Janet Ahrberg: Hello, can everybody hear me?

Hello, my name is Janet Ahrberg. And I want to welcome you to the ALCTS Webinar for the second session on an Introduction to Sears Subject Headings. I'm a member ALCTS Continuing Education Committee, and I'm certainly glad to have you all with us here today.

Our presenter is Sara Marcus. Sara is the Electronic Resources Web Librarian at Queensborough Community College. In 2009 she received a Samuel Lazerow Fellowship for research on Sears Subject Headings, and she is currently completing this research. In 2009, 2010, she also received the Professional Staff Congress of the City University of New York Grant to study the Sears List.

Welcome, Sara.

Now, if you have questions for Sara, please them into the box on your screen. And Sara will do her best to answer them during her presentation. Or if there's a question that can be answered later in the presentation, Sara will let you know that too. And also please note the session will be recorded, and you will receive an E-mail shortly after the conclusion of the webinar with a link to the recording. You will also receive a copy of Sara's slides.

Now, I'm going to turn the program over to Sara, and there may be a slight delay as I do this. So again, thank you, Sara, for joining us and everyone else.


So, welcome, again my name is Sara Marcus. And I'm here to show you more about the Sears Subject Headings and to go further into not only Sears Subject Headings in particular but subject cataloging in general drawing the on
Sears Subject Headings as examples. Because the Sears Subject Headings are intended for small and medium-sized collections and libraries, not just for schools and public libraries, but for any small or medium-sized collection or sub-collection within a larger collection, such as your general collection in a law library or a health science library.

So we're going to start by figuring out, how do you determine the subject content? And, what I'm going to be telling you today, a lot of it is applicable to all subject cataloging. But in particular it applies to when you're using the Sears List, because the Sears List is a list that is made that you can adapt, that you can edit. It was made with the intention of adapting or editing, so that other people can see it.

Let's see. I wanted tell you that. And, so to start, whenever you're going to catalog anything, I'll call it a thing, because we generally catalog things, because it's something either physical or something that can be turned into somebody physical, if it's a podcast, if it's a book, if it's a recording, if it's a poster, if it's my husband, everything needs to be cataloged.

So how do you determine the subject content of the item? The first thing you need to do is look at the subject-rich portions of the item. And while you're looking at these subject-rich portions, you need to identify keywords and concepts.

So what are the subject-rich portions of the item? Well, the subject-rich portions of the item can include the title, or the name of the item, because not everything has a thing that says: Hi, I'm the title. But there's some type of name of the item. You might have a table of contents or a listing of what's in here. You'll have an introduction, maybe a preface, some kind of verbiage that's usually in paragraph form that tells you, you know, hey, this is what this thing's about, this is why I wrote it, this is why I think these other people wrote it, and you should read it. You have the author's purpose or foreword, sometimes, or the creator's purpose or foreword. You might have an abstract, a summary, maybe some liner notes. You might have an index or a listing of, you know, what's in here, not by page, but maybe alphabetically or by subject. You might have some lists of illustrations, diagrams, or other things included in there. And
also the container of the item itself, whether it's the book jacket, the case that the CD came in, the mailing tube that the poster came in, there's some type of holder that might give you a hint as to what this thing is.

So what concepts do we need to identify now that we've found some you know keywords or we're thinking about some key concepts? Well, the types of concepts that we need to identify when we're doing subject cataloging is the primary subject focus of the item. What is the item about? And to do that we might look for the names of people, corporate bodies, or geographic areas that might be discussed that the item is about. Not where it was done, not who wrote it, not who created it, but that the item is talking about, or discussing or somehow rather telling you about the something.

Then you also might want to find out what time periods are covered. Not the time period that the item was made, but rather you want to find out what time period, again, is discussed, is covered, is addressed. If you're looking at a poster that's of the Globe Theatre when Shakespeare was around, well, even if it was created today, the time period we're looking for is the time when the Globe Theatre was around when Shakespeare was around. You might want to find if the item that you're holding, the thing, is talking about another item. So for example you might have a criticism of another work, a poster of another work.

And also you might want to figure out what is the form of this item. Is it a book? Sorry. I'm sorry, I can see someone's chat posting, so I'm asking questions. And also the form of the item, you know, is it an audio book? Is it a print book? Is it a poster? Is it a picture book? Is it a bibliography? But you know some type of you know some people are looking for a specific type of version of it. Is it a juvenile version? Is it an adult version? And so on. Also maybe what, you know, is it in another language than the original language it was intended to be read in?

