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ARSC

ARSC Continuing Education Webinar Series presents

CRITICAL CATALOGING:

*identifying and dismantling
bias in description*

with guest speaker

TRESHANI
PERERA

Free (suggested donation)

Thursday, January 14, 2021

11AM-12PM PT

2PM-3PM ET

arsc-audio.org

Critical Cataloging: Identifying and Dismantling Bias in Description

Treshani Perera (she/her)

Association of Recorded Sound Collections (ARSC) Webinar
January 14, 2021

Session Code of Conduct

In addition to the [ARSC](#) Code of Conduct, the following session code of conduct* will be implemented during this webinar.

*(*from Digital Library Federation (DLF) Code of Conduct “How to be” section)*

- listen as much as you speak, and remember that the presenter and BIPOC attendees may have expertise you are unaware of;
- encourage and yield the floor to those whose viewpoints may be under-represented in a group;
- accept critique graciously and offer it constructively;
- stay alert, as Active Bystanders, to the welfare of those around you.

Support your (free) attendance by making a donation to [ARSC](#).

OR

Consider supporting organizations that advocate for Black, Indigenous, and trans rights.

Thank you for your consideration.

Purpose of this webinar

What is Critical Cataloging?

Definitions

An offshoot of Critical Librarianship:

“a growing body of Library and Information Science (LIS) scholarship that draws on critical theory, progressive movements within librarianship, an online “community” that occasionally organizes in-person meetings, and an informal Twitter discussion space active since 2014 and identified by the #critlib hashtag.” (Karen P. Nicholson & Maura Seale, Introduction. In **K. P. Nicholson & M. Seale (Eds.), The Politics of Theory and the Practice of Critical Librarianship**. Sacramento, CA: Library Juice Press, 2018: pp. 1–18)

My Critical Cataloging Framework

Lived experience as a woman of color

Expertise + cultural humility

Labor: Who's doing the labor? Are they recognized, and how? Is there acknowledgement in catalog records?

Collections-specific approach

Identifying Bias

In Libraries, Archives, Museums and Cultural Heritage Organizations:

Who has been doing description work historically, and who's continuing to do that work?

Where is that intellectual labor coming from, and where is the work being done?

Who has the resources to contribute to the systems we use for description?

Whose expertise is being consulted and for which communities?

Under whose leadership is description work being done?

“It is by bringing in more diverse perspectives and experiences that we can truly begin to address bias in description, problematic aspects in our systems, and how we evaluate and recognize labor, especially emotional labor.”

-- Treshani Perera

Dismantling Bias

Systemic change IS collective responsibility.

Be responsible for your own education.

Acknowledge your privilege - everyone has a certain amount of privilege.

“Everyone in (and engaging with) libraries, archives, and museums will benefit from inclusive description: by being able to address and remove problematic language in our catalogs, by reimagining classification that is not centered on a dominant cultural narrative.

Identifying and dismantling bias in description should matter to not just catalogers and metadata librarians, but also anyone in the profession interested in making our institutions, collections, and even the profession more diverse and inclusive.”

-- Treshani Perera

Critical Cataloging in Action

Framework: Centering the lives and experiences of those from underrepresented and marginalized groups and identities

Local workarounds prioritizing user community

Inclusive language in Notes for keyword access

Engage with cultural humility

Pay people for their labor towards inclusive description

Resources

Indigenous collections:

Xwi7xwa Library: [Indigenous Knowledge Organization](#)

Brian Deer Classification System: [About Brian Deer](#)

LGBTQIA+: [Homosaurus Vocabulary Site](#)

New subject heading proposals and revisions: [Cataloging Lab](#) (founded by Violet Fox)

Alternatives to LCSH Illegal aliens: [Report from ALA Working Group on Alternatives to LCSH "Illegal aliens"](#)

- Link to documentary: [Change The Subject | Dartmouth Library](#)

Resources

We Here webinar (October 2020):

[Incorporating Critical Cataloging Into Your Work](#) (presenters: Treshani Perera and Deidre Thompson)

Resources List (for this webinar): <https://bit.ly/2MYbYfQ>

Questions submitted with event registration

Metadata for Indigenous collections

Balancing ethical description with professional practice around transcription, controlled vocabularies, racist language, etc.

- List of statements indicating harmful language in catalogs: see Resources
- “[Content warning]” alongside transcribed data

MARC 386 field

Critical cataloging for non-catalogers

Thank you for attending.

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