Tips for Making Successful Subject Proposals

SACO-At-Large Meeting, ALA Midwinter 2003

*Annotations discussing the issues with each proposal are provided beginning on page 7.*

Record 1

110 1# $a France. $b Armée $x History $y Indochinese War, 1946-1954
550 $w g $a Indochinese War, 1946-1954
952 SCM H 1200

Record 2

150 $a Thirty Years’ War, 1618-1648
450 $a Dreissigjähriger Krieg, 1618-1648 ADD FIELD
550 $w g $a Counter-Reformation
551 $w g $a Europe $x History $y 1517-1648
551 $a Germany $x History $y 1618-1648
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Record 3

150 $a Korean Chinese
450 $a Chosŏnjok
450 $a Chaoxianzu
450 $a Joseonjok
550 $w g $a Chinese
550 $a Ethnology $z China
670 $a Work cat.: P’aran kwa kocchǒl küringo hŭi-mang, 2010: $b t.p. (Chosŏnjok)
670 $a Han’guk minjok munhwa taebaekkwa sajŏn, Feb. 6, 2012 $b (Chosŏnjok; ethnic Koreans with Chinese nationality; one of the minority race of China; majorities are living in Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture; keeping cultural and linguistic heritage of Korea)
670 $a Wikipedia WWW Home Page, Feb. 6, 2012: $b (Joseonjok; Chosŏnjok; Chaoxianzu; ethnic Koreans with Chinese nationality; Koreans in China include millions of descendants of Korean immigrants with citizenship of the People’s Republic of China, as well as smaller groups of South and North Korean expatriates; one of the 56 ethnicities officially recognized by the Chinese government; Most of them live in Northeast China, especially in the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture)

Record 4

151 $a Sha’arei Ḥesed (Jerusalem)
410 1 $a Jerusalem. $p Sha’are Ḥesed
451 $a Has’are Ḥesed (Jerusalem)
667 $a This heading is not valid for use as a geographic subdivision.
670 $a Work cat.: She’arim, 2008: $b t.p. (Shekhunat Sha’are Ḥesed)
670 $a Encyc. Judaica online, viewed May 23, 2012 $b Jerusalem article (Before the outbreak of World War I the Jewish quarters of Zikhron Moshe (1905), Sha’arei Ḥesed, Aḥavah, Even Yehoshu’a, Battei Varsha (Warsaw Houses), and Ruḥamah (all c. 1908) were built.)
670 $a Wikipedia WWW site, viewed May 23, 2012: $b Sha’arei Hesed (Sha’arei Hesed (also Sha’arei Chessed) is a neighborhood in central Jerusalem, Israel, bordering Rehavia, Nahlaot and Wolfson Towers. The cornerstone was laide by the Ashkenazi chief rabbi of Jerusalem, Rabbi Shmuel Salant, in 1909.)
670 $a Eiferman Properties, Ltd. WWW site, viewed May 23, 2012: $b Shaarei Chessed (Shaarei Chessed is a religious neighborhood at the north edge of Rechavia).
675 $a GEOnet, May 23, 2012.
952 $a LC pattern: Sheikh Jarrah (Jerusalem)
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Record 9

150  $a Hidden organizations
550  $w g $a Organizational sociology
670  $a Work cat: Scott, C.R. Anonymous agencies, backstreet businesses, and covert collectives, 2013: $b (“Contemporary society is characterized in part by various hidden organizations—ranging from clandestine terror networks and secret societies to back-alley establishments and largely unknown businesses—that regularly escape our attention amid the focus on more transparent/visible organizations”)
670  $a Homepage of Craig R. Scott, Aug. 28, 2012: $b (forthcoming book on hidden organizations; “These more hidden organizations might include secret societies, organized crime, parts of the underground economy, terrorist cells, covert intelligence agencies, anonymous support groups, online hate groups, stigmatized businesses, and others.”)

Record 10

150  $a Ecovillages
450  $a Eco communities
550  $a Organic living
670  $a Wikipedia, Aug. 7, 2012 $b Ecovillage article (ecovillages are intentional communities with the goal of becoming more socially, economically, and ecologically sustainable)

Record 11

150  $a Gatekeeping (Journalism)
550  $w g $a Journalism
550  $w g $a Press
670  $a Britannica Online Encyclopedia, accessed March 3, 2012 $b (gatekeeper: a person who controls access)
680  $i Here are entered works on the process through which information is filtered before dissemination by the media.
952  $a LC pattern: Syndicates (Journalism)
Record 12