Okay. So, are you looking for the subject or are you looking for the form or genre? Way back when, many, many, many years ago, there was a time when subject and form and genre were all the same thing. If you look at the mark coding, it was all you know 650, and there was, you know, and had your dollar sign X, dollar sign, dollar sign X for most things. You had your dollar sign
Z for dates. You had your dollar sign Y for geography. And that's about it. And that was about it, but that was -- that was all I could see -- that was you know really all that's there.

Now beyond that, there's other things that you might want to see also -- and I'm sorry. I'm in the middle of a technical thing, so, um, sorry, technical issue.

So while we're looking at the subject, but now with so many more forms and genres being identified: Mystery, cookbook, bibliography, fiction, nonfiction, romance, print book, audio book, web book, video book, Nook book, E book, Kindle book, you know, so many E-reader books, pdf book, Braille book, and so on and so fourth and all those other types of books that are out there. I'm sure I'm missing a few. We need to actually decide, do we want to describe what the item is about, its subject, or the physical aspect of the item. Not the bibliographic information, but the physical thing. Is it a book? Is it a tape? Is it a CD? Is it a video? And so on. So the subject will tell you what the item is about, what is the intellectual content?

While the form and genre tell you other things, the form will tell you what the physical item is. It will give you a physical description. Not the 300 field that we think about where we see, you know, pagination, you know, extent of item, any illustrations in the item and extent of the item, but rather, you know what type of physical thing is it? What type of information does it contain? Is it a score? Is it an audio recording? Is it a video recording? And how is the information arranged, because that might have make a difference to someone looking for the information.

Then we may also want to tell people about the genre, because with all these wonderful mysteries coming out, well, so much more to think about. You know, do you want a mystery? Do you want a comedy? Do you want a romance? What type of, you know, genre are you thinking about? Especially when we work with children and you know they're like, well, I want a mystery. Well, my teacher said I need to read something that's science fiction. If we put these into our catalog by using subject headings, makes it easier for our patrons to find the exact information they're looking for.

Okay. So what are some important factors that we need to consider when
we're doing cataloging? And this is whether we're using Sears or any other list. But especially in Sears, because again the Sears List you can create your own headings if there's nothing in there. You need to make sure that the heading is accurate. You need to make sure the heading is unbiased. And unbiased means for the audience you're working with. Because some terms can be based in some populations, but in other populations it's considered perfectly acceptable. So this is where, again, a cataloger or someone who is doing subject cataloging in particular needs to know their population. Need to make sure it's unbiased.

You need to make sure it's an objective indication of the content or the intellectual content or the creative content of the item.

You want to consider what was the author's intent when they created this item? You know, did they intend this to be a comedy? Did they intend this to be fictional? Did they intend this to be a memoir or an informative textbook? You know, and you need to give equal attention to all items and all aspects of the item. You can't just give your best attention to the items that are of most interest to you.

You need to make sure that you don't let your own personal value judgments impact what decisions you make. You need to be very unbiased, again. You can't say, well, you know, I don't like the word African-American, I like the word Negro. You need to look at what's being used in your community. Look at what's being used in the literature. And use the one that's most accurate for your population. Even if the other one is considered the appropriate one in Sears, if your population will be insulted by that term, maybe you should go back to an older term used in the Sears List just to make sure that you don't insult your intended population.

The worst thing that can happen is you take your child or you take someone who has never come into the library before, and they come in and they say, do you have any books on Jews? And you go to the catalog and you say, well, we have all these books on Israelis, let's go look there. And that can be very embarrassing. So you need to do that.

So basically this all comes down to the cataloger's judgment. You need to have a perspective. You need to know the concepts and terms of the discipline
and the concept of terms of the discipline as used in your population. Not the population that you live in, but the population where your library serves. You need to have at least some background knowledge of the subject. If you don't, don't be afraid to ask for help. You need to, you know, be aware of the cultural backgrounds. And you need to be consistent. No matter what term you pick, you need consistency.

Even with keyword searching, you need to have a consistent word. Because if you type a keyword into the catalog, you need to be sure that it's going to pull up all of the records that have that keyword in them. Okay.

