Browsing through Bias: The Library of Congress Classification and Subject Headings for African American Studies and LGBTQIA Studies

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Abstract

The knowledge organization system prepared by the Library of Congress (LC) and widely used in academic libraries has some disadvantages for researchers in the fields of African American studies and LGBTQIA studies. The interdisciplinary nature of those fields means that browsing in stacks or shelflists organized by LC Classification requires looking in numerous locations. As well, persistent bias in the language used for subject headings, as well as the hierarchy of classification for books in these fields, continues to "other" the peoples and topics that populate these titles. This paper offers tools to help researchers have a holistic view of applicable titles across library shelves and hopes to become part of a larger conversation regarding social responsibility and diversity in the library community.[1]

Introduction

The neat division of knowledge into tidy silos of scholarly disciplines, each with its own section of a knowledge organization system (KOS), has long characterized the efforts of libraries to arrange their collections of books. The KOS most commonly used in American academic libraries is the Library of Congress Classification (LCC). LCC, developed between 1899 and 1903 by James C. M. Hanson and Charles Martel, is based on the work of Charles Ammi Cutter. Cutter devised his "Expansive Classification" to embody the universe of human knowledge within twenty-seven classes, while Hanson and Martel eventually settled on twenty (Chan 1999, 6–12). Those classes tend to mirror the names of academic departments then prevailing in colleges and universities (e.g., Philosophy, History, Medicine, and Agriculture). As Drabinski (2013) notes, "libraries are sites constructed by the disciplinary power of language" (94).

While it is theoretically possible to imagine a KOS that would use an organizing heuristic other than scholarly discipline (e.g., a topical approach), the fact remains that libraries have been using LCC for so long that "researchers are now *used* to finding documents grouped by discipline" (Szostak, Gnoli, and López-Huertas 2016, 96). LCC is in place, and the use of shared catalog records means that most libraries are likely to continue its use. For over a century, the Library of Congress (LC) has produced catalog records that are reused by other libraries, and the availability of LC records has created a strong incentive for libraries to adopt LCC for ease of processing new acquisitions (Edlund 1976; Yee 2009.) As Denda (2005) observes, "this cataloging is often acquired and reused with minimal revision or no revision" (268). Access to monographs in fields such as LGBTQIA and African American studies can be greatly affected by the disciplinary model of LCC, which separates, for example, history from politics, and photography from art.

Classification, of course, is only one aspect of the KOS employed by libraries using LCC. It is intended to be complemented by Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH). While a classification system requires a book to be shelved in a single location, subject headings allow multiple points of topical access to the same work, as Pettee (1946, 48) explains:

> The parallel lines of our classification schemes are drawn through the flat surface of plane geometry. The interrelationships of a topical name demand another dimension. Names reach up and over the surface. Sugar, for example, many handed like a Hindu god, reaches up a hand from Chemistry, from Agriculture, from Applied arts. These hands clasp in the air under the single term Sugar, irrespective of the classification map on the plane surface below. In a dictionary catalog the logical analysis of a classed catalog is exalted to a third dimension. The logic transcends the limits of a classification scheme, for the interrelationships of the special topics reach out into the whole field of knowledge.

While not a formal aspect of LC's KOS, keyword searching in OPACs augments the accessibility provided by subject headings. Both Peterson (2008) and Grey and Hurko (2012) highlight the importance of researchers using parallel search strategies, employing both LCSH and keyword searching. For research in interdisciplinary fields, this requires that the researcher and the subject librarian, liaison, or reference librarian assisting the researcher have a large knowledge set of frequently used terms in a variety of fields (versus the more narrow band of specialized knowledge that can be effective when researching in a more traditional canon.)

Despite the guidance provided by LCSH and keyword searching, library patrons still rely upon classification to aid them in their information seeking. A number of studies how shown that, even in an OPAC environment, patrons still rely on browsing to help identify books of interest (Massey 2005; Jones 2006; Švab and Žumer 2015; Knowlton and Hackert 2015).

