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Alternative Vocabularies: What to do when LCSH isn't enough

Sasha Frizzell

Binghamton University--SUNY, sfrizzell@binghamton.edu

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Alternative Vocabularies: What to do when LCSH isn't enough

Sasha Frizzell
Catalog / Metadata Management Librarian
for SCRLC
April 26, 2024





Sasha Frizzell (she/they)
Catalog/Metadata Management Librarian
Binghamton University



What we'll talk about

01

What is an alternative vocabulary and why would we use it?

02

Introduction to four alternative vocabularies

03

Practical examples





Why Alternative Vocabularies?

LCSH doesn't always get it right.

Occasionally, terms in LCSH just won't be the right fit for the resource we're cataloging.

LCSH does their best to keep their vocabulary updated and inclusive but sometimes terms are outdated or inappropriate.





Some reasons LCSH lags behind

1. Terms are based on literary warrant
2. They are the Library for the Congress of the United States
3. Long administrative processes

Per the Project for Cooperative Cataloging (PCC), catalogers should feel empowered to integrate alternative vocabularies as needed.



There are a **lot** of
alternative vocabularies.

The LOC MARC office keeps an updated list here:
<https://www.loc.gov/standards/sourcelist/subject.html>





My criteria for choosing a controlled vocabulary

1. Authorized for use in MARC
2. Well maintained
3. Open information about how it is updated

Bonus points for linked data interoperability



A good rule to follow when selecting terminology:

use the term that the group being described uses to describe themselves.





Examples of alternative vocabularies

Library of Congress Demographic Group Terms

Getty Art & Architecture Thesaurus

Rare Books and Manuscripts Controlled Vocabulary

Homosaurus

Library of Congress Demographic Group Terms (LCDGT)

- Based on literary, user, and organizational warrant.
- Used for creator/contributor/audience characteristics (also useful for NACO cataloging)
- Can be found at
 - LC Website (PDFs or id.loc.gov)
 - Classweb



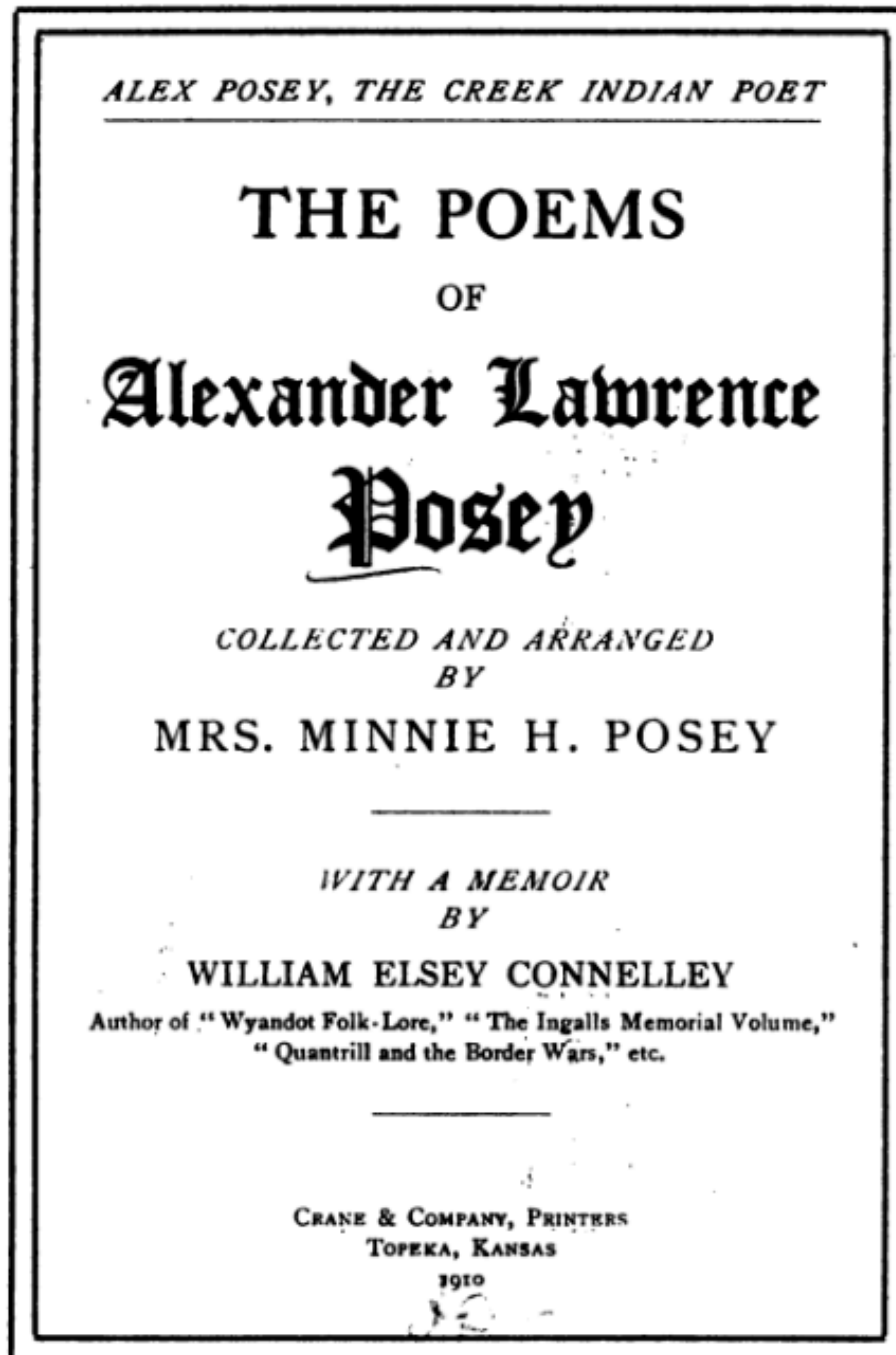
Library of Congress Demographic Group Terms (LCDGT)