So now that we've figured out how do we find all these keywords, what do we do with them? How do we make sure we find the right ones? How do we make sure they're going to serve our population. Well, the next thing we need to do is take these keywords we found and translate them into Subject Headings or a controlled vocabulary. A vocabulary where there's one term or phrase for every concept that might appear in the catalog.

So once we've finished our conceptual analysis and that we know what this item is about and we know if there's any weird form issues, you know, is there anything special about how the information is presented, is there any special genre issue we need to be aware of, once we know all of this, we need to translate these keywords and phrases into our controlled vocabulary. Again, in this workshop we're looking at the Sears List of Subject Headings, but there are many other controlled vocabularies out there. Including Library of Congress Subject Headings and specialized subject headings for particular libraries. So what you need to do is think about what are these words, make sure that you have them, and that you can think about similar terms, that you can think about what are some synonyms. Okay?

There are two types of controlled vocabularies that we as librarians encounter. We encounter Thesauri, which have terms for single subject concepts. But these are strictly hierarchical and there are international standard guidelines for how you express the relationship among terms. But we're more likely to encounter, when we're doing our cataloging, subject heading lists where there are headings for single concepts, but we also have headings for phrases
and multiple concept headings, such as arts and crafts, librarians in theatre, librarians in film, librarians in medicine, medicine and libraries, and so on. So there are -- that's why we look at subject, that's why we use the subject heading list as opposed to just a Thesauri which is kind of old Roget's, you know, you can't really find two things together.

So why do we use controlled vocabularies in the library? Well, we like to use them because they identify a preferred way of expressing a concept. And especially with the English language, where there are some synonymous and almost synonymous terms, we need to have a single way of expressing each concept. Because without that, again, if you do a keyword search, keyword search you have to have the word there in the record in order to find it. So keyword searching is great. I have nothing against it. But if we as catalogers don't populate our catalog with those keywords so our patrons can find it through our authority records, through our subject heading choices, we're not going to be able to find anything. Controlled vocabularies allow for multiple entry points such as cross references. Again, that's where the keyword searching comes in where we have synonyms that point to the preferred term. We have inversions or variant forms of spellings, such as theater versus theatre, you know, E-R versus R-E. I still have problems with that one, trying to figure out which one's used in what catalog.

We have -- controlled vocabularies also identify how terms or concepts are related to other terms. You know, how is the word cat related to the word animal? Where does it fall? You know maybe a patron comes in, says -- this is a specialized reference librarian. Patron comes in and says, I need a book about cats. Okay, well, you know what we only have two books about cats. And you know what they're both taken out. What do you need to know about cats? And you might say, well, you know, I need to know about them as household pets. Well, let's see cats are a narrower term for household -- for pets, so maybe we should look at pets and see if any of these books have a chapter on cats. Okay.

So I've mentioned key words and keywords are something, you know, very useful, especially today when we use Google. We use a lot of keyword searching. And the advantage to the keywords is that when you do a keyword
search, you can search anywhere in the bibliographic record. So whether it's in the title, the subjects we've given, the table of contents, or the 505 fields, or anywhere else, we might be able to find that record. Sometimes if your authority records are linked -- problems with keyword searching is you still can’t compensate for, you know, the English language. And you need to make sure that the catalog, the authority records do have all of those compensations for all those weird complexities of our language, of the English language. And if there's you know foreign language books or translation problems. I'm in New York, we have, oh, you know a very large multilingual population. And when you start trying to translate concepts, it can get very difficult. So keyword searching is great, but you still need to have that controlled vocabulary to help bring everything together somehow.

So, quick summary, how do you determine a subject heading? You do it through subject analysis or looking at and determining and summarizing what is this item's concept. What is it talking about? And this is a two-step process. Determine what it’s about and then translate what it's about into the controlled vocabulary such as the Sears List of Subject Headings.

When you do this you have to remember and keep in mind be objective, make sure you have background knowledge. Make sure that you spell things correctly. Because I noticed I didn't, and that's where benefits of having people proofread for you comes in. And be consistent when you make your decisions. Keep records of your decisions. That's where your scope notes come in. That's where you need to have records of, why did I make this decision? You may say, oh, I'll always remember the decision I made. Trust me. In three weeks you won't remember why you made that decision. Think about even when you go food shopping and you, you know, you buy that weird spice because you wanted to make a chicken dish. Three weeks later you see that spice on your shelf, why did I buy that spice, and you have no idea? You write yourself a note about why that spice was bought, good chance you'll remember. At least that's what my husband tells me. We still have unnamed spices though.