And it is still a common practice for librarians to tell patrons to scan the shelves near a book that is of interest, in case other similar books are also available. This valuable technique for finding materials one might have passed over in a catalog search is a less robust option for those conducting research in interdisciplinary fields. While some might say this is just another hurdle for researchers to navigate, there are much deeper implications. As Clarke (2010) notes with regard to LGBTQIA books in a campus library, "the near impossibility of browsing" may result in user frustration that can lead some to "abandon using the library and its resources altogether" (83). Whether serving academic or personal research pursuits, this is a risk no library should knowingly undertake.

For librarians serving interdisciplinary researchers, then, navigating the classification system for a number of disciplines becomes important. One way to think about interdisciplinary studies is as "a form of research and teaching where each discipline continues to be separate and distinct in its approach to a subject, but where the findings of each discipline are integrated" (Robb 2010, 50). This notion, then, obliges librarians who serve patrons in interdisciplinary fields "to know how to find materials across a wide variety of disciplines" (40). Naturally, Robb adds that such librarians must be conversant with appropriate subject vocabularies.

Because of the complexity of LCC, interdisciplinary scholars may find it difficult to immediately identify all the areas of the collection that contain relevant materials. (In fact, scholars in traditional disciplines may also face this difficulty; Hickey and Arlen [2002] report that more than half of the books reviewed in leading historical journals are classified at a location outside the letters assigned to "History" by LCC.) Knapp (2010, 58) writes, "One of the problems with traditional cataloging methods is that they assume a sort of omniscience, or a sort of bird's eye view of how the totality of knowledge is organized . . . in short, they are designed to help *librarians* locate items more than the average scholar" (italics in the original.)

The Hurdles and the Opportunities for Librarians Working in Interdisciplinary Studies

This, in turn, provides both opportunities and hurdles for librarians. As Knapp (2012) notes, older roles for librarians are being supplanted by the internet. But openings remain for librarians to "add value to the academic enterprise" (204) of their institutions through facilitating interdisciplinary research by virtue of their extensive knowledge of the library's organization and means of access. The means by which librarians add value is expertise regarding information-seeking tools in multiple disciplines. This requires librarians to become familiar with classification schemes, subject vocabularies, and keywords used in multiple areas.

To better define the expertise required in this mission, librarians have been investigating the problematic nature of conducting interdisciplinary

research (Knapp 2012; Denda 2005). For patrons using the tools of the LC KOS, many difficulties persist due to, among other problems, the silo-like structure of LCC, the lack of consistency in word choice within LCSH, and the dated nature of the terminology. In addition, as will be discussed below, both LCC and LCSH exhibit "othering" tendencies—that is, presenting historically marginalized people as fundamentally different from white heterosexual men.

Researchers encountering these difficulties are often further frustrated when looking at works addressing marginalized groups and at research by marginalized scholars. Works of, on, and about African American studies or lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (and/or questioning), intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA) studies, or authored by African American or LGBTQIA scholars, have been grudgingly admitted into the academic landscape and are often not collected and acquired at the same pace as other materials. Works in African American studies have been seen "to suffer from invisibility in the publishing and bibliographic world" (Warner 2001, 168). They are not well-represented in standard reference works nor reviewed as frequently as general works. Several scholars have investigated the lack of LGBTQIA representation in both public and academic library collections and how this can lead to alienation from the library (Clarke 2010; Taraba 1990).

Whether because of lack of representation on the shelves or the very real phenomenon of being othered in library classification systems, interdisciplinary research in studies of marginalized people is complicated. Even if both researcher and librarian are well-versed in different disciplines, the corresponding terminology, and interdisciplinary research, it might still be difficult to cast a wide-enough net to catch everything that is in a library's collection. Partly, this is due to the fact that often these materials are scattered across LCC and therefore scattered across the physical space of the library. As an example of the desire of library patrons for breaking down the disciplinary divides in LCC, Clay (2000) surveyed reference staff serving students in African American studies, who noted that a major improvement to library service would be to shelve related materials all together. While that is an unlikelihood in most libraries, librarians well-equipped with knowledge of the classification numbers most relevant to African American studies can help patrons negotiate the collection more easily. At Princeton University, librarians have created a tool to aid researchers doing interdisciplinary research in the fields of African American studies and LGBTQIA studies, which is described below.

