

Authority Control FAQs for Authors and Creators

What is authority control?

Authority control is a process that standardizes information to help library users find information. For example, instead of a library user needing to look up all the spelling variations used for Shakespeare in English and other languages, everything by and about Shakespeare can be found under the standardized form “Shakespeare, William, 1564-1616.” Librarians organize that information in an *authority record*; take a look at the authority record for Shakespeare: <https://lccn.loc.gov/n78095332>.

Personal name heading	Shakespeare, William, 1564-1616
	<i>Browse this term in LC Authorities or the LC Online Catalog</i>
Variant(s)	Shakespear, William, 1564-1616
	Shakspeare, William, 1564-1616
	Šek'spiri, Uiliam, 1564-1616
	Saixpēr, Gouilliam, 1564-1616
	Shakspere, William, 1564-1616
	Shikisbīr, Wilyam, 1564-1616
	Szekspir, Wiliam, 1564-1616
	Šekspyras, 1564-1616
	Shekspir, Vil'iam, 1564-1616
	Šekspir, Viljem, 1564-1616
	Tsikinya-chaka, 1564-1616
	Sha-shih-pi-ya, 1564-1616
	Shashibiya, 1564-1616
	Shekspir, Vilyam, 1564-1616
	Shakspir, Vilyam, 1564-1616
	Syeiksūp'io, 1564-1616
	Shekspir, V. (Vil'iam), 1564-1616
	Szekspir, William, 1564-1616

Caption: Partial view of William Shakespeare's authority record.

Librarians sometimes ask for information from creators (authors, artists, editors, etc.) to ensure that all the works created by an individual can be correctly attributed and easily found and collocated in library catalogs.

Personal name heading	Boss, Alan, 1951- <i>Browse this term in LC Authorities or the LC Online Catalog</i>
Variant(s)	Boss, A. P. (Alan Paul), 1951-
Associated country	United States
Associated place	Washington (D.C.)
Birth date	1951-07-20
Field of activity	Astronomy
Affiliation	Carnegie Institution of Washington Las Campanas Observatory
Profession or occupation	Astronomers Astrophysicists
Found in	Looking for earths, 1998: CIP t.p. (Alan Boss) info. sheet (Alan P. Boss is a reach scientist at the Carnegie Institution in Washington D.C.; He is a prominent astronomer; world's leading authorities on planet formation) d.s. (dob July 20, 1951) Protostars and planets IV, c2000: CIP t.p. (Alan Paul Boss) bk. t.p. (Alan P. Boss) cover (A.P. Boss) Universal life, 2019: title page (Alan Boss) back cover (Alan Boss is an astrophysicist and has been helping NASA plan its search for exoplanets since 1988. For the past thirty-five years, Boss has been on stff at the Carnegie Institution for Science in the Department of Terrestrial Magnetism. He leads a groundbased astrometric planet searc effort at the Las Campanas Observatory in Chile. He currently chairs NASA Astrophysics Advisory Committee and the National Academy of Sciences Committee on the Astrobiology Science Strategy for the Search for Life in the Universe)
Associated language	eng

Caption: Example of a full authority record, including selected titles of authored books.

Why am I being asked for this information?

Libraries collect millions of resources from around the world. Sometimes creators can have similar names or the same name, and libraries need to find ways to distinguish one person from another.

When a librarian contacts you for information, they want to ensure that your work is correctly attributed to you and not to another person with a similar name.

Lee, Margaret, 1944-
Lee, Margaret, 1971-
Lee, Margaret, 1974-
Lee, Margaret, 1980-
Lee, Margaret A., 1974-
Lee, Margaret (Actress)
Lee, Margaret C. (Margaret Carol), 1955-
Lee, Margaret (Children's fiction writer)
Lee, Margaret E.
Lee, Margaret Earley
Lee, Margaret Ellen, 1954-
Lee, Margaret (Embroiderer)
Lee, Margaret Giles
Lee, Margaret Gordon Scott, 1817-1866

Caption: Examples of authority records for people with a name similar to or the same as "Margaret Lee".

What information is most helpful to provide?

You can provide as much or as little information as you feel comfortable sharing. Some of the information that is most helpful to identify you is a middle name or initial, occupation or profession, and/or a birth date or year.

If you have created published works under different forms of names (either due to a name change or using pseudonyms), it can be helpful to let us know so we can work with you to explain options for the visibility of your names in association with your works.