Okay. So we're going to quickly look back, get more into, you know, the Sears List of Subject Headings, because these are the headings that we're
looking at. Again, this isn't the only heading list out there, but because the Sears List is intended for small and medium-sized public and school libraries, but it also applies to any small or medium-sized collection. It's very affordable, whether you get the print version which is one volume, smaller than the size of a phone book. Or you can get it online from Wilson now, again, very inexpensive compared to getting the Library of Congress Subject Headings. If you use any Wilson database, it's very easy to use. If you go to the HW Wilson website, they will give you a free trial of the Sears List online. It's an amazing resource to use.

So, quick history of the Sears List of Subject Headings, it's an evolving list of subject headings. It's evolving both as it's being published, so that people can see what decisions have been made by the editors. And it also evolves within individual libraries where you can keep track of decisions you'd made to build your own headings. Originally this list was based on nine representative small and medium-sized school and public libraries. Originally published in 1923 by Minnie Earl Sears, the most recent issue in print is in 2010, the 20th Edition, edited by Joseph Miller.

Okay. So now, we'll look quickly at the principles of the Sears List of Subject Headings. The importance of the principles of the Sears List of Subject Headings is that this is where you get guidance on how you can create your own subject headings if you can't find any subject headings that look good for you in the Sears List. And this is where the Sears List really differs from the Library of Congress Subject Headings in that the Sears List encourages you, if you can't find a heading, to create your own. Okay.

Subject headings according to the Sears List and according to Minnie Earl Sears and the subsequent editors that subject headings are used to identify items on a specific topic and to collocate all of the items in the collection that are on the same topic. Whether it's using a print catalog, or even today the online catalog, when you do your search and you search and you get that 650 field and you click on a subject heading, brings up all of the other materials on the same subject.

So there are two aspects to the principle of literary warrant for subject headings: The need for their use and the terminology selected. Subject
headings are created for use in cataloging and reflect the topics given in a specific collection.

You also want to make sure that the terminology selected to formulate individual subject headings reflects the terminology used in the current literature, the language, and the population served. The construction and style used in the Sears List generally does reflect this, but if for whatever reason it doesn't reflect your population, make sure you take your population into consideration. Okay?

The next thing you want to think about is: What are uniform headings? A uniform heading means that there's one heading in your catalog chosen to represent each individual topic. This allows the materials about a topic to be retrieved together even if they contain different terms for the topics, such as with keyword, set keyword things. Okay?

An exception occurs when there are reciprocal headings which consist of the same words in different order so that you can provide access to related terms by placing them in the entry position of an alphabetical list, so for example, arts and crafts, crafts and art, or something like that.

The next thing that you want to consider is that you also have references. References to headings are made from synonyms and variant forms. Your users, whether it's your patrons or your reference librarians or anyone else who's using your catalog for any purpose, you want to make sure that they get guided from their entry vocabulary to the authorized headings through these reference terms, whether they're from synonymous terms or variant forms. When you as the cataloger are choosing between terms, you need to consider your audience. And make sure that your audience, the terms you choose are the ones your audience are most likely to use. That doesn't mean if your entire audience misspells the word cats with a K that you should word the K, but it does mean you need to consider how they do things. And if everyone misspells it, make you need to make a reference from the misspelling to the correct version. Okay?

Preference in the Sears List is given to terms that are generally used as opposed to terms that are technical or jargon. So you probably won't see, you know, DDC, or Dewey Decimal Classification System, but you might see call number. And one problem with the Sears List, the original Sears List, is that it
isn’t made based on the American English language. The Sears List is used internationally. I’ve interviewed Joseph Miller. I’ve read a lot of work about the Sears List. Well, whatever there has been published about it, which isn’t much, and the Sears List is used very widely internationally. So there are libraries internationally that do change words based on the terms used in their population. India is one of the largest users of the Sears List for their English collections and they do have changes that may make. England or any British nations, they you know, use jumper instead of sweater and other such things, to make sure that their patrons can find what they’re actually thinking about.

You also want to make sure that whatever terms you do use, again, don’t display bias or prejudice. You need to make sure that you’re neutral. You’re inclusive. And, if it’s a potentially controversial topic, check with other people, see what other people are saying. Okay?