Knowledge of LCC and LCSH for interdisciplinary research is particularly important in the unique circumstances of librarians serving African American students. Librarians who have a goal of improving information literacy may take note of the findings of Mortimore and Wall (2009), who note that African American students are most receptive to instruction

when they perceive there to be a nurturing, encouraging relationship between instructors and students. Among the ways instructors can cultivate an experience of nurture is to make explicit the information search process—such as by explaining how library tools like classification and subject headings are created and applied. (To be sure, the field of African American studies is open to students of all races, but in many institutions, African American students are predominant among scholars in the field.)

Sharing expertise and interest can also help librarians to overcome what Katapol (2012) observes as "information anxiety" among some African American students. Information anxiety is stress induced by students' fears about accessing information. Stress may be caused by external factors such as unfamiliarity with a library's floor plan, or internal pressures such as fear of being judged when asking for assistance. These factors are compounded in academic libraries by architectural features and library workforces that present "normative Whiteness" to those visiting library spaces (Brook, Ellenwood, and Lazzaro 2015, 248.)

Stress is manifested in behaviors of "stress avoidance" (Katapol 2012, 8), such as not approaching librarians for assistance. Among the African American graduate students surveyed by Katapol, common sources of information anxiety related to academic libraries included, first, perceptions that non-African American librarians are "disinterested in and disrespectful of minority-related research" (10) and also lack expertise, and second, fear of encouraging stereotypes of "incompetence" by revealing a need to learn more about library resources. An obvious approach to overcoming library anxiety is to make clear a librarian's enthusiasm for and familiarity with library resources for African American studies, and to lower barriers to students' unmediated use of the collection. Although her language is dated, in 1970, Smith (21) laid out the competencies that should be expected of any librarian working with African American studies:

a. Application of sound principles in the selection of various types of materials by and about the Negro.
b. Ability to organize materials in various forms that are grouped under numerous subjects concerning the Negro.
c. Skill in the preparation of special subject bibliographies.
d. Ability to identify major collections of research materials on the Negro.
e. Ability to identify major contributors to the literature of the Negro. . . .
f. Ability to interpret materials by and about the Negro to library users and to the community.
g. Ability to integrate thoroughly these materials with the literature on other aspects of American life and culture.

These competencies are still necessary and will serve the unique needs of researchers in African American studies.

Librarians in the field of LGBTQIA studies face many of the same issues. Collections are often lacking in comparison to more traditional subject areas, or in some cases are nonexistent (Alexander and Miselis 2007;

Clarke 2010; Taraba 1990). As with African American studies and women's studies, LGBTQIA materials are often scattered across the library, making it more difficult to visualize the scope of a topic, and also interfering with the shelf-browsing search technique. Librarians, whether designated as the specialist in LGBTQIA studies or not, should also be aware that patrons asking for the location of these materials or wanting other assistance might be reading for personal reasons rather than in a scholarly pursuit. Language used by librarians is extremely important, as the wrong words may alienate a patron from both the library as a space and librarians. If LGBTQIA materials are lacking, or if keyword searches come up empty (for example, searching for "queer" in LCSH), librarians should be transparent with the patrons about the reasons why; creating an open dialogue between librarian and patron only serves to strengthen the role of the library in a given community. It is best to avoid the situation Hope Olson (2001) describes as "library users seeking material on topics outside of a traditional mainstream . . . meet[ing] with frustration in finding nothing, or . . . find[ing] something but miss[ing] important relevant materials" (639), and not knowing how to find other similar items in the collection.