150  $a Returning veterans
450  $a Returnees (Veterans)
450  $a Returning combat veterans
450  $a Returning service members
450  $a Returning soldiers
450  $a Service members, Returning
450  $a Soldiers, Returning
550  $w g $a Veterans
670  $a Work cat: Return [VR], 2012: $b (Summary: When a servicewoman returns home following a tour of duty in Iraq, she expects to settle back into her former civilian life. Instead, she is hit with the difficult realization that the world she left behind is no longer waiting on her.)
670  $a Work cat: When I came home [VR], 2006 $b (Summary: A film about homeless veterans in America, especially those who served in Vietnam and those returning from the current war in Iraq. The film reveals the challenges faced by returning combat veterans and the battle many must fight after they come home.)
670  $a Returning from the war zone: a guide for families of military members, 2009, viewed online May 14, 2012: $b p. 1 (returning service members) p. 4 (service members returning from conflicts) p. 5 (post-deployment stage. This is the period after troops have returned home when families must readjust to life together)
670  $a Returning Veterans of America website, May 14, 2012: $b home page (Returning Veterans of America’s (RVA) mission is to help create, build up and support grass roots veteran communities that advance the transitional success and higher education of current returning service members, thereby preparing and supporting them for the next phase of their personal, social, and professional lives)
670  $a U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs website, May 14, 2012: $b Veteran services > Health & well being > Mental health > Returning veterans (returning veterans; almost all service members will have reactions after returning from deployment)
670  $a Make the connection website, May 14, 2012: $b (home page (transitioning from service; transitioning from military service or returning from deployment and adjusting to a new life; “Returning to civilian life presents new opportunities as well as challenges for veterans. Many veterans look forward to life after the military, because they can spend more time with family and friends and no longer have to worry about military structure or being deployed.”)
[670  $a 6 more 670s that provide use-in-title]
680  $i Here are entered works on veterans who have recently returned from military service to civilian life.
Record 13

150 $a Survivors’ writings
450 $a Writings of survivors
550 $w g $a Literature
670 $a Répertoire de vedettes-matière (RVM) website, 2011-11-23: $b (possible French equivalent (Récits de survivance))
952 $a LC pattern: Prisoners’ writings
Record 1  Summary of Decisions 1301
110 1# $a France. $b Armée $x History $y Indochinese War, 1946-1954

- The subdivisions free-float under headings for military services (H 1159).
- The pattern cited, SCM H 1200, was not appropriate because that is the pattern for wars, not military services.
Record 2
Summary of Decisions 1312
150  $a Thirty Years’ War, 1618-1648

- LCSH is an English-language vocabulary and generally does not include foreign-language translations as UFs. Dreissigjähriger Krieg is not a phrase in widespread use in English-language reference sources, as is required for the addition of the UF.

Record 3
Summary of Decisions 1303
150  $a Korean Chinese

- Headings for hyphenate ethnic groups are established only for ethnic groups in the United States. All others are provided for by assigning the heading for the group, subdivided geographically as described in H 1919.5 sec.1.b.
- During the meeting, someone posed a hypothetical question: If the heading were approved, would the UFs for the foreign-language terms be approved, as well? The answer was that it’s not an issue here, but we do receive a lot of proposals for ethnic groups of Asia and Africa. We generally do not go out searching for variant language terms, but often will leave them in the record if they are provided in English-language reference sources such as Ethnologue or African Ethnonyms. That said, PSD does reserve the right to remove them from proposals if they are considered extraneous.
a. Establishing headings for nationalities. Establish nationality headings according to the following model:

150 ## $a [nationality]
450 ## $a [variant form(s), if any]
550 ## $w g $a Ethnology $z [country of origin]

Provide for geographic subdivision of these headings by selecting the May Subd Geog radio button in the Subject Heading Proposal System template.

b. Use of geographic subdivision. These headings are used only to designate the presence of nationalities outside their native countries. Therefore, they are never assigned without local subdivision. Whenever a nationality heading is assigned, further subdivide it by the place where the presence of the nationality is being discussed, for example, Germans—Brazil.

With the exception of American ethnic groups, specific nationalities in foreign countries are designated in this manner, rather than by composite names such as German Brazilians.

Note: Do not confuse this type of prohibited composite nationality name with names for true ethnic groups, i.e. groups with a common cultural and linguistic heritage, whose names are by chance in composite form, such as French-Canadians.
According to the citations in the proposal, this is a city section of Jerusalem. City sections are always established in the name authority file.
This record was originally marked “resubmit” because citations to standard reference sources were not provided and the term was ambiguous. Citations serve to guide the approval process and are also a permanent record for future consultation.
Record 5, continued

The proposal was resubmitted in this form.