You want to make sure that there’s a unique heading, that there’s one heading for each topic. And it only covers that topic and very little more. If the heading can cover more than one topic, you want to try to qualify it either with parenthesis or with subdivision. Such as the word China, do you mean the country? Or do you mean the dishes that are made out of china? Make sure you somehow qualify this. Okay?

Specific entry, you want to make sure that terms are co-extensive with subjects. That each subject is represented by the most precise term naming the subject, not broader, not narrower, but just as specific as the concept you want to portray. You want to make sure that you’re consistent and that you’re predictable. If you use cats and you use dogs and you use fish and then you use the scientific name for snakes that might be a problem, because you’re not being consistent. You’re not being predictable, someone can’t figure out the term that they might look up for.

Dynamism, that means that when changes to headings are made that the more frequently they’re made that they’re made to enhance not just for the sake of changing. You want to make sure that they’re made for a reason.

The Sears List is pre-coordinated which means that there’s an untold number of headings that can be created. You can create as many as you want
from the individual elements that are available in the Sears List. And it's also
post-coordinated in that some elements cannot be combined into a single
heading, in which case you may need more than one heading.

So I mentioned qualifying a heading. Let's look at that in a little bit more
detail. To qualify a heading, you generally do this if a term or phrase used is a
subject heading, can have different meanings, so that you can indicate which
meaning you mean. Which mean -- yes, which meaning you mean. You want to
either do this with a parenthetical qualifier, an adjectival or adjective qualifier, or
maybe even with a subdivision. And you need to make sure that you do this to
make sure that people know exactly what you mean by the term that you're
choosing.

Now the next thing I said was subdivisions. Okay? You can use
subdivisions not only to qualify but also to become more specific or more narrow
as to what you're talking about. You know you're talking about books. Well, you
might want to talk about specific topics of books, books in specific geographic
areas, books from specific chronological periods or books, or in specific forms.
So remember that the Sears List is made for smaller collections where there's
less need for a subdivisions to differentiate between large number of items. If
you have four books that are about cats, you really don't care what part of cats
it's talking about or what aspect, you only have four books. But if you have 30
books about cats, then you probably do want to be more specific what aspect of
cats is each book about.

So a topical subdivision is similar to a topical subject heading in that it tells
you about the concept or a sub area of the concept. It might represent an action,
an attribute, or an aspect. Some topical subdivisions only apply to one, to
several or to many subject headings. In the mark record you're going to find
these as subfield X.

You also have your geographic subdivisions which talk about the
geographic area covered in the book. Again, not where the book was published
but where the book is talking about. So if a work discusses a topic in regards to
a specific location, the geographic subdivision can be used to group together
common coverage. Geographic subdivisions represent where something is
located or where it is from. Not every heading can be subdivided geographically and if it can be in the Sears List it will say in parentheses May Subd, Geog. in parentheses next to the heading. In mark geographic subdivisions will be in subfield B. Chronological subdivisions can also be referred to, you might hear them called, period subdivisions, and they’re used for the time period covered in the work. So it doesn't mean the publication date of the work. It doesn't mean when the author was born. It means: when is the work talking about? These are generally associated with historical treatment of a topic such as history or art.

I'm sorry, is someone asking a question?

>> (Indiscernible away from microphone.)

>> Sara Marcus: Okay. So that's what the chronological subdivision is for. You'll generally find them used with literary, music, art, and historical treatments of a topic. So if they're -- they generally modify the main heading and represent something created or talking about that time period. These are coded and marked as subfield Y. Okay?

Form subdivisions generally indicate what an item is, what it physically is, rather than what it's about. The most common form subdivisions that you'll find are generally used and can be used under any type of main heading. And they're generally the last subdivision you find in a heading. And if a work is about a specific form, the form is considered a topic not a form heading. Okay. Form subdivisions are generally found in mark as subfield V. But this is new so older records may still have it under X. So just so you're aware of that. Okay?

Now, in the Sears List they do provide you a list of subdivisions provided for use in the Sears List. If you're familiar with LCSH, this is what you see in the free floating lists of LCSH that go with the big red books. And the list of subdivisions provided for the use in the Sears List are those that can be used with almost any other heading, while established subdivisions can only be used under the headings for which they're indicated for. Generally you use the established headings and subdivisions as listed in the Sears List of Subject Headings itself. And you'll follow the instructions for combining them, the subdivisions provided for it in the Sears List. The order used for a given subject in Sears is a decision that has already been made by the editors of Sears, and
you need to learn them as a cataloger. Some topics are used as subdivisions under places, while other topics are divided by place, and this is something you need to look in the Sears List to figure out.