- Good for describing:
 - Indigenous people
 - (ex: Haudenosaunee (North American people))
 - occupations
 - (ex: Protein chemists)
 - with people first language
 - (ex: People with cerebral palsy)



Library of Congress Demographic Group Terms (LCDGT) examples

Used for creator/contributor/audience characteristics



100	1		Posey, Alexander Lawrence , #d 1873-1908, #e author. #1 https://id.oclc.org/worldcat/entity/E39PBJpV8J6gGb6crjDqhg3CwC
245	1	4	The poems of Alexander Lawrence Posey / #c collected and arranged by Mrs. Minnie H. Posey ; with a memoir by William Elsey Connelley.
246	1		#i At head of title: #a Alex Posey, the Creek Indian poet
264		1	Topeka, Kansas : #b Crane & Company, Printers, #c 1910.
300			192 pages : #b portraits ; #c 22 cm
336			text #b txt #2 rdacontent
337			unmediated #b n #2 rdamedia
338			volume #b nc #2 rdacarrier
386			#i Author: #a Muscogee (North American people) #2 lcdgt
386			#i Author: #a Humorists #2 lcdgt
340			#m 8vo. #2 rdabf

Posey, A. Lawrence., Connelley, W. Elsey., Posey, M. (Harris). (1910). The poems of Alexander Lawrence Posey. Topeka, Kan.: Crane Printers. Courtesy of HathiTrust



Getty Art and Architecture Thesaurus (AAT)

- Created and maintained by an editorial board at the Getty Museum in Los Angeles.
 - Available on their website: [Link](https://www.getty.edu/research/tools/vocabularies/aat)
(<https://www.getty.edu/research/tools/vocabularies/aat>)



Getty Art and Architecture Thesaurus (AAT)

- Good for describing:
 - Art styles (ex: Czech Cubism)
 - Art forms (ex: Face vessels)
 - Art techniques (ex: Aquarelle (technique))
 - Book terms (ex: Accordion album bindings)

AAT example



Gaulke, C., C. Gaulke. 2005. Offerings at the crossroads.
Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

100	1	Gaulke, Cheri , #e artist.
245	1 0	Offerings at the crossroads / #c Cheri Gaulke, Sue Maberry.
260		[Los Angeles, California] : #b C. Gaulke, #c ©2005.
300		20 unnumbered leaves : #b color illustrations ; #c 9 x 31 cm
336		text #b txt #2 rdacontent
337		unmediated #b n #2 rdamedia
338		volume #b nc #2 rdacarrier
500		Palm leaf book.
500		"Digitally printed on an Epson Stylus Photo 2200 with archival inks and Epson watercolor paper in an edition of 100. The cover is Indonesian teak wood with red cord, wooden beads, and a fabric pouch."--Colophon.
650	0	Artists' books #v Specimens .
650	0	Friendship in art .
655	7	Teak (wood). #2 aat
655	7	Unbound volumes. #2 aat
655	7	Artists' books (books). #2 aat
655	7	Limited editions. #2 aat
700	1	Maberry, Sue , #e artist.