150  $a Group rights
450  $a Collective rights
550  $w g $a Human rights
670  $a Wikipedia, viewed March 27, 2012: $b (hdg: Individual and group rights)
670  $a LC OPAC, viewed March 27, 2012: “Collective rights” – 34 hits, 9 in 245 field; “Group rights” – 50 hits, 21 in 245 field.
670  $a Conde, H. A handbook of international human rights terminology, 2nd ed. $b p. 103 (Group (Human) Rights (vs. Individual Rights) (AKA Collective Rights))
670  $a Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, viewed Nov. 1, 2012 $b Group rights (“A group right is a right held by a group rather than by its members severally”)
670  $a Google, viewed Nov. 1, 2012: $b (for search “Group rights” 442,000 hits, for search “Collective rights” 456,000 hits)

A scope note was added during the approval process.

150  $a Group rights
450  $a Collective rights
550  $w g $a Human rights
670  $a Wikipedia, viewed March 27, 2012: $b (hdg: Individual and group rights)
670  $a LC OPAC, viewed March 27, 2012: “Collective rights” – 34 hits, 9 in 245 field; “Group rights” – 50 hits, 21 in 245 field.
670  $a Conde, H. A handbook of international human rights terminology, 2nd ed. $b p. 103 (Group (Human) Rights (vs. Individual Rights) (AKA Collective Rights))
670  $a Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, viewed Nov. 1, 2012 $b Group rights (“A group right is a right held by a group rather than by its members severally”)
670  $a Google, viewed Nov. 1, 2012: $b (for search “Group rights” 442,000 hits, for search “Collective rights” 456,000 hits)
680  $i Here are entered works on rights that are intended to preserve the traditions and characteristics of a group.

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A complete BGN citation is required for geographic proposals. A complete citation includes the approved/official name and any variants, the location (ADM1 for foreign places, the state(s) and county(ies) for domestic places), the type of feature (e.g., stream, mountain), and the coordinates. The approved name and each variant must also be searched for conflict, and that conflict noted where it exists.
In cases of conflict, research can confirm that the BGN decision does in fact refer to the same place discussed in the work being cataloged.

For geographic names in non-English-speaking countries, reference sources may aid in the translation of generic terms, or may justify the choice of the conventional English form when BGN has supplied the name only in the vernacular form.

Variant forms of the geographic name found in reference sources are useful as UF references in addition to the variants provided by BGN.

The BGN decision, when it is obtained, must be evaluated in conjunction with information found in the standard authorities available to subject catalogers. Consult additional authorities such as *Merriam-Webster's Geographical Dictionary*, *Columbia Gazetteer of the World*, *National Gazetteer of the United States of America*, national gazetteers issued by the country where the

Cite the works consulted in 670 fields in the authority record, following the conventions for citation of sources described in H 203.

Record in a $b subfield of each 670 field any data that conflicts with, or supplements, the BGN decision.

Record any data showing that the name under consideration conflicts with other names. This serves to justify the form of the qualifier constructed in accordance with H 810.
Record 6, continued

The proposal was resubmitted in this form.

- When the approved BGN form is obtained, the heading should be based on it, translating and rearranging as necessary.
Record 6, continued

b. English vs. vernacular form. Select the English form of the name whenever possible, especially for geographic features. Examples:

If no English form is found, construct an English heading by translating the generic term into English. If, in the case of certain inflected languages, the resulting construction is grammatically awkward, use the noun form of the proper name in the nominative case, rather than either the adjectival form or the noun form in the genitive case. In such situations, provide UP references from the pure vernacular forms, as specified in sec. 10, below. Examples:

b. Names in foreign languages. Translate the name and rearrange the elements to put the distinctive portion of the name in the initial position. Since the resulting heading is not inverted, do not put a comma between the elements. Example:

The heading was approved in this form:

151 $a Yufen River (China)
451 $a Wei-fen Ho (China)
451 $a Wei Fen River (China)
451 $a Weifen He (China)
451 $a Weifen River (China)
451 $a Yü Fen River (China)
451 $a Yü-fen Ho (China)
451 $a Yufen He (China)
551 $w g $a Rivers $z China
670 $a GeoNet $b (Yufen He; variants: Weifen He, Wei-fen Ho; Yü-fen Ho; located in Shanxi Sheng; 38°30′55″ N 110°52′28″ E 38.515278 110.874444)
670 Google, March 15, 2012: $b hdg. (Wei Fen River)
781 #0 $z China $z Yufen River
A definition or description of contrastivism from the work being cataloged should have been provided.

No research to define contrastivism was done in reference sources. This research is necessary according to H 202.

2. Citation of sources consulted.

a. General principles.

(1) Authority research required. Thorough authority research demonstrating that the term selected for the proposed heading is the appropriate one must be done for all concepts that are new to the LC subject heading system and outside the scope of simple and obvious pattern situations. The final selection of terminology and form may be the result of a combination of both pattern and research, in which case both should be cited.