In summary, one of the ways that librarians can embrace the American Library Association's "Core Values" of diversity and social responsibility, as called for by Roberts and Noble (2016), is to provide insight into the means of access to materials by and about traditionally marginalized people.

Classification and Subject Headings for African American Studies and LGBTQIA Studies
Understanding the classification and subject headings for interdisciplinary topics starts with observing their history and basic structure. From there, we can assemble lists of appropriate entries for dissemination among librarians and researchers.

Library of Congress Classification for African American Studies
The most prominent classification for African American studies is at E184–E185. The E class was the first to be published, in 1901, and was originally titled *America: History and Geography* (Chan 1999, 207). While the class is now simply titled *History of the Americas,* the geographical elements remain in the first section of the class. E184–E185 is labeled "Elements in the population" and includes classification numbers for populations identified by ethnicity, nationality, race, or religious denomination, such as "Cornish," "Cubans," "Jews," and "Mennonites." African Americans are classified at E184.5–E184.7, for topics such as general historiography, ethnology/sociology of African American communities, and the field of African American studies. E185 is labeled "Elements in the population. African Americans. General works. History." African American history is

included in this classification number, but so are a number of other top-
ics, ranging from African American rhetoric, to demographic studies, to
humor by African Americans. Cazort (1971, 4) calls E185 "the hall-closet
of classification." Because E185 has subdivisions according to historical pe-
riod, entries that are not strictly historical in nature are classified accord-
ing to the period in which they were produced. "Special topics" begin at
E185.62 and include entries such as "Intermarriage of races," "Economic
conditions," and "Social conditions." E185.9 is reserved for coverage of
African American life and history in regions or states.

   While materials continue to be cataloged in E185, Cazort (3) noted
a trend in 1971 that has continued to the present, of LC "more and
more . . . placing black materials within the subject area into which they
fall." In such cases, access may be provided either through appropriate
subject headings or through elements of LCC that specify coverage of
African Americans within the topic.

   In the latter case, Clack (1975, 44) has noted, "Although the outline [of
E184–E185] is arranged so that all materials about blacks in the United
States may be kept together, notation which is coextensive with the pub-
lished literature is available elsewhere in the system if one has the time,
talent, and patience to search it out. Additional or alternative classifica-
tion locations are to be found in each of the twenty-six volumes of the
schedules." In 1975, the attempt to identify classification numbers outside
of E184–E185 was sometimes "an exercise in futility because of the lack of
access to the themes [in LCC] through the index." However, in the age of
the personal computer, assembling a list of relevant classification numbers
is easier, with the use of full-text readable PDFs of the LCC schedule.

   In table 1, we present what we believe is a complete list of LCC num-
bers where material relating to African American studies may be located
(see the Appendix for all tables). The focus has been on African Ameri-
can studies as defined by the Department of African American Studies at
Princeton University: "Teaching and research about African-descended
people, with a central focus on their experiences in the United States"
(Department of African American Studies 2015). Classification numbers
that apply to people living in the continent of Africa are excluded. Some
classification numbers have been changed from earlier editions of LCC
but may persist in catalogs. Those numbers are marked with an asterisk.

   The list was assembled according to this process:

1. The full text of the current LCC was accessed at https://www.loc.gov
   /aba/publications/FreeLCC/freelcc.html#About.
2. Each schedule was searched (using the "Find" function in Adobe Acro-
   bat) for the terms "Black," "Negro," and "African American." (For the
   distinction between Black and African American, please see the discus-
   sion under "Subject Headings for African American Studies," below.)
3. Certain classification numbers have tables, which show how a number

may be modified to indicate coverage of a certain facet of the topic in question. When tables specified that a classification number could be extended to indicate coverage of African Americans or Blacks, the applicable classification number was generated from the table.

4. Broader terms that include African Americans were also searched (e.g., "minorities").

5. Topics that disproportionately concern or affect African Americans (such as "slavery," "discrimination," "segregation," and "sickle cell anemia") were searched. Similarly, genres of art or performance in which African Americans play a dominant role, such as jazz and soul music, are included.

