

Rubenstein Audit Manual Categorization:

To better understand the data returned by the description audit computer program and establish a plan for remediation, it is important to parse this data manually and understand specifically what the speaker, context, and impact/implications are for each instance of potentially harmful language identified by the program.

Match_speaker:

Who was responsible for using this potentially harmful term? Remediation strategies are likely to differ if terms are used as a form of self-identification or community among a marginalized group, rather than those used by an archivist, for example.

There are 3 potential categories that instances of use can fall into for their speaker: in-group, out-group, and archivist.

In-group: the term was used by a member of the group who the term has systemically been used to harm or oppress.

Out-group: the term was used by someone who is not a member of the group who the term has systemically been used to harm or oppress.

Archivist: the term was used, without direct quoting or paraphrasing of the exact term, by the archivist.

Match_context:

In what way was the term used? Remediation of the use of a potentially harmful term differs if the term is used by an archivist rather than in a direct quote or proper noun. This category helps to capture that nuance.

There are 4 established categories in which instances of use can be categorized: direct quote, paraphrasing, proper noun, and archivist language/narrative.

Direct quote: the term was used in the source material and is directly quoted in the finding guide or library record. These are likely to be remediated via harmful language statement.

Paraphrasing: the term was directly used in the source material but is not pulled from a quote in this specific instance.

Proper noun: the term is used as a part of a proper noun (e.g. the Indian Removal Act).

Archivist Narrative/Language: the term is used independently by the archivist in their description of the collection or entry.

Match_impact:

What was the impact or impression left by this instance of use? This is where false positives are logged, along with distinctions between dated term use in the source material as compared to dated term use by archivists, a mention of a marginalized identity, etc.

Dated original term: the term might have been acceptable when the source material was produced, however is recognized as potentially harmful now.

Dated Rubenstein term: the term used by the archivist cataloguing this material may have been acceptable at that time, however is recognized as potentially harmful now.

Mention of marginalized identity: the term mentions a marginalized group or identity in a way that is likely not harmful but still merits review (e.g. referring to someone as being another person's spouse when relevant).

Mention of marginalized issues: the term mentions issues faced by a marginalized group or identity in a way that is likely not harmful but still merits review.

Downplaying Bias: the term uses a euphemism or presents an oversimplification which downplays bias towards a marginalized group (e.g. referring to racism as "race relations").

Dehumanization of marginalized people: the term fails to represent an individual or group with a marginalized identity in a way that recognizes their personhood and agency (e.g. referring to a woman as "Mrs. [husband's name]" or referring to enslaved people as slaves).

Aggrandizement of individual: the term is used by archivists to elevate the status of an individual, often the author of a collection.

Aggrandizement of institution: the term is used by archivists to elevate the status of an institution such as a university.

False positive: use of the term in this instance is not at all harmful and is largely irrelevant to this audit.