Rare Books and Manuscripts Controlled Vocabulary for Rare Materials Cataloging (RBMSCV)

- Created and maintained by the ACRL Rare Books and Manuscripts Section (RBMS) Controlled Vocabularies Editorial Group (CVEG).
- Available on id.loc.gov [Link](#)

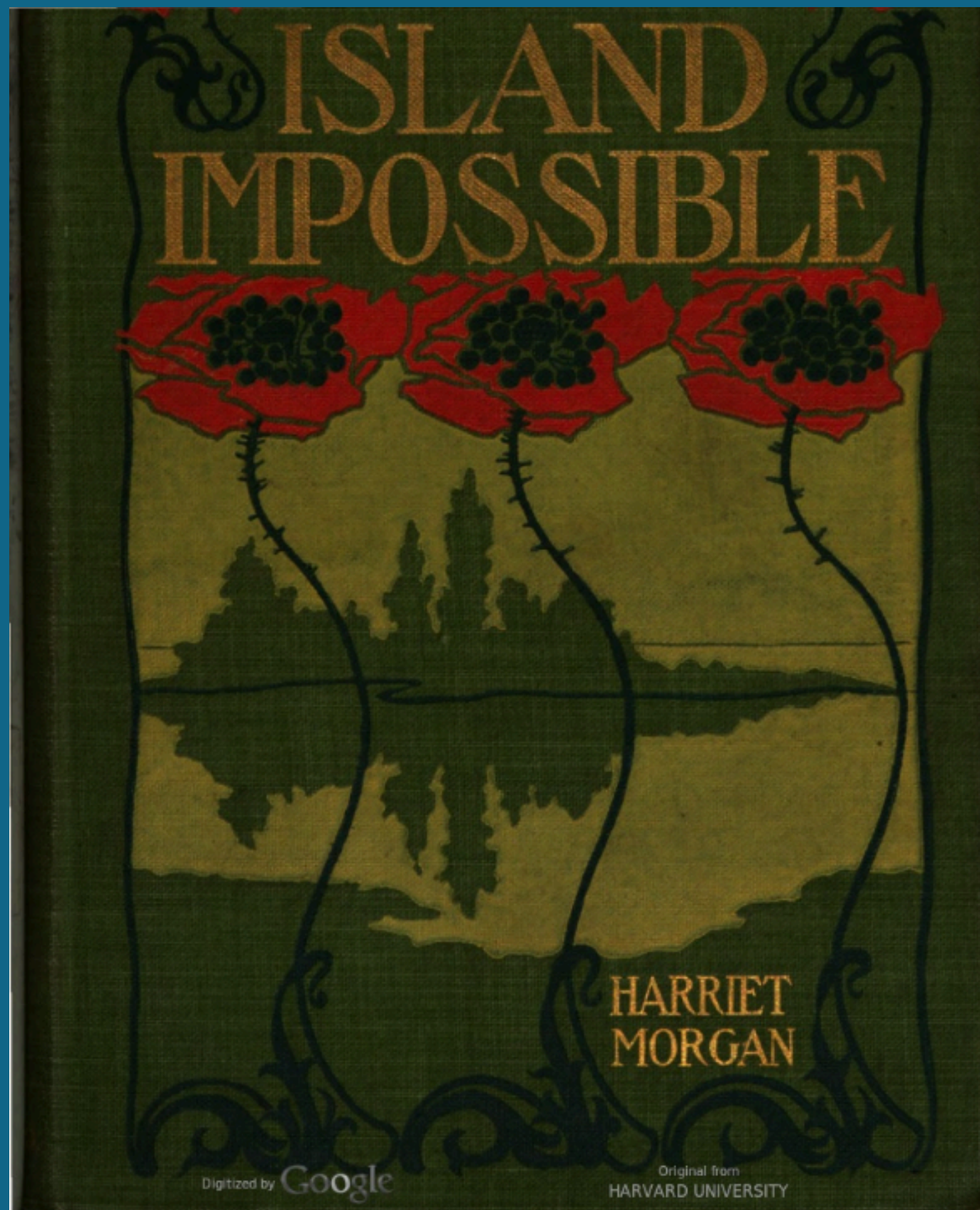


Rare Books and Manuscripts Controlled Vocabulary for Rare Materials Cataloging (RBMSCV)

- Good for describing:
 - Genre terms (ex: Alphabet wheels)
 - Printing terms (ex: Anthropomorphic letters)
 - “Anti” content terms (ex: Anti-communist works)
 - Special occasion terms (ex: presentation copies)