6. When the classification indicates coverage of individuals, any African Americans mentioned in the classification were noted.

7. Certain classification ranges, particularly those in music, art, cinema, and literature, allow for classification of individuals. As a representative sample, one hundred names (judged by the authors to be "well known" by most Americans) were selected from *African American National Biography* (Gates and Higginbotham 2013) and added to the list.

8. This process was augmented by consulting lists prepared by Clack (1975), Cazort (1971), and Nancy Olson (1974).

In table 2, we present an index to this list of classification numbers. The index is modeled on the indexes that appear in each volume of LCC. For potential uses of these tables, please see the section on "Potential Uses for Tables and Indexes to LC Classification."

Library of Congress Classification for LGBTQIA Studies
The most prominent classification for LGBTQIA studies is at HQ12 thru HQ79. Class H contains the Social Sciences. Subclass HQ is listed as "The Family. Marriage. Women." A copy of the hierarchical relationship appears below.

HQ1-2044	The Family. Marriage. Women
HQ12-449	Sexual life
HQ19-30.7	Sexual behavior and attitudes. Sexuality
HQ31-64	Sex instruction and sexual ethics
HQ71-72	Sexual deviations
HQ74-74.2	Bisexuality
HQ75-76.8	Homosexuality. Lesbianism
HQ77-77.2	Transvestism
HQ77.7-77.95	Transexualism

In table 3, we present what we believe is a complete list of LCC numbers where material relating to LGBTQIA studies may be located. Some classification numbers have been changed from earlier editions of LCC, but may persist in catalogs. Those numbers are marked with an asterisk.

The list was assembled according to this process:

1. The full text of the current LCC was accessed at https://www.loc.gov /aba/publications/FreeLCC/freelcc.html#About.
2. Each schedule was searched (using the "Find" function in Adobe Acrobat), for the following search terms: ACT-UP, advocate, AIDS, bisexual, fag, gay(s), gay liberation, gender, homophobia, homosexual, lesbian(s), Log Cabin Republicans, LAMBDA, marriage equality (also, same sex marriage), Mattachine, queer, sexual identity, sexual minorities, sexual preference, Stonewall, sodomy/sodomite, transgender, transphobia, transsexual. The *Historical Dictionary of Homosexuality* (Pickett 2009) and *The Guide to Gay and Lesbian Resources in the University of Chicago Library* (Conaway, Hierl, and Sutter 2002) were both helpful resources in assembling the list of search terms.
3. Certain classification numbers have tables that show how a number may be modified to indicate coverage of a certain facet of the topic in question. When tables specified that a classification number could be extended to indicate coverage of LGBTQIA people, the applicable classification number was generated from the table.
4. When the classification indicates coverage of individuals, any LGBTQIA people mentioned in the classification were noted.
5. Certain classification ranges, particularly those in music, art, cinema, and literature, allow for classification of individuals. As a representative sample, twenty-five names (judged by the authors to be "well known" by most Americans) were selected from *Queers in History* (Stern 2009) and added to the list.

In creating such a list, deciding on the keywords to search within the subject headings is the first intellectual hurdle to jump. For LGBTQIA materials, choosing keywords relating to sex or sexuality is a difficult decision. For this list, the keywords searched were words indicating sexual identity and sexual preference. This decision was based on the thought that we are investigating the identity of the group rather than the behavior of some of its members. Once this decision was made, there was a moment of reflection about the use of the term "sodomy," which is a behavior rather than an identity, and which is certainly not exclusively a behavior of LGBTQIA folks. However, when looking at the hierarchical relationships in the LCC, sodomy is sometimes used to identify members of a social group (sodomites—often used as a synonym for gay men) and can be connected via hierarchical relationships to LGBTQIA subject headings.

In table 4, we present an index to this list of classification numbers. The index is modeled on the indexes that appear in each volume of LCC.

