Lesson Title: Visual Aids and Descriptors in Primary Source Evaluation & Curation

Overview: This lesson was developed for HIS484 (Topics in the History of Gender and Sexuality/Pride in the time of HIV/AIDS) in the Spring of 2018. The students' final assignment culminated in a multimedia or digital research project on a topic of their choosing and heavily relied on primary source and visual materials. This lesson focuses on how students, as content curators and analysts, can engage in deeper analysis and contextualization of the sources they present through their projects. Students collectively analyzed one example from a particular resource that they are already acquainted with and considered the language used by both systems of knowledge and the communities that they are studying, in order to help them form thoughtful, critical, and reflective perspectives.

Learning Outcomes:
- Students will be able to analyze and contextualize primary source and visual materials related to HIV/AIDS.
- Students will be able to articulate how knowledge is socially constructed and contested and how/why language evolves over time.
- Students will engage with art as a primary source related to their research topics.

Time: 75 minutes

Background/recommended reading: Drabinski, Emily. "Queering the catalog: Queer theory and the politics of correction." *The Library Quarterly* 83.2 (2013): 94-111.
https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/pdfplus/10.1086/669547

Teacher Materials: Projector/computer (with sound), Google Doc worksheet, printed worksheets, presentation, notecards

Student Materials: Computer or laptop, pen/pencil

Preparation:
- Students will need to have explored the Visual Aids website before this class since the focus is not on learning a new tool but critical thinking and deeper analysis of visual images: https://www.visualaids.org/
- Email instructor link to an editable copy of the Google Doc worksheet ahead of time so that students can get access and edit collectively during class
- Print copies of the handout for students to use during their own research

Session Instructions:
1. Introductions (10 min)
    a. As with any major activist movement, art plays a huge role in the conversation around change, acceptance, empathy and understanding for individuals and communities.

b. Art as information is the key concept in this discussion and activist and marginalized communities create, disseminate, and engage with art in order to get their messages out.
    i. What are the messages of the HIV/AIDS movement? Historically? Today?
    ii. Create a class list of all of the various art forms that they have seen, related to the AIDS/HIV crisis and movement (posters, buttons, paintings, murals, zines, etc)

2. Watch short video (5 min): https://www.visualaids.org/projects/detail/radiant-presence
3. Intro/review of Visual Aids (10 min)
    a. Questions for discussion:
        i. What is it and who contributes to it?
        ii. How are they not just about historicizing aids but about keeping it contemporary?
    b. Make note: Visual Aids commission new works on AIDS, provide grants to artists, provide public events and education, and provide a current online artist registry.
    c. This can be a good place to identify well-known artists as well as new, self trained, and contemporary artists who have addressed AIDS through their work. This is where we will be looking today for our purposes. All of the art objects and types you named count as a primary source and can be used in your final projects.
    d. Demonstrate how to find work by a specific artist (Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Barbara Krueger are well-known examples)
    e. Demonstrate how to explore by their topics (Stigma, Christian*, Trans*)
    f. Find one image that is rich in content to use for the class analysis/worksheet.
4. Analyzing and Contextualizing a work of art as a primary source (15 min)
    a. Have all students open the worksheet in Google Drive
    b. Encourage students to add comments and answer the questions, as well as pose other questions to others' responses.
    c. Encourage students to look for more information on the web once they have a starting point and have more questions they would like to answer.
    d. Offer guidance in generating keywords/terms for further searching, if needed.
5. Now that we have these keywords and terms that will help us dive deeper, beyond our analysis of this image, we will talk about the systems of information, particularly language and knowledge of LGBTQ people and people living with HIV/AIDS. Bring up slides/presentation (20 min):
    a. LOC classification is the subject heading system used by the majority of academic libraries in the United States, including our library and database systems. Specific topics, that fall outside of our society's mainstream, have often been 'hidden' in broader headings, or even misplaced, in an attempt to fit them into the LCC schedule. While you are likely aware from your course materials, visibility has been a longstanding issue for both the LGBTQ and HIV/AIDS communities and increased visibility would lead to increased accessibility to relevant resources. All of this is to say, that when you go searching for materials

on your topics you may find it frustrating if you don't get the results you need right away.

    b. LGBTQ subject terms (Slide 1)
        i. What do we notice about this snippet of the LOC subjects?
        ii. Discussion on language and placement within the LOC schema
        iii. Important points (Drabinski, 2013)
            1. Until 1972, materials related to homosexuality were placed under "sexual deviance"--now under "sexual behavior," but alongside a very heteronormative life story.
            2. The catalog and knowledge organization systems are like any other text: political and subject to biases
            3. Identities are relational and contingent
    c. Subject terms related to HIV/AIDS (Slide 2)
        i. Discussion of the evolution of terms and the significance in this case
        ii. How do these terms for both LGBTQ people and HIV/AIDS compare with those used on Visual Aids?
    d. Take away points of discussion:
        i. Knowledge is socially constructed and contested
        ii. Categories and names change over time
        iii. Artists/art have a significant role in activist movements
        iv. Keep these concepts in mind as you continue researching your topics and creating knowledge for your final project. How will you reflect on this as you research, curate, and develop multimedia pieces that fill gaps in information on HIV and AIDS?
    e. Final thoughts and questions (10 min)
    f. One-minute reflection (hand out notecards) (Slide 3)

Assessment: Analysis of the group worksheet/activity and the one-minute reflection

Reflection/final question for instructor: Where else, throughout the course material, is there an opportunity to discuss knowledge being socially constructed and contested?