RBMSCV example



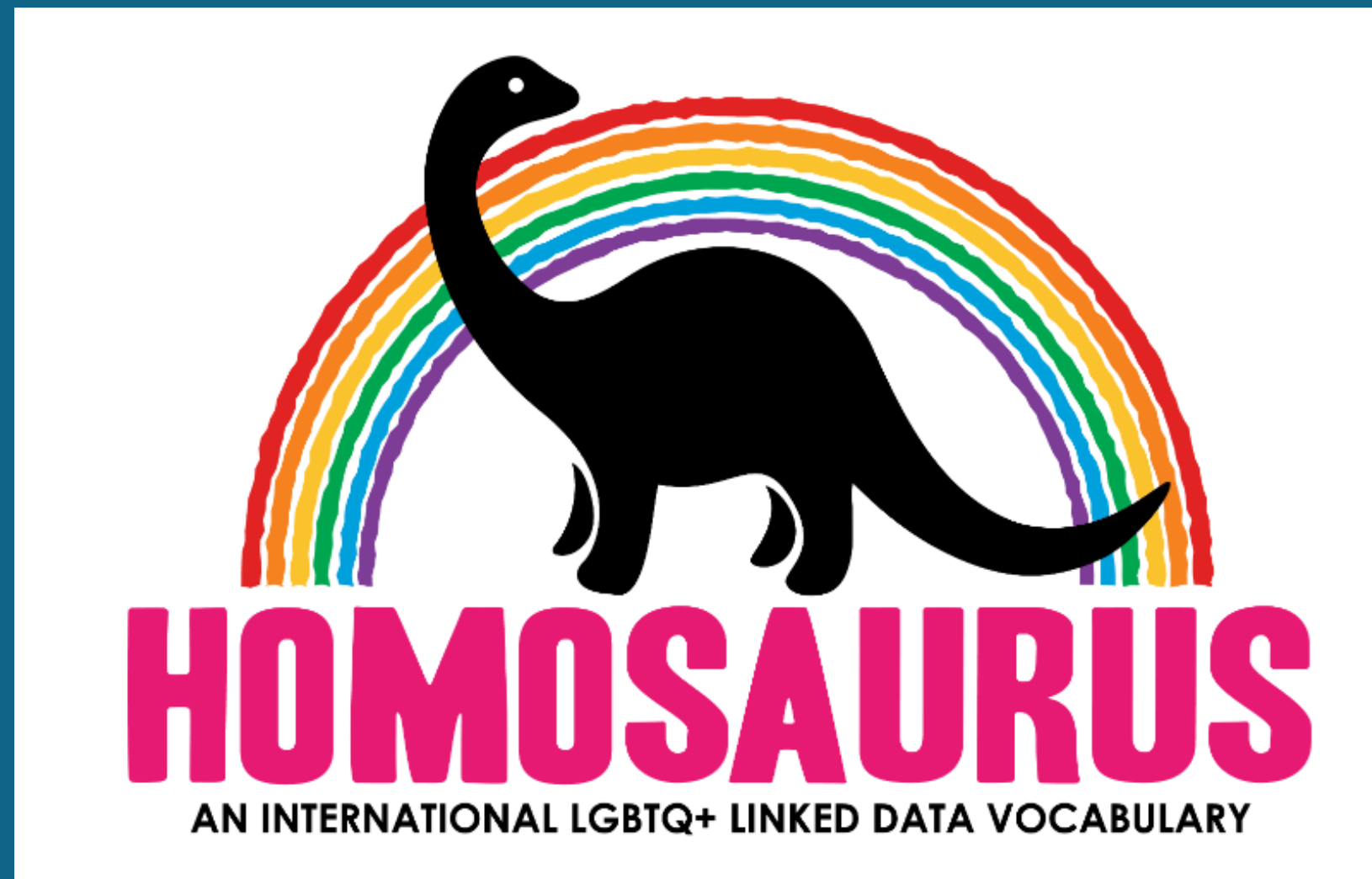
100	1		Ford, Harriet , #d 1868-1949 . #1 https://id.oclc.org/worldcat/entity/E39PBJth67vhxBVyjMhwTmCWjC
245	1	4	The island impossible / #c by Harriet Morgan ; illustrated by Katharine Pyle.
260			Boston : #b Little, Brown & Co., #c ©1899 #e (Cambridge, USA : #f University Press ; John Wilson and Son)
300			206, [5] pages, 5 unnumbered leaves of plates : #b illustrations ; #c 19 cm
336			text #b txt #2 rdacontent
337			unmediated #b n #2 rdamedia
338			volume #b nc #2 rdacarrier
500			Publisher's catalogue follows text.
500			Bound in decorated red cloth publisher's binding, stamped in green, yellow and gilt with design of flowers and buds with leafy vines.
650	0		Youth #x Conduct of life #v Juvenile fiction .
650	0		Conduct of life #v Juvenile fiction .
650	0		Friendship #v Juvenile fiction .
655	7		Publishers' cloth bindings. #2 rbmscv
655	7		Pictorial bindings. #2 rbmscv
655	7		Presentation inscriptions. #2 rbmscv
655	7		Illustrated works. #2 rbmscv

Ford, H., Pyle, K., John Wilson and Son., University Press (Cambridge, M., Little, B. and Company., Little, B. and Company. (1899). The island impossible. Boston: Little, Brown & Co..Courtesy of HathiTrust