Potential Uses of Tables and Indexes to LC Classification

Potential uses for the lists and the indexes include preparing a LibGuide with the list of classification numbers, including links to the OPAC display. An example may be found at http://libguides.princeton.edu/Browsing ForAfricanAmericanStudies.

While the list of classification numbers is useful *per se* as a tool to acquaint librarians and patrons with the many places in which materials of interest to African American studies are located, it also serves to point out some features of LCC that should inform its use:

1. Outdated and biased terminology. While the LCC schedule itself is largely invisible to patrons, librarians relying on it will encounter terms such as "Negro," "miscegenation," and "Black Muslims" used for the Nation of Islam.
2. What Bethel (1993, 87) calls "a colonial orientation" that "sees Black people in particular as passive objects acted on, rather than as living beings with thoughts, feelings, desires, and aspirations of their own." This is seen in entries such as "History of the United States. Slavery question, 1849–1853," "Young Men's Christian Associations. Work with special classes. Blacks. African Americans," and "Employment of minority women."
3. Related to the previous point, a default assumption that unless specified, a person is white. LCC includes numerous entries like "Drug habits. Drug abuse. Ethnic minorities," "African American press," and "Dolls and dollhouses. Black dolls," which do not have equivalent subdivisions for white people.
4. The reliance upon "literary warrant" (the practice of waiting until a sufficient number of books acquired by LC needs a new classification number) produces some entries that seem inconsistent. For example, there are classification numbers for Black Baptist sermons and Black Methodist sermons, but not for Black Pentecostalist sermons.

Knowledge of these characteristics of LCC will help librarians to guide patrons in using the collection, to be alert for potentially confusing or offensive situations, and to explore the collection in a thorough-going way.

Subject Headings for African American Studies and LGBTQIA Studies

LCSH is a rigid system defined by a hierarchical organization that is extremely slow and resistant to change (Berman 1993; Denda 2005; H. Olson 2001). While some may argue its rigidity is part of the effectiveness of the system, this same rigidity and resistance to change reproduce problematic social narratives and complicate the research process for those interested in interdisciplinary subjects.

There is a great deal of literature dealing with Library of Congress subject headings for African American and LGBTQIA studies. In the past, there were many concerns about the place of "African American" as a descriptor in precoordinated strings. The descriptors "Homosexuality" and "Gay" and "Lesbian" have raised similar concerns and calls for investigation in LGBTQIA subject headings (Christensen 2008). In current OPACs, keyword searching has made the necessity of properly formulating precoordinated subject headings less important. Nonetheless, librarians should be aware of concerns of authors such as Clack (1994), Brown (1995), and Adler (2016), who point out some of the ways that precoordinated subject headings and controlled vocabulary can affect the retrieval of relevant materials.

The most important consideration for keyword searching of subject headings in African American studies is that LCSH uses both the terms "Blacks" and "African Americans." The scope notes help make the distinction clear:

> Blacks
> Here are entered works on blacks as an element in the population. Theoretical works discussing the black race from an anthropological point of view are entered under Black race. Works on black people in countries whose racial composition is predominantly black are assigned headings appropriate for the country as a whole without the use of the heading Blacks. The heading Blacks is assigned to works on such countries only if the work discusses blacks apart from other groups in the country.

> African Americans
> Here are entered works on citizens of the United States of black African descent. Works on blacks who temporarily reside in the United States, such as aliens, students from abroad, etc., are entered under Blacks— United States. Works on blacks outside the United States are entered under Blacks—[place]. (Policy and Standards Division 2013, A-96)

Thus, keyword searching of subject headings should use one or both terms, as appropriate.

The most important considerations for keyword searching of subject headings in LGBTQIA Studies is that LCSH uses the terms "Gays," "Homosexuality," "Gay men," and "Lesbians," and material about queer people may be found under each of the headings. Although there is no scope note, the LCSH list notes that "Gays" is used for "Gay people," "Gay persons," and "Homosexuals [Former heading]," while "Homosexuality" is used for "Same-sex attraction" (Policy and Standards Division 2013, G-56, H-212). Ideally, then, a searcher would use "Gays" for works on people and "Homosexuality" for works on sexual orientation. It may be advisable to continue to search under both headings.