So, now that we covered all that, let's look at some of the tools. Okay. The tools used for subject analysis when you're working with the Sears List of Subject Headings basically is the Sears List of Subject Headings itself, whether it's the online version, Sears on the web from HW Wilson; the print version, Sears List of Subject Headings; or the Spanish language version of the book, which includes subject headings in Spanish, Sears Lista de Encabezamientos de Materia. So that's also available from HW Wilson if you have a large Spanish population, and it's very similar to the Sears List in English. So if you have a decent Spanish dictionary or if you know someone who speaks Spanish, they can help you make your catalog available to your Spanish-speaking population. Another benefit of the fact that the Sears List uses the more generally used terms and not the scientific is that it's much easier to translate.

So what are the components of the entries in Sears? Well, there's authorized headings. The authorized heading is a term selected to represent a distinctive concept. Headings that are authorized are listed in bold face type. And the authorized heading maybe followed by the legend, May Subd Geog., or it may say, not Subd. Geog., indicating whether or not the heading may be subdivided by place or geographically. In many cases there is no legend next to the heading, because the decisions are still being made, but more and more decisions are being made as the new editions of Sears come out. If you do not see May Subd Geog., generally it means you cannot; however, remember this is the Sears List, so if you really feel you need to subdivide geographically in your collection, please do so. Okay?

Next, when possible, there is a suggested Dewey Decimal Classification Number. These are provided only when there's a close correspondence between the subject heading and the Dewey schedules themselves. As a cataloger we need to consider these numbers as starting points and make sure that we can consult the Dewey schedules as the schedules may have changed, and also see what the common practice in our library is. The scope notes will help clarify the
intended meaning or scope of a heading, and it will give you some ideas as to why you might want to choose this heading.

References, these will indicate relationships among headings. They're listed in groups by types of references. You have your equivalence references which are USE and UF for Used For. So USE comes before the authorized heading. And UF, Used For, comes before the unauthorized heading. So that this way you can go back and forth to see how a heading might or might not be used and this helps you make your authority records. You have your hierarchical relationships which go between broader and narrower terms. You have your associative relationships that say, well, you know, this is a good term, but you know what this term is kind of related, so go check that one out too and see which one you think is better. And you have your general references which are not made to a specific heading but to an entire group of headings or to subdivision used under certain types of headings. Okay?

So, spoke already about the different versions of the Sears List.

So, how do we apply the Sears List of Subject Headings? Well, it's pretty simple. Tell yourself, SLAM: Scan, look for, ask yourself, and mentally compose. You start out by scanning the subject-rich portion of the item. Look for the keywords and concepts. Ask yourself, what is this thing about? How many topics are discussed? Which ones are dominant? And then mentally compose a statement telling yourself this is resource is about. Once you're done SLAM'ing the book, translate these terms into Sears or your other controlled vocabulary. Then you're going to try to think how many headings do I need? Think about that and remember that you should assign one or more subject headings that best summarize the overall content of the work and provide access to its most important topics.

How do you define most important topics? Well, you need to stop and think, what is most important, not just in terms of the item itself but again in terms of the population you're serving. In practice, generally it's only one heading that's sufficient, but sometimes something may just be so general that you can't get any subject heading. And sometimes you may want one, two, three, or more.

So how do you choose your headings? Well, remember, be objective,
assign headings that characterize the content of the resource as a whole. Assign headings that are as specific as the material covered. Go broader only when you can't get a precise heading. If a work discusses a general topic with emphasis on a specific subtopic, assign a heading for the general topic and the subtopic, if the subtopic represents at least 20 percent of the work or if it's the subtopic it's something that a lot of your patrons are looking for.

There's a rule of three that if a work discusses several distinct topics, assign up to three headings if you can find them for these distinct topics. If you can find one heading that encompasses only those two or three subtopics and nothing else, use that heading. If there's four or more, use the broader topic. Again, unless one or more of those subtopics needs an access point or subject heading because that's a topic asked for a lot in your library. Okay? A resource may also discuss a topic for which a single heading doesn't exist and it just can't be formulated. So you might want to use more than one heading. Okay?