Homosaurus (homoit)

- Created by an international board of queer information professionals based on needs of the community.
- Available on their website. [Link.](https://homosaurus.org/v3)
(<https://homosaurus.org/v3>)



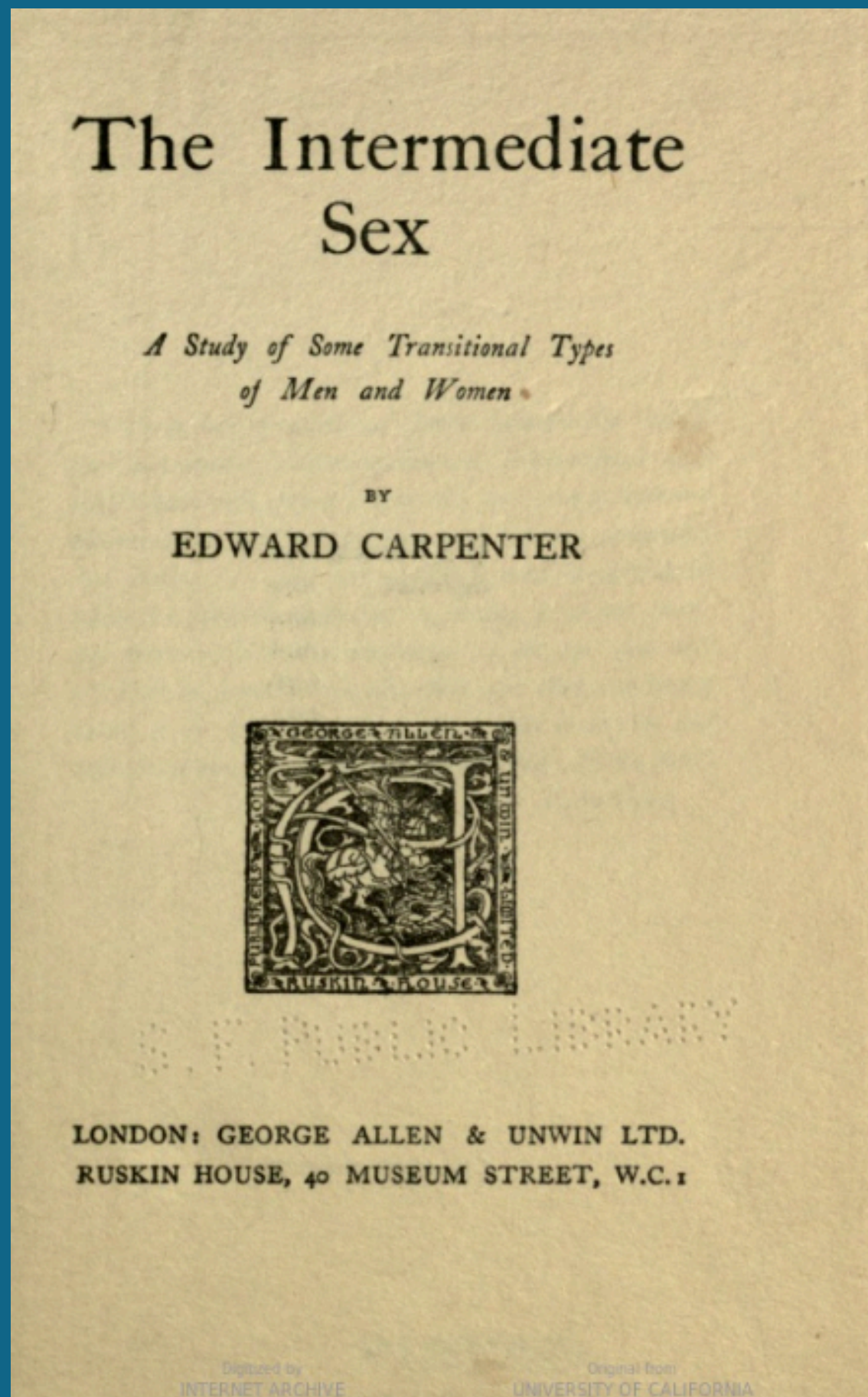


Homosaurus (homoit)



- Good for describing:
 - Queer people: (ex: Queer neurodivergent people)
 - Specific sexual identities (ex: Multiracial asexual people)
 - Specific gender identities (ex: Demigender people)
 - Any time you want to use the term LGBTQ+
 - Fandoms (ex: Gender in fandom)

