changes to the behavior of FAST headings in our catalog.

○ Because MSUL does not presently load authority records for FAST subject headings, and because these terms are not indexed in our catalog, any effort within Sierra to programmatically convert FAST subject headings to other terms would presently be very difficult. We recommend that if MSUL chooses to change the behavior of FAST subject headings in the future, an evaluation of the desirability of undertaking conversions of FAST headings on the order of those we are undertaking in LCSH. This would likely require the introduction of local "FAST-like" authority records into our catalog, and a project to index FAST subject headings in our catalog.

● Contingency planning/undoing the changes
    ○ If, for any reason, we decided to go back to using the national forms of heading for *Aliens* and *Illegal aliens,* we could globally change our bib records in a two-step process:

      1) Create a review file with this query:
              BIB Record MARC tag 650   HAS Noncitizens
              AND   BIB Record MARC tag 650   HAS   Unauthorized immigration

      In the resulting file, change the heading *Noncitizens* to *Illegal aliens*. (This will take 2 global updates to accommodate instances of this heading with and without an ending period.)

      Then delete the heading *Unauthorized immigration*.

      2) Once the above change is done, create a review file with this query:
              BIB Record MARC tag 650 HAS Noncitizens
      In the resulting file, change the heading *Noncitizens* to *Aliens*. (This will take 2 global updates to accommodate instances of this heading with and without an ending period.)

    ○ There would be a small loss of data for bib records that originally contained both *Aliens* and *Illegal aliens*, since the resulting duplication of *Noncitizens* (from the original change) has already be de-duplicated in our records. There is nothing now in these records to indicate that both *Aliens* and *Illegal aliens* were originally present. Fortunately, this situation occurred in fewer than ten records.
    ○ An alternative to the above process would be to do an OCLC reclamation project on all the records with our local headings. OCLC does charge for this service.
    ○ A third option would be to do an "in-house OCLC reclamation project" by batch searching in Connexion the OCLC numbers of all the records with our local

headings and batch overlaying those records. But we would absolutely need to protect our call numbers and local notes (and perhaps other fields).