It is seldom acceptable to cite only the work cataloged as authority for a new concept, except in the case of certain named entities such as obscure archaeological sites, brand name products, computer languages, etc. Although the concept may have been found only in the work being cataloged, other sources appropriate to the subject area in question should be cited to demonstrate that the concept was properly investigated.

(2) Number of citations. There is no general rule as to the number of citations to a term that must be found in order to demonstrate literary
A description of this ethnic group from the work being cataloged should have been provided.

An attempt was made to do some research, but “Internet” is not an appropriate citation. Instead, the website title should have been cited.

The BT should be Ethnology—Russia (Federation). Geographic qualifiers on BTs for instance relationships should reflect the country, or in the case of the exceptional countries (United States, Canada, United Kingdom), the first-order administrative subdivision.
The phrase “hidden organizations” is ambiguous. The citations indicate that it refers to everything from Alcoholics Anonymous to terrorist cells.

- The citations provided were for the work being cataloged and for the author’s website. Standard reference sources were searched, but without success. While the meeting may approve proposals for new concepts that are not yet represented in standard sources, one author’s of a phrase is not sufficient justification.
- The instructions in SHM H 187 sec. 2, making proposals for new topics that are not yet identifiable, apply.
This proposal cited only Wikipedia, which is not sufficient. SHM H 202 states that “thorough authority research” must be done. A search of ABI Inform, which includes environmental issues in its scope, provided multiple authoritative references to ecovillages.

The concept of ecovillages may overlap with existing headings such as Communal living and Sustainable living. Overlaps such as this should always be considered when proposing a heading for a new concept, and the citations in the proposal should make the distinctions clear. In some cases, it is also advisable to propose contrasting scope notes to clarify the relationships among the headings. The notes can always be removed if the meeting doesn’t consider them to be necessary. (See SHM H 400 for information on contrasting scope notes.) Alternatively, a cataloger’s note can be added in a 952 field to explain the relationship between the existing headings and the proposal, as described in H 202 sec. 3.
The proposal cites *Britannica*, which defines gatekeeper, not gatekeeping in journalism. SHM H 202 specifies that the works cited must apply specifically to the heading being proposed.

The scope note is not supported in citations (as it should be), but the scope note is helpful because it makes clear the fact that gatekeeping is not a new concept in journalism. An essential part of the work of reporters and editors is to filter information for the public. The work being cataloged should be assigned the existing heading *Journalism—Editing*. 

(4) *Relationship between a source and the specific heading being proposed.* Sources cited should apply specifically to the heading being proposed. For example, citing the presence of the word *culture* in *Web. 3* is not sufficient authority in itself to justify the heading *Culture shock*; similarly, citing authority for the name of a person is not sufficient to justify a heading for a city gate named after the person.
This proposal was well-researched. Authoritative sources were consulted (e.g., Returning Veterans of America; the U.S. Department of Veterans’ Affairs), and several titles using the phrase “returning veterans” were even cited. Note, though, that while usage in a title can enhance a proposal, title usage alone is not sufficient to justify a heading for a new concept (for formulaic headings, on the other hand, it is sometimes sufficient).

The concept of returning veterans is ambiguous – when is a veteran done returning? Each individual veteran – or veterans’ organization – may define it differently and base it on differing criteria, such as emotional, psychological or medical status, job status, etc.

“Returning veterans” is not a new concept – soldiers have been returning from wars since wars started being fought. That being the case, the first question to ask when considering proposal like this is, How have works about this concept been cataloged in the past? The answer is that they have been assigned the heading Veterans or the heading for a war subdivided by –Veterans (SHM H 1200). The second question is whether the concept is so important that it is worth dividing the file. Here, because there is no definite period after which a veteran is done returning, dividing the file between returning veterans and [unqualified] veterans is not desirable.

Although the phrase “returning veterans” is in common use today, it is redundant. By definition, veterans are soldiers who have returned from war.

If the proposed heading had been approved, the scope note would have been revised. Many (if not most) returning veterans are not returning to civilian life, per se, because they are still in the military.
• Citations were not provided to indicate what is meant by “survivors” in this proposal. At a minimum, an English description of the scope of the work being cataloged should have been provided. It is usually relatively easy to find online descriptions of works, but the citations in records are not just for the duration of the approval process, but serve as a permanent record for future reference.

• An online description of the work being cataloged seems to consist of stories of people who were exiles, prisoners, and hostages, and who were affected by social exclusion, wars, shipwrecks, etc. This is therefore another wide-ranging and ambiguous proposal, similar to the proposal for hidden organizations.

• There could be confusion over what this heading means in light of existing headings for groups of survivors, including Death march survivors, Genocide survivors, and Holocaust survivors. Nowhere in LCSH is the word “survivors” used without an adjectival qualifier indicating the event (or type of event) that was survived.