What are some additional aspects of a work we might want to bring out in our subject headings? We may want to bring out the place, the time, the named entities and forms, form of the book. You may want to bring that out through your subject headings, either through main headings, adjectival qualifiers in the main headings or subdivisions. In terms of place, you may want to bring out the geographical aspect of a topic. You may want to bring out the chronological aspect of a topic. You may want to bring out a named entity discussed within the work. And you may want to talk about the form of the work itself.

So, the order of subject headings, because now that we have all these terms, you know, what order do we put them in? Well, the first subject heading should reflect the primary topic or focus of the work. It generally corresponds to the assigned call number. Other headings should follow in descending order of importance.

So now that we've figured out all of the stuff, how do we check our results? Well, ask yourself these questions: Do the assigned headings group this work with similar works; do the headings capture the spirit and essence of the work; do they capture what is special or unique about the work? Imagine yourself as a reader or a user in your library and ask yourself, would you look
under these headings to find this type of material? Would you be satisfied if you wanted material on this topic and you found this item? If you can answer all these successfully, you've done a good job. If not, go back and try again.

So, now we've talked about our main headings. Now we also need to apply subdivisions. There are two types of authorized subdivisions. There are your established subdivisions and your free floating. Some basic concepts about the functions of subdivisions, subdivisions are used in the Sears List to bring out various aspects of a topic or to sub-arrange a large file. Authorized subdivisions can be either established or free floating. Authorized subdivisions are subdivisions that may be applied to particular subject headings according to the Sears List policy. There are two types of authorized subdivisions established and free floating. The established subdivisions are established editorially for use under a particular heading. These generally represent unique concepts or are applicable to only a few headings. These are found in the Sears List under the appropriate heading. Free floating subdivisions may be used under certain types of headings without being established editorially. These generally represent concepts common to several fields or are applicable to numerous headings. These are found in the preliminary pages of the Sears List.

Before assigning a free floating subdivision, consider the following: Is it appropriate under the main heading; does it conflict with a previous established heading; is it redundant? Don't assign a free floating subdivision of the topic if the topic of the subdivision is already implied in the heading itself.

Let's talk a little bit more about free floating subdivisions. Okay? There are different types of free floating subdivisions, each with their own guidelines. Free floating subdivisions of general application represent common concepts widely used across disciplines and physical or bibliographic forms that could apply to nearly any heading. Although this is a general list provided at the start of the Sears List of Subject Headings, there are still restrictions on the application of these as we touched on earlier.

Free floating subdivisions can be controlled by pattern headings also. Some subdivisions are especially relevant to headings in a particular subject category. To avoid repeating all possible subdivisions under each heading in the
category, subdivisions are listed under one or more representative headings. These subdivisions become free floating under all appropriate headings belonging to that category or pattern. Current practice favors the use of headings with subdivisions or phrase headings, unless the phrase heading is well known in that form. Use of free floating subdivisions allows for consistency in how a concept is expressed and can be easily applied to a broad range of headings without requiring individual phrase headings to be established.

Geographic subdivisions, geographic areas and features can play a key role in the contents of a work and need to be reflected in the assigned headings. Many subject headings and subdivisions in Sears may be subdivided by place in order to bring out the geographic aspects of a topic. Which headings and subdivisions can be subdivided by place? Generally topics that can be treated from a geographic point of view are authorized for geographic subdivision. Authorization for geographic subdivision can be found in the Sears List. If a subject heading is authorized for geographic subdivision, the entry in Sears will have the notation May Subd. Geog. If a free floating subdivision may be further subdivided by place, the notation May Subd. Geog. will appear next to the subdivision.

For some topics you may find that heading cannot be subdivided by place, even though it can be treated from a geographic point of view. If a topic lends itself to geographic treatment, but the heading itself is not authorized for geographic subdivision, Sears practice may be to formulate the heading as place, subdivided by topic. Use the form of the geographic name as established in the Sears List. If the name is not there, use the Library of Congress authority file to locate the form of the geographic name to use. When the name of a place has changed over the course of its existence, use the name of the place in use at the time of the content of the item.

Direct and indirect subdivision, once you know that your heading is authorized for geographic subdivision and you -- use the direct when the geographic subdivision is assigned without interposing the name of a larger place. The general rule is that for places at the country level or higher, you should subdivide directly. Indirect is when the name of a larger place is given,
subdivided by the name of a more specific locale. The general rule is that for places within a country, subdivide indirectly with the name of the country first. There are some exceptional countries where you start out with the state, the province, or other first order political divisions, such as Canada, Great Britain, and the U.S.

