The Shortcomings of Bibliographic Description in Service of Indigenous Peoples in Canada

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Abstract

The marginalization of Indigenous Peoples in library catalogues and cataloguing standards is well documented. Authored by a white settler librarian, this article looks beyond Library of Congress Classification to analyze how the marginalization of Indigenous Peoples manifests in Machine-Readable Cataloguing (MARC) and online public access catalogues (OPACs) to the detriment of Indigenous users. The rules that govern bibliographic description either obscure the presence of materials in a collection that represent Indigenous worldviews, or do not have the capacity to accurately record demographic terms related to Indigenous Peoples. This leads to inaccurate access points and culturally inappropriate metadata. Examples of projects and institutions innovating in this domain are examined. The harms cataloguers enact through adherence to bibliographic standards deserve critical and ethical analysis. These analyses and innovative projects are first steps towards better serving Indigenous users and fostering reconciliation in libraries in Canada.

Keywords: Cataloguing; Indigenous Users; MARC; Metadata; Reconciliation

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The nation known as Canada¹ is a settler-colonial state (Battell Lowman & Barker, 2015). Libraries, as institutions of the state, are therefore settler-colonial institutions and the settler librarians who work within them, especially white settler librarians like this author, have a responsibility to reconcile the harms they have caused as part of colonization. In response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's (TRC) "Calls to action" (TRC, 2015b), the Library and Information Science (LIS) community in what is now known as Canada is taking greater responsibility for its role in settler colonialism and its treatment of both Indigenous users and Indigenous colleagues within the profession. A leading example of this work is the Canadian Federation of Library Associations / Fédération canadienne des associations de bibliothèques (CFLA-FCAB) Truth and Reconciliation Report and Recommendations (CFLA-FCAB, 2017). This report is the first publication of the CFLA-FCAB Truth and Reconciliation Committee, which "exists to promote initiatives in all types of libraries to advance reconciliation by supporting the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and to promote collaboration in these issues across the Canadian library communities" (CFLA-FCAB, 2017, p. 3). The report is a starting point for LIS professionals to learn about the profession's treatment of Indigenous Peoples in what is now known as Canada, and how to move forward in the spirit of reconciliation.

¹ To refer to this land as "what is now known as Canada" is a rhetorical choice inspired by Ball and Lar-Son (2021) to foreground Indigenous sovereignty. They say: "By using such statements as 'the land now known as Canada,' the authors are acknowledging [the collective right to the land that Indigenous Peoples claim], that Indigenous Peoples have their own names for the land, and that they have used these names since time immemorial" (Ball & Lar-Son, 2021, note 1).

The purpose of this article is to more closely examine one aspect of library services in which the work of reconciliation is taking place: bibliographic description in the online public access catalogue (OPAC). An OPAC is the public-facing digital interface for information on the resources held by a library. Cataloguers populate the catalogue by transcribing the bibliographic attributes of resources and applying access points to “create links between resources and links to the agents responsible for creating them” (G. Campbell, personal communication, October 24, 2020). This is the step in the cataloguing process that precedes classification, which involves organizing items by topic so that they may be grouped together on a shelf. The inaccurate and actively harmful practices in the classification of works related to Indigenous peoples are well documented (e.g., Berman, 1995; Duarte & Belarde-Lewis, 2015; Littletree & Metoyer, 2015; Olson & Schlegl, 2001; Webster & Doyle, 2008). However, the failures of classification are beyond the scope of this paper. It will instead focus on the embedded colonialism of library metadata standards, how this colonialism manifests in the OPAC, and how libraries cannot effectively, ethically, or respectfully serve Indigenous communities until radical changes are made to cataloguing practices.

Literature Review

Indigenous Worldviews

In order to recognize the limitations and harm of standard Western Eurocentric cataloguing practices, one must first be aware of the general characteristics of Indigenous worldviews. Each Indigenous nation has its own customs, values, and knowledge sharing practices. It is important to recognize and respect these unique characteristics when working with or describing a particular Indigenous group (Littletree

& Metoyer, 2015). However, Indigenous scholars have recognized the need to describe