Homosaurus example



100	1		Carpenter, Edward , #d 1844-1929 , #e author. #1 https://id.oclc.org/worldcat/entity/E39PBJdWXxfqmWVWCbRMkqX8G3
245	1	4	The Intermediate sex : #b a study of some transitional types of men and women / #c by Edward Carpenter.
264		1	London : #b George Allen & Unwin, #c 1908.
300			175 pages ; #c 19 cm
336			text #b txt #2 rdacontent
337			unmediated #b n #2 rdamedia
338			volume #b nc #2 rdacarrier
504			Includes bibliographical references.
650	0		Homosexuality.
650	0		Gay men.
650	0		Lesbians.
650	7		Sexual identity. #2 homoit
650	7		Uranism. #2 homoit

Carpenter, E. (1921). The intermediate sex: a study of some transitional types of men and women. London: G. Allen & Unwin ltd. Courtesy of HathiTrust.



Examples of enhancement

THE WORK
OF THE
AFRO-AMERICAN WOMAN

BY
MRS. N. F. MOSSELL

PHILADELPHIA
GEO. S. FERGUSON COMPANY
1894

100	1	Mossell, N. F. , #c Mrs. , #d 1855-1948 . #1 https://id.oclc.org/worldcat/entity/E39PBJqmP7hDd8gkJPvwq4hWDq
245	1 4	The work of the Afro-American woman / #c by Mrs. N.F. Mossell.
264	1	Philadelphia : #b Geo. S. Ferguson Company, #c 1894.
264	4	#c ©1894
300		178, [4] pages, [1] leaf of plate : #b portrait ; #c 17 cm
336		text #b txt #2 rdacontent
337		unmediated #b n #2 rdamedia
338		volume #b nc #2 rdacarrier
504		Includes bibliographical references.
500		Advertisements on pages [1]-[4] at end.
563		Bound in publisher's brick-colored full cloth. Double rule in black stamped on front cover. Title stamped in black and centered in front panel. Four pages of advertisements at the back. #5 WaU
505	0	The work of the Afro-American woman. -- A sketch of Afro-American literature. -- The Afro-American woman in verse. -- Our women in journalism. -- Our Afro-American representatives at the World's Fair. -- The opposite point of view. -- A lofty study. -- Caste in universities. -- Verse.
650	0	African American women.
650	0	African American women authors.
650	0	American literature #x African American authors #x History and criticism.

Mossell, N. F. (1894). The work of the Afro-American woman. Philadelphia: Geo. S. Ferguson Company.
Courtesy of HathiTrust

What I want to capture	What it is	What vocabulary I'll check
Advertisements	Physical feature of book	RBMSCV AAT
Binding	Physical feature of book	RBMSCV AAT
Author characteristic	386 note	LCSH LCDGT

Before

After->

100	1		Mossell, N. F. , #c Mrs. , #d 1855-1948 . #1 https://id.oclc.org/worldcat/entity/E39PBJqmP7hDd8gkJPvwq4hWDq
245	1	4	The work of the Afro-American woman / #c by Mrs. N.F. Mossell.
264		1	Philadelphia : #b Geo. S. Ferguson Company, #c 1894.
264		4	#c ©1894
300			178, [4] pages, [1] leaf of plate : #b portrait ; #c 17 cm
336			text #b txt #2 rdacontent
337			unmediated #b n #2 rdamedia
338			volume #b nc #2 rdacarrier
504			Includes bibliographical references.
500			Advertisements on pages [1]-[4] at end.
563			Bound in publisher's brick-colored full cloth. Double rule in black stamped on front cover. Title stamped in black and centered in front panel. Four pages of advertisements at the back. #5 WaU
505	0		The work of the Afro-American woman. -- A sketch of Afro-American literature. -- The Afro-American woman in verse. -- Our women in journalism. -- Our Afro-American representatives at the World's Fair. -- The opposite point of view. -- A lofty study. -- Caste in universities. -- Verse.
650	0		African American women .
650	0		African American women authors .
650	0		American literature #x African American authors #x History and criticism .

338			volume #b nc #2 rdacarrier
386			#i Author: #a African American journalists. #2 lcsh
500			Copyright statement from verso of title page.
504			Includes bibliographical references.
510	4		Library Company of Philadelphia. Afro-Americana, 1553-1906 (2nd edition), #c Supplement 1519
500			"List of Afro-American publications": pages 64-66.
500			"Verse": pages 149-176.
500			Advertisements on pages [1]-[4] at end.
563			Bound in publisher's brick-colored full cloth. Double rule in black stamped on front cover. Title stamped in black and centered in front panel. Four pages of advertisements at the back. #5 WaU
505	0		The work of the Afro-American woman. -- A sketch of Afro-American literature. -- The Afro-American woman in verse. -- Our women in journalism. -- Our Afro-American representatives at the World's Fair. -- The opposite point of view. -- A lofty study. -- Caste in universities. -- Verse.
650	0		African American women .
650	0		African American women authors .
650	0		American literature #x African American authors #x History and criticism .
655	7		Advertisements. #2 rbmscv
655	7		Publishers' cloth bindings. #2 aat

TRIED! TESTED! PROVEN!

