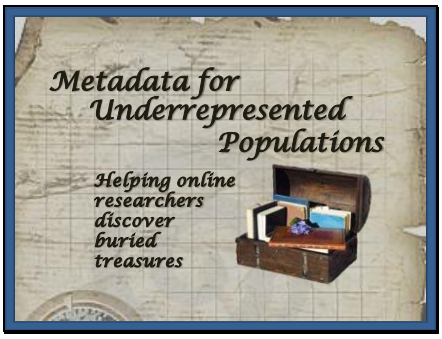
Slide 1




Thus far Maija and Beth have covered various levels of processing and digitizing archival collections which contain historical material related to underrepresented populations. From this point forward, I'm going to focus only on digital collections and [b-click] things to consider when preparing metadata to help researchers find hidden collections.

I know I'm not the first to use this example, but after we dig up, or at least dig a collection out of the backlog, examine its contents, decide how to best "more or less" process it given our priorities, resources and institutional standards, [click]*. . .

*[b-click]=build click--adds item to same slide; [click]=move to next slide

Slide 2

. . . and then actually do the processing according to the chosen protocol, only to put the items in storage boxes on shelves like this . . .

Slide 3

. . .and the finding aids in binders on shelves that look like this, we can't help but feel a little like Indiana Jones at the end of *Raiders of the Lost Ark* when the Ark is, for all practical purposes, [click]

Slide 4

. . . lost again in that gigantic warehouse at the Smithsonian--as we all remember from the last scene of the classic movie.

Granted, despite how we may feel on some days, our struggles are not life threatening, and the treasures in our institutions are generally less valuable than the Ark of the Covenant. It is, however, still frustrating to process a collection to <u>any</u> degree and have it remain hidden to most of the world.

Of course today we want to believe this doesn't have to happen because we can [click]. . .

Slide 5


. . . .DIGITIZE! [fades automatically to next slide]

Slide 6

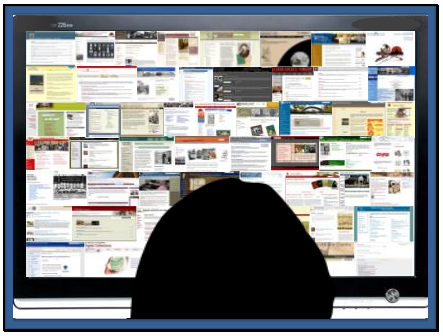
But if we careful in the manner in which we prepare the metadata, we will only be taking a collection that is hidden in a place like this, and . . [click]

Slide 7

. . . replicating it in another hiding place that looks like this. At least the warehouse has finite spatial limitations – and perhaps a good map.

We all know the Internet represents a tremendous opportunity to provide unprecedented numbers of people access to primary materials, but the flip side of that opportunity, is [click] . . .

Slide 8



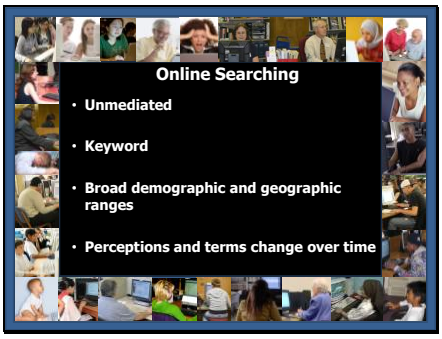
. . . a researcher—like this person sitting before a screen with his or her hand on a mouse—may. . .[click]

Slide 9


. . . [click] literally be almost anyone anywhere in the world.

Not too long ago an archival collection's only "user interface" was a person-to-person reference interview between a trained professional and someone from a relatively small, and generally academically trained, universe of researchers. [click] nderrepresented populations? [click]

Slide 10

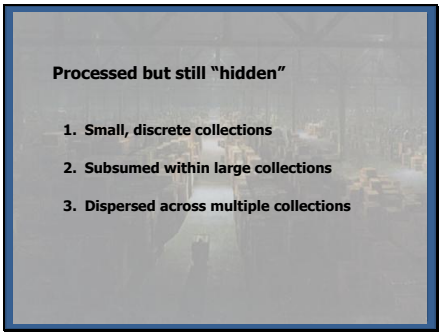



Today the user interface is an impersonal [B-click, B-click] unmediated keyword search. And today's researchers come from [B-click] a much wider range of demographic and educational backgrounds.

