RSA Homosaurus Cataloging Policy

Created July 9, 2024

On 05/17/2024 the RSA NFP Database Committee agreed to forward to the RSA Board of Directors a proposal to use the Homosaurus controlled vocabulary when cataloging. The RSA Board of Directors approved this policy on MM/DD/YYYY.

Definition of Homosaurus:

- Homosaurus is an international linked data vocabulary of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ+) terms. These terms can be used as subject and genre headings on bibliographic records.
- Homosaurus was first created in 1997 and is maintained by the Digital Transgender Archive. Homosaurus terms are regularly updated by an editorial board.
- Homosaurus is not intended to be used by itself but supplement Library of Congress Subject and Genre Headings, as well as other controlled vocabularies.

Benefits of using Homosaurus:

- Homosaurus headings will increase access points on records and improve discovery of materials for the LGBTQ+ community in WorkFlows and RSAcat.
- Homosaurus will make LGBTQ+ materials easier to find using terms that patrons use.
- Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH) often do not reflect the terms used when patrons search for LBGTQ+ topics. Examples:
  - There is no LCSH for queer identity or pansexual people.
  - There are LCSHs for gender non-conformity and gender non-conforming people, but these are not the preferred terms for non-binary people.
- Homosaurus is more specific than LCSH, which is helpful when assigning subject and genre headings for specific LGBTQ+ topics or themes.
- RSA would join the wider library community by adopting Homosaurus. Other Illinois shared catalog systems, including Cooperative Computer Services (CCS), are already using Homosaurus in their databases.
- Using Homosaurus is a practical way for libraries to participate in DEI (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion) efforts, making themselves more inviting to the LGBTQ+ community.

How RSA would use Homosaurus:
- RSA cataloging staff would assign Homosaurus headings as they catalog in OCLC.
- RSA would add Homosaurus headings on the official WorldCat record to allow other OCLC members to benefit from them when they use the record in their local databases.
- RSA would add Homosaurus headings to OCLC records using the same care and caution they exercise when adding **any** controlled vocabulary term to records -- only when they are certain, based on their review of the heading's scope note in the Homosaurus vocabulary and the content of the item, that the heading is appropriate for that item.
- Potentially objectionable Homosaurus terms are more relevant to archives and special libraries than public and school libraries. A complete list of Homosaurus terms is available here.
- RSA would not delete the equivalent LCSH when adding Homosaurus headings to records.
- Libraries will be encouraged to email help@rsanfp.org if they have an LGBTQ+ item they would like RSA to examine to see if Homosaurus subject and/or genre headings can be added to its OCLC record. RSA will ask libraries to send the items in delivery.
- RSA may eventually work with the vendor MARCIVE to add Homosaurus headings to existing records and update obsolete Homosaurus headings to the current preferred terms.
- Even if RSA does not start adding Homosaurus headings, RSA libraries will likely see an increase of these headings on OCLC records as this vocabulary is adopted by more libraries, and the records are then loaded into WorkFlows.

Homosaurus on a record in WorkFlows:
- Homosaurus headings use the source code |2 homoit in the 650 and 655 fields on OCLC records.
- RSA **already** has OCLC records in WorkFlows with Homosaurus headings that were added by other OCLC members, then the records were loaded into WorkFlows.
- Example: From *Never silent : ACT UP and my life in activism* (OCLC title control number o1240210962):

Subject term	650	7	LGBTQ+ activists.|2homoit|?UNAUTHORIZED
Genre index term	655	7	LGBTQ+ biographies.|2homoit|?UNAUTHORIZED
Genre index term	655	7	Gay biographies.|2homoit|?UNAUTHORIZED

- Homosaurus headings appear unauthorized in WorkFlows because there is no authority file to control them, but they are still searchable in both WorkFlows and the RSAcat.

Homosaurus in the RSAcat:
Homosaurus headings are not visible on the results list or the item details screen unless the patron clicks the Catalog Data view.

Title: Never silent : ACT UP and my life in activism
Author: Staley, Peter author
Added Author: Cooper, Anderson
Call Number: 362.1969 STA
Publisher: Chicago Review Press,
Publication Date: 2022
Physical Description: xiii, 269 pages : illustrations ; 24 cm
ISBN: 9781641601429
Medium: text
still image
Content Type: volume
Contents: Foreword / Anderson Cooper -- Wall Street catharsis -- Troublemaker -- Seven nights, eight men -- Innocence lost -- Searching for ACT UP -- Fundraising and fucking -- Unleashed -- AZT -- "You can all now consider yourselves members of ACT UP" -- A feel-good condom -- TAG -- Surviving survivor's guilt -- Fighting Tina -- Dallas Buyers Club -- Dinner with Tony.

Actions:
Place Hold
Catalog Data
Permalink
Cite This Item

From the Catalog Data view:

650	7	‡a LGBTQ+ activists. ∩ homoit
655	0	‡a LGBTQ+ biographies.
655	0	‡a Gay biographies.
655	2	‡a Autobiography.
655	7	‡a Autobiographies. ∩ fast ∪ (OCoLC)fst01919894
655	7	‡a Biographies. ∩ fast ∪ (OCoLC)fst01919896
655	7	‡a History. ∩ fast ∪ (OCoLC)fst01411628
655	7	‡a LGBTQ+ biographies. ∩ homoit
655	7	‡a Gay biographies. ∩ homoit

Even though Homosaurus headings are not visible except from the Catalog Data view, the terms are still searchable in the RSAcat.