THE

HOME COOK BOOK.

COMPILED BY
LADIES OF TORONTO AND CHIEF CITIES AND TOWNS
IN CANADA.

SEVENTIETH EDITION.

Toronto:
ROSE PUBLISHING COMPANY,
1887.

245	0	4	The home cook book / #c compiled by ladies of Toronto and chief cities and towns in Canada.
246	3		Home cook book, Tried, tested, proved
246	3		Tried, tested, proved home cook book
250			Seventieth edition.
264		1	Toronto : #b Rose Publishing Company, #c 1887.
300			[3], iv-xi, [2], 10-384 pages ; #c 19 cm
336			text #b txt #2 rdacontent
337			unmediated #b n #2 rdamedia
338			volume #b nc #2 rdacarrier
500			At head of title: Tried, tested, proved.
500			Names of some contributors are given.
500			Includes Table of contents.
500			Includes 10 pages of medical recipes.
650	0		Cooking #x Canadian.
650	0		Cooking #z Canada .

(1887). The Home cook book. Toronto: Rose Pub. Co.
Courtesy of HathiTrust..

What I want to capture	What it is	What vocabulary I'll check
Wooden Binding	Physical feature of book	RBMSCV AAT
Cookbook	Genre/Form	LCGFT AAT RBMSCV
Canadian folks	386	LCDGT
Canadian Cookbook in the 19th century	6XX	LCSH