Plus, as Maija noted, [B-click] keyword searches in minority history present added challenges because language, terms and perceptions tend to change over time—sometimes as a result of population growth and assimilation, or increased awareness and sensitivity, and at other times simply because a word goes in or out of fashion.

So how can we best help interested parties find hidden materials related to the history of underrepresented populations? [click]

Slide 11




First, a quick reminder about the three categories of hidden collections we want to make more visible and accessible: [B-click]

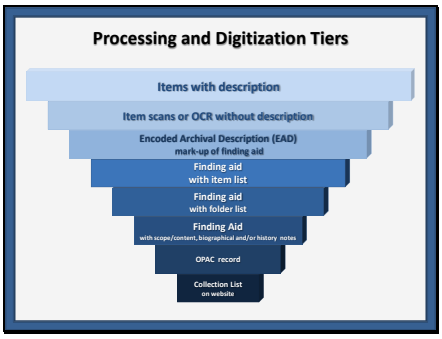
1. Small collections focused exclusively on minority groups or issues, which will not be found via keyword searches unless there are precise matches between the collections' metadata and the researcher's vocabulary [B-click].

2. "Sub-collections" where relatively small amounts of material relevant to the history of minority groups comprise only small portions of larger collections. The content of these minority records is often not deemed to be of sufficient magnitude or importance to be included in the finding aid's subject list or other metadata. [B-click]

3. Situations where minority items are preserved in numerous collections that have other primary subjects. This is where digitization has the potential to make the biggest difference, by linking previously unlinked items. Unfortunately good item level description is usually required and that is a luxury many of us cannot afford.

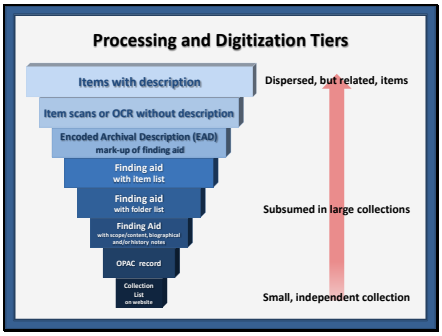
As previous speakers discussed, materials in each of these three hidden categories are processed and digitized to varying degrees depending on the situation. [click]

Slide 12




Here is one representation of tiers of processing and digitization. You may or may not agree with these delineations, or believe all options are included, but that's not important right now. The point is that there <u>are</u> tiers and . . . [click]

Slide 13




. . . at every level we can, and should, try to increase the odds of researchers finding hidden collections related to underrepresented groups.

Many of our suggestions regarding item level metadata are applicable to finding aids and thus can help researchers discover small collections and "sub-collections" subsumed in larger collections even when those collections have not been processed at the item level.

I'm going to quickly review five basic, common sense tips. Nothing new or earth-shattering—just simple things to keep in mind when preparing metadata. Most apply to all metadata preparation, but have added importance for items and collections relating to underrepresented populations. Underlying all five tips is a need to "keep the end in mind." Try not to get so caught up in following procedures or instructions for an individual field that you forget what you are really trying to accomplish with the finding aid and metadata.

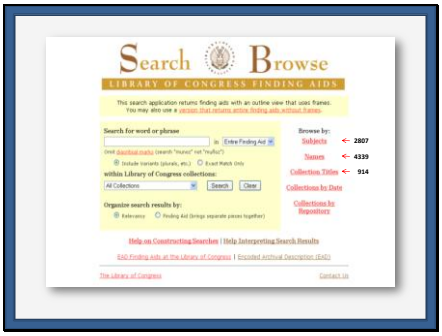
I'm going to start with a group of three tips which I have irreverently dubbed "forget your manners" because they contradict rules your mother taught you about personal interactions and friendships. [click]

Slide 14


Number one is “name drop.” Name dropping may repel people in real life, but it will attract researchers to your collections.