Inverted headings are used for specific regions of countries or first order political divisions such as Scotland, Central China, or Southeast China. Jurisdiction or regions larger than a single country or first order political division in the exceptional countries are assigned directly after topics. These may include historical kingdoms, regions of the United States, and geographical features.

There are two exceptional cities, Washington DC and Jerusalem that are assigned directly after topics. Be aware that Vatican City, Palestine, Gaza Strip and West Bank are treated as countries.

Levels of geographic subdivisions, subdivisions can be further subdivided by place in one of these two-ways depending on where you can put in the geographic subdivision. Okay? So, that you would use these forms.

So when do you use qualifiers in geographic subdivisions? Well, generally you follow the example for Art of Barcelona in Spain, except for with Australia and Malaysia, as you see on the screen. Okay?

We have chronological subdivisions, again, we have our order of subdivisions. And remember we're in the 21st Century, so now we can't just say current. We now have to remember that 1900's, 2000's are two totally different things. So pay attention to that when you're subdividing chronologically.

Names as subjects, okay, we've got our personal names, our corporate names, our geographic names, our uniform titles, and changes of names of geographic and corporate entities. Remember, the Sears List is not complete and is not meant to be used by itself, it contains headings that represent primarily topics and concepts, non-jurisdictional geographic features, non-corporate named entities such as buildings and family names.

For personal names used as subject headings, you may assign the name heading on its own or you may need to bring out additional aspects by using subdivisions. Okay? For corporate names used as subject headings, assign the
name heading on its own or again bring out additional aspects by using subdivisions. And use the name of the corporate body in use at the time that the writing is about not the time it was written. Uniform titles are named entities that can be used as subject headings when the work is discussing another work.

And then we get up to evaluating existing headings. Remember that the absence of a subject heading in the Sears List does not mean that the heading is invalid. Remember that the Sears List is intended to be added to added to by the cataloger following the guidelines in the Sears List book, bibliographic records in the catalog, whether print or electronic, have been created over a period of years. Forms of headings change. Policies and practices for application change. New heading are established. Heading in older records should be reviewed using current standards whenever possible. We all know there are these budgetary issues.

He's a quick checklist again. Analyze the subject focus and within the controlled vocabulary assign headings that are authorized in the list or create your own.

And test your results again. Make sure that you can answer these questions.

And that's the end of the slides. And I will take any questions that anyone has at this point.

>> Janet Ahrberg: Okay, Sara, thank you for that insightful program that has provided us with an understanding of Sears Subject Headings.

We hope you found today's session useful. You will soon receive a short online evaluation form. Please take a few minutes to respond to the questions and return the form to us. The comments that are received are reviewed by the ALCTS CE Committee and are used to plan additional continuing educational offerings. Information about all ALCTS webinars are featured on the ALCTS home page and the web address is given here on this slide. And you can see those, the URL's are provided on the second slide. New webinars and CE events are continuously being developed. So check the ALCTS home page frequently for new information.

Again, we welcome suggestions for webinars and other continuing
educational opportunities. You may contact me at Janet.Ahrberg@okstate.edu or submit a proposal online using the ALCTS webinar proposal form at the web address noted below.

Now, for your convenience I've noted the upcoming webinars and our ALA midwinter program on how to present the webinars. As you can see we have on December 15th, we have FRBR as a Foundation for RDA with Robert Maxwell. On January 19th we have Finding Savings in the Collection Budget with Jane Schmidt. January 22nd Copyright in the WEB 2.0 Environment with Lisa Macklin. February 2nd we have RDA and AACR2 Compared Part I with Adam Schiff. And February 9th we have Part II, RDA and AACR2 Compared.

You can register for these programs on the online form as noted at that URL address on your screen. And if you plan to be at ALA midwinter, please join us for the webinar playground on Sunday January 9th, 2011 from noon to 2:00 p.m. at the San Diego Convention Center in Room 05A.

I would also like to thank today Melissa Defino for providing technical support for today's webinar. She and her colleagues on the CE Committee's Technical Support Subcommittee make it possible to smoothly present these webinars.

Again, we sincerely appreciate your attendance today and hope you will join us again for other presentations ALCTS has planned. Thank you.

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