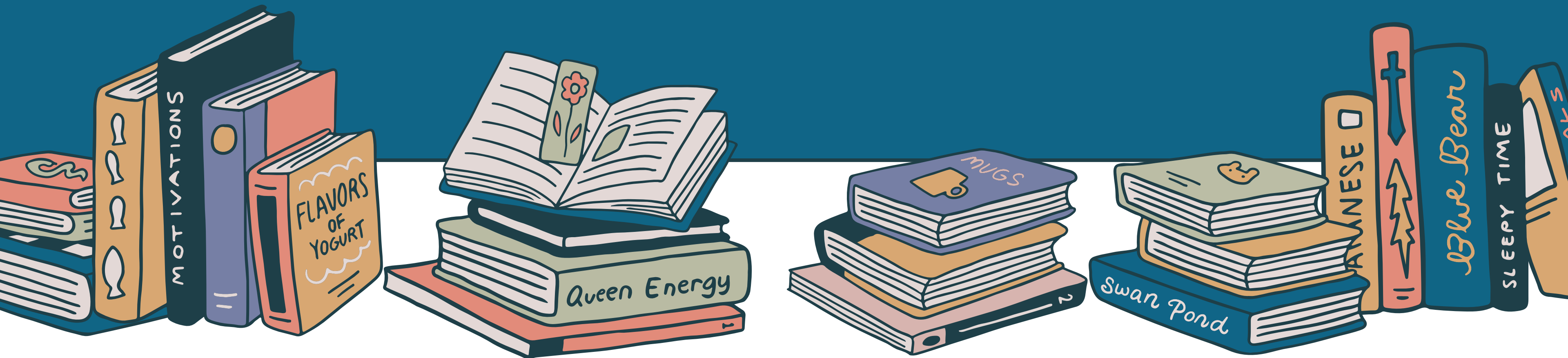
Before enhancement

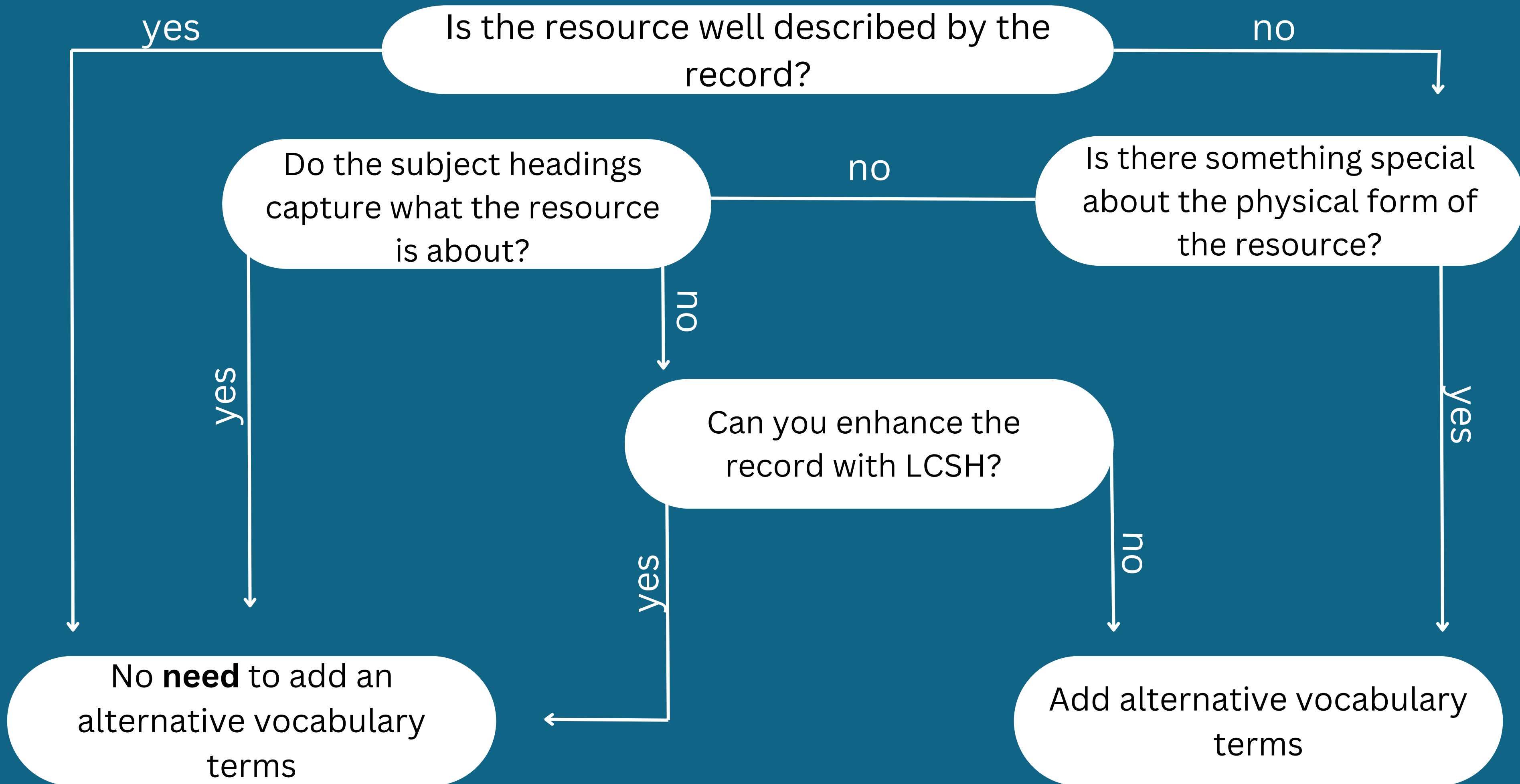
245	0	4	The home cook book / #c compiled by ladies of Toronto and chief cities and towns in Canada.
246	3		Home cook book, Tried, tested, proved
246	3		Tried, tested, proved home cook book
250			Seventieth edition.
264	1		Toronto : #b Rose Publishing Company, #c 1887.
300			[3], iv-xi, [2], 10-384 pages ; #c 19 cm
336			text #b txt #2 rdacontent
337			unmediated #b n #2 rdamedia
338			volume #b nc #2 rdacarrier
500			At head of title: Tried, tested, proved.
500			Names of some contributors are given.
500			Includes Table of contents.
500			Includes 10 pages of medical recipes.
650	0		Cooking #x Canadian.
650	0		Cooking #z Canada .

After enhancement

245	0	4	The home cook book / #c compiled by ladies of Toronto and chief cities and towns in Canada.
246	3		Home cook book, Tried, tested, proved
246	3		Tried, tested, proved home cook book
250			Seventieth edition.
264	1		Toronto : #b G.M. Rose & Sons, #c 1887.
300			[3], iv-xi, [2], 10-384 pages ; #c 19 cm
336			text #b txt #2 rdacontent
337			unmediated #b n #2 rdamedia
338			volume #b nc #2 rdacarrier
386			#i Authors: #a Canadians. #2 lcdgt
500			At head of title: Tried, tested, proved.
500			Names of some contributors are given.
500			Includes table of contents, 10 pages of medical recipes, and recipes for household chores.
650	0		Cooking, Canadian #y 19th century .
650	0		Cooking #z Canada #y 19th century .
655	7		Cookbooks . #2 lcgft
655	7		Publishers' bindings. #2 rbmscv #5 BNG

Basic decision tree





What can I do if I can't find a term?

- Look up similar resources to see what other librarians have done to help
- Enter a blurb in a 520 field so it still has keyword access
- Reach out to a SACO funnel or the editorial board of the appropriate vocabulary to help create a new heading



Thank you !

Contact: SFrizzell@binghamton.edu