Possible Contributions to Librarianship and Scholarship of a Detailed Knowledge of the LC KOS for Interdisciplinary Studies

The creation of these lists was certainly an investment in time, but it produced what we hope will be a useful resource for researchers and librarians. These lists also answer a call to the profession made by Knapp (2012) asking us to "promote the 'whole' of knowledge and give the growing interdisciplinary research movement the support it deserves" (209). Knapp (2012) observed that "librarians are uniquely qualified to play a central role as 'connectors' in this movement" (209), and it is our hope that these tools will serve to provide some connections between librarians, patrons, and library collections.

These lists of classification numbers act as a virtual shelf of books that cannot be replicated in academic libraries where materials are organized using the LC classification system. These lists, available via a Libguide on the Princeton University website, can act as a stand-alone resource for researchers wanting to see the scope of their area of research or thinking about a narrower focus for a research project.

The lists are also useful for collection development. For new librarians, or those new to collection development in African American or LGBTQIA studies, these guides can be used to appraise current collections. And far too often, collection development—particularly with approval plans—is done according to LCC runs; knowing the full call number and understanding the hierarchical relationships between topics can help those searching for titles in LC areas they might have looked over in the past and see where there might be holes in current collections at one's institution.

These lists could also be useful to researchers looking for gaps in their knowledge of a subject area. Beyond these important uses, examination of these lists—both the hierarchical relationships and the terminology used—can serve as a launching pad for conversations between librarians and researchers about historical perspectives on a topic and terminology assigned to specific groups. We also build off the ideas of Drabinski, who highlights that as librarians, we "work within and against these linguistic structures: we build and extend them, and we teach users how to navigate them" (2013, 94). The lists are tangible ways for students to both see themselves in the stacks, to know their stories are represented, and at the same time for collection development librarians to better "see" where collections are lacking. These lists and related research are produced in the same vein as Adler's work in *Cruising the Library* (2017), in which she writes, "This study is an act of love. I view libraries to be absolutely essential in a democratic society, but I also believe that critique opens a field of vision so that we see where we can do better. It is a credit to the institution

of librarianship that these to are open to the public and available to criticism" (9).

CONCLUSION

The KOS established by LC shows many signs of its origins in the early twentieth century. LCC's disciplinary structure inhibits techniques such as browsing by researchers in interdisciplinary subjects, and LCSH often employ language and precoordinated strings that serve to "other" historically marginalized people. In order to best serve patrons, and to establish ourselves as critical participants in the post-internet research process, librarians can equip themselves to assist interdisciplinary researchers by becoming familiar with the classification numbers, subject headings, and frequently used keywords in a number of fields. To aid in that process, we have assembled lists of LCC numbers throughout the classification that are applied to materials in African American studies and LGBTQIA studies. Observations about the nature of LCC and LCSH in the fields of African American studies and LGBTQIA studies confirm concerns of other scholars about bias exhibited by the LC KOS. Despite its drawbacks, this KOS is likely to continue in use by academic libraries, and librarians who understand it and can aid patrons in using it will be better placed to assist in interdisciplinary research projects and can use this knowledge to work toward liberating researchers from the antiquated and oppressive language of these knowledge organization systems.

APPENDIX: TABLES 1–4

The following tables can be viewed online at http://muse.jhu.edu/resolve/52:

Table 1: Library of Congress Classification Numbers Applicable to Materials for African American Studies
Table 2: Index to Library of Congress Classification Numbers Applicable to Materials for African American Studies
Table 3: Library of Congress Classification Numbers Applicable to Materials for LGBTQIA Studies
Table 4: Index to Library of Congress Classification Numbers Applicable to Materials for LGBTQIA Studies

NOTE

1. This project was previously reported in a poster session presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Library Association, Chicago, Illinois, June 24, 2017.

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