Personal name heading	Major, Miss <i>Browse this term in LC Authorities or the LC Online Catalog</i>
Variant(s)	Gracy, Major Griffin-, 1940- Griffin-Gracy, Miss Major, 1940- Miss Major Griffin-Gracy, Major, 1940-
Located	Oakland (Calif.)
Birth date	1940-10-25
Place of birth	Chicago (Ill.)
Field of activity	Social work with transgender people
Found in	Diagnosing difference, 2009: Container (Miss Major) Miss Major website, viewed Mar. 3, 2020: homepage (Miss Major) Press (most citations from press videos and articles are titled with the name Miss Major; a few name Miss Major Griffin-Gracy) Major!, 2016: intertitles (Miss Major) Wikipedia, April 5, 2016 (Miss Major Griffin-Gracy; often referred to as Miss Major; a trans woman activist; serves as the Executive Director for the Transgender GenderVariant Intersex Justice Project; born October 25, 1940 in Chicago; lives in Oakland, California)

Caption: Example of an authority record for someone who has changed her name but did not publish under a previous name.

Personal name heading	Smith, Jada Pinkett, 1971- <i>Browse this term in LC Authorities or the LC Online Catalog</i>
Variant(s)	Pinkett, Jada, 1971- Pinkett-Smith, Jada, 1971- Jada, 1971-
Birth date	1971-09-18
Place of birth	Baltimore (Md.)
Field of activity	Acting Motion pictures--Production and direction Motion picture authorship
Affiliation	Baltimore School for the Arts North Carolina School of the Arts
Profession or occupation	Actresses Actors Motion picture producers and directors Screenwriters
Found in	Demon knight, c1995: container (Jada Pinkett; actress) Woo, 1998: credits (Jada Pinkett Smith) Internet movie database, Dec. 29, 1998 (Jada Pinkett, a.k.a. Jada Pinkett Smith, b. Sept. 18, 1971; actress; married Will Smith, Dec. 31, 1997) Bamboozled, c2001: container (Jada Pinkett-Smith) Smith, W. Born to reign [SR] p2002: container (Jada) insert (Jada Pinkett-Smith) IMDb, July 16, 2020: (Jada Pinkett Smith; actress, producer, writer; Jada Koren Pinkett Smith was born in Baltimore, Maryland; majored in dance and choreography at the Baltimore School for the Arts; spent a year at the North Carolina School of the Arts)

Caption: Example of an authority record for someone who has changed her name after creating published works under a previous name.

Personal name heading	Cardi B, 1992- <i>Browse this term in LC Authorities or the LC Online Catalog</i>
Variant(s)	B, Cardi, 1992- Almanzar, Belcalis, 1992-
Associated country	United States
Birth date	1992-10-11
Place of birth	Bronx (New York, N.Y.)
Profession or occupation	Rap musicians Singers Composers Celebrities
Found in	Now that's what I call music! 65, ©2018: container (Cardi B) insert (Belcalis Almanzar) Wikipedia, February 5, 2018 (Cardi B; born Belcalis Almanzar, October 11, 1992, Bronx, New York; American rapper, singer, songwriter, and media personality)

Caption: Example of an authority record for someone who is best known by a pseudonym.

What will be done with this information?

The information provided will be collected in the Library of Congress/Name Authority Cooperative (NACO) Authority File, displayed in library catalogs, and shared openly throughout the Internet. In addition, many libraries, museums, and other institutions collect records from the LC/NACO Authority File in their own systems. You should be sure that you want to share this information publicly, because while it can be removed from the LC/NACO Authority File, we cannot guarantee that all other sources that have used the information will also remove it.

What can I do if there is incorrect information in my record or if I would like information removed?

If there is inaccurate information in a record or information that should be removed, we want to correct it! You can contact naco@loc.gov to request a change, or contact a [NACO institution](#). Please be patient with your request due to staffing limitations.

Information provided by the person identified in the authority record will be given precedence over information from other sources.

Library of Congress staff are only able to change items in the Library of Congress/NACO Authority File, not in authority files maintained by other national libraries. You will need to

contact those libraries separately if you have concerns about an authority record that has been created by another national library.

Who can I contact for more information?

Find more information about the Name Authority Cooperative program at this page:

<https://www.loc.gov/aba/pcc/naco/about.html>. For general questions about the program, contact naco@loc.gov.