Even if you don’t have time to write long notes or descriptions, try to list the names of as many people, places, institutions, and other organizations that are either mentioned or pictured as possible. [click]

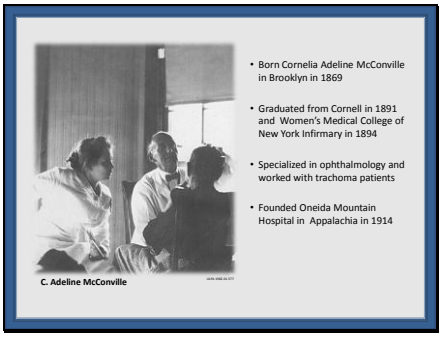
Slide 15




It is simply of a matter of increasing access points. For example, the Library of Congress’s finding aids site [B-click] links to 914 titles. Those 914 collections cover [B-click] about 2800 subjects, but the name list [B- click] includes close to five times the number of access points to the collections as the title list.

I believe name lists provide the best return relative to the investment of processing time and effort because, unlike subjects or free text descriptions, pulling names is something that can usually be done by students or volunteers with limited experience. [click]

Slide 16




One example I want to share involves C. Adeline McConville, the woman on the left in this picture, taken at Oneida Baptist Institute, a settlement school in Clay County, Kentucky, circa 1910. The picture was in an album found in the Florida office of a professional photographer after his death in 1944. Because it was part of the artist’s early amateur work, the photo eventually found its way to his hometown, Louisville. We put the albums online and included the photographer’s captions and notes in the metadata. [B-click]

We later learned that C. Adeline was Cornelia Adeline McConville, born in Brooklyn, NY in 1869. She graduated from Cornell in 1891 and was one of only 17 women granted medical degrees from Women’s Medical College of New York in 1894. She specialized in ophthalmology, and worked with victims of trachoma, which was the first disease officially classified as dangerous by the U.S. government.

Although she maintained her practice in New York, Dr. McConville raised money and in 1914 founded a 22-bed hospital

in Appalachia that reportedly operated at over 130% capacity for decades. The hospital has since been renamed and replaced with a larger facility, but this picture is on the hospital website—and I believe it also hangs in the hospital. A second picture we have of Dr. McConville appeared in several books. So this is one small part of the history of women in medicine, and in Appalachia, that may still be hidden if we hadn't lifted the name C. Adeline McConville from the photographer's notes and put it in the metadata. [click]

Slide 17


The second forget-your-manners tip is to assign labels to people and groups. I certainly don't recommend being this rude, literal or close-minded in life. Like most, I would prefer a world where these types of labels weren't even conscious thoughts, but, even if it takes us out of our comfort zones, in the interest of historical research we have to label people according to their race, religion, occupation and other affiliations—and it is important to put them in as many relevant boxes as possible.

As Maija demonstrated in the Sun Ra example, an individual has the ability to identify with many groups and it is not up to us to decide to eliminate one or more. [click]

Slide 18


The third forget-your-manners tip applies primarily to metadata for individual images in collections where you have the resources to do item level processing and digitization.

When considering what an image is both *of* and *about*, ask why someone took the picture. Is it a special event? What are the people doing and why? Does the clothing in the picture provide clues? Are there artifacts that indicate the people belonged to a certain religion or other group?

If you're rolling your eyes or internally groaning and thinking that you don't have time for that, I just want to add that finding the proper names for items related to minority history is sometimes easier than you may think thanks to websites like this one [click] . . .

Slide 19

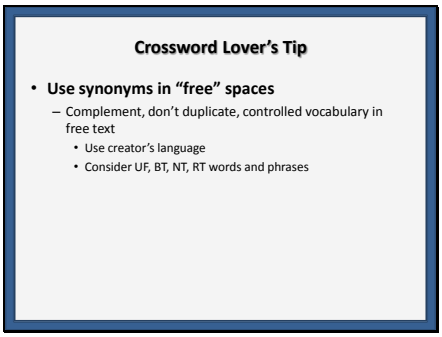

. . .from the Smithsonian's *National Museum of the American Indian*. . . [click]

Slide 20


. . . and this one which is also from the Smithsonian and has links to other sites--just to highlight a couple.

There are also numerous illustrated encyclopedias, almanacs, and handbooks related to the history of diverse minority groups. [click]

Slide 21




The next tip concerns the use of free text in titles, descriptions, and notes. I labeled it crossword lover's tip, but it is really its own word game blending aspects of crosswords and puzzles.

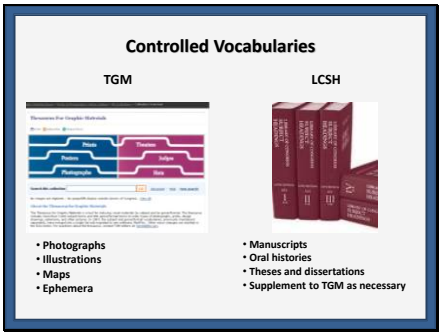
Finding "best fit" controlled vocabulary terms is imperative for both academically trained researchers and to establish links to similar items, but we should avoid the temptation to automatically repeat "best fit" subject terms in titles, descriptions, notes and other fields. The limitations and biases of controlled vocabularies have been well documented. Therefore, if we really want to help keyword searchers, we have to compensate for the deficiencies of controlled vocabularies by using carefully selected synonyms in the free text fields.

The first source for free text terms is, of course, the collection. As Maija said, let "records speak for themselves." If titles, captions, names, or phrases written by the creator or collector do not match LOC authorities or other controlled terms, put them in free text fields.

The "use for," broader, narrower and related terms found in

controlled vocabulary lists are frequently good candidates for inclusion in free text. [click].

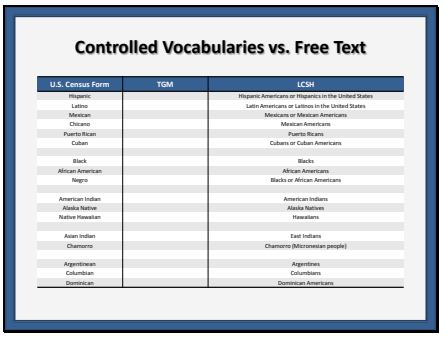
Slide 22




We use TGM, or the *Thesaurus for Graphic Materials,* as our main controlled vocabulary source for photographs, ephemera, and—well, as the title says,--other graphic materials.

For most manuscript collections, oral histories, theses and dissertations, we rely on the Library of Congress Subject Headings. We also use subject headings to fill "holes," such as race, in TGM when we are describing photographs and graphic materials. [click]

Slide 23

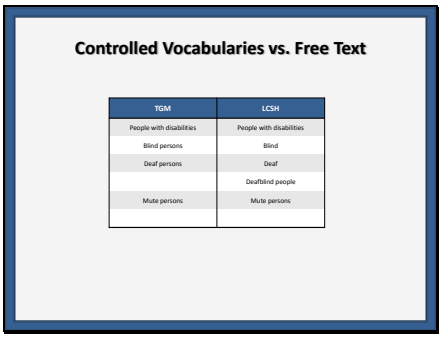



Maija spoke about balancing contemporary and historical terminology and gave examples concerning African Americans and Native Americans.

In the left column are terms used to describe race and nation of origin on the 2010 U.S. census form. I think it is reasonable to presume that at least some online searchers wanting to learn more about these populations might use the census terms either because they are top-of-mind, or considered to be the most-up-to date terminology given their recent widespread use by the census bureau.

With the exception of *indigenous peoples*, TGM has no race or nationality index terms, and some LCSH index terms are closer matches to the census than others. Of course, it depends on the collection—but these are things to consider when selecting free text terminology. [click]

Slide 24

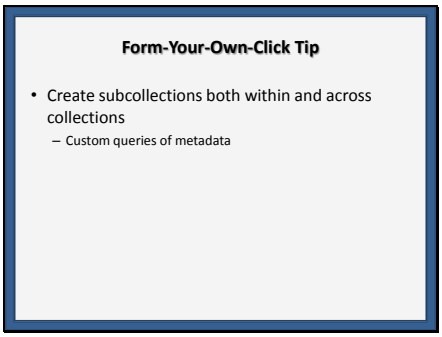



We also need to exercise judgment when balancing historical terms with our desire to be sensitive to the feelings and preferences of people with disabilities. Shown here are examples of disability index terms in TGM and LCSH.

Both avoid using *handicapped* despite the fact that the word is printed on millions of parking signs across the country, and therefore should have high top-of-mind awareness.

As Maija said, dated terms can be important to understanding the context of collections. I recently discovered that searching Uof L digital collections for "crippled" returns more items than does "people with disabilities," primarily because creators and/or collectors used "crippled" in captions and descriptions. Plus in the early and mid twentieth century, the names of numerous hospitals and commissions contained the word "crippled." [click]

Slide 25

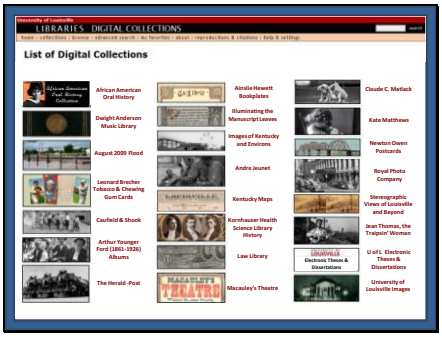



The final tip is another one parents would probably find objectionable if click were spelled with "q-u-e" instead of "c-k."

"Form your own click" is my shorthand for building custom queries to link items and provide subject browsing opportunities. A digital collection, like the physical collection, should maintain its original order, but that does not mean that you can't provide select shortcuts to alternate groupings of similar items.

This works well with all three types of hidden collections. [click]

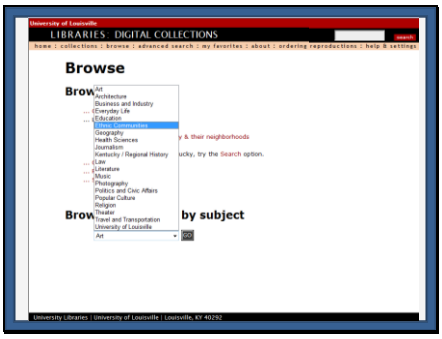
Slide 26




For example, based on the titles of UofL's digital collections, it appears only one, African American Oral Histories, concerns ethnic minorities.

But we—actually, Rachel--created a subject browse for collections [click]

Slide 27

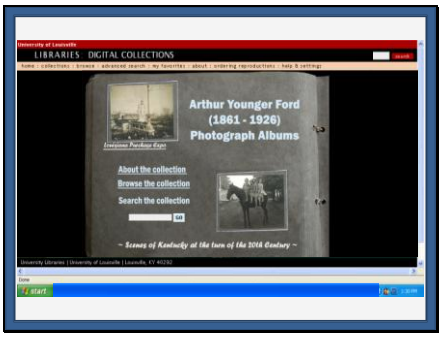



If a researcher chooses to browse collections by the subject “Ethnic Communities” he or she will find . . . [click]

Slide 28


. . . two other collections, including the Arthur Younger For photograph albums [click].

Slide 29

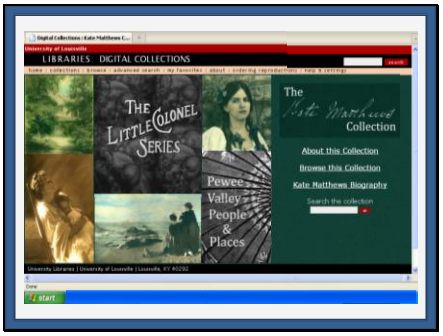



Over 80% of Ford images are of Kentucky, but an interested researcher can use this link labeled “Louisiana Purchase Expo” [click]

Slide 30


to study photographs of the anthropology exhibits at the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis. [click]

Slide 31



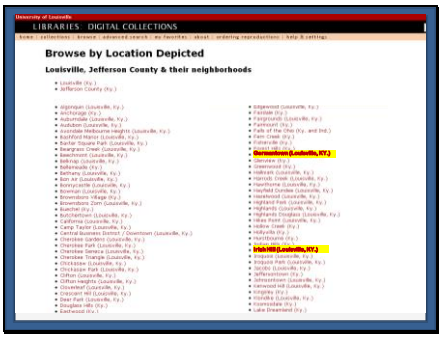

Here is another example of how we used custom queries to organize one photographer's images, which actually came from numerous accessions, into mini-collections by subject [B-click]– although the subjects are not related to minorities[ B-click], this format could be applied to minority subjects. [click]

Slide 32


In addition to browsing collections by subject, we encourage visitors to UofL's digital collections to browse items by subject and location. The subject list is automatically generated by the software, CONTENTdm, but we create custom queries for the local neighborhoods.

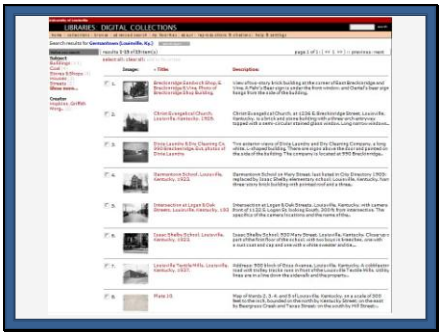
Louisville's ethnic neighborhood history is not nearly as rich as Chicago's, but Louisville did have its immigrant neighborhoods. [click]

Slide 33




I've highlighted two neighborhoods with names related to their ethnic origins-- Germantown and Irish Hill. If you click on Germantown, [click]. . .

Slide 34



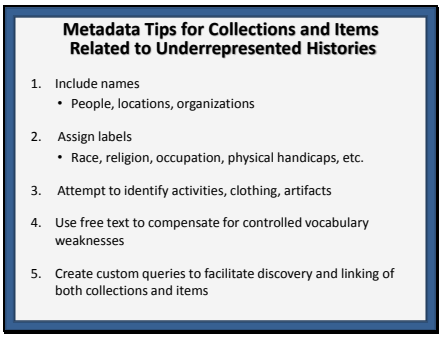

. . you will see thumbnails of Germantown images from four or five collections, including this one of Plate 10 of an atlas [click] . . .

Slide 35


. . .which shows names of property owners and types of structures in Germantown and adjoining Schnitzelberg in 1894. [B-click]

That same custom query list also leads researchers to photographs of institutions founded in the 19th century. . . [B-click] and the people who have attended or worked at those establishments over the years.

Slide 36




So, in summary, there are no hard and fast rules. Judgment and sensitivity are definitely required when choosing terms to describe minority groups and issues, but I do offer five basic, common sense tips:

- Include names of people, places, and organizations to as great an extent as possible

2. Label people and events according to race, religion, occupation, affiliations, physical handicaps, etc.

3. As time and resources permit, attempt to correctly identify activities, events, clothing and other artifacts, especially when you suspect that they may be related to minority cultures and/or events.

- Make a deliberate effort to supplement, rather than duplicate, controlled vocabulary in free text fields

- Look for opportunities to create your own minority groupings with custom queries by subject.

And now, I'd like to turn the microphone back over to our session leader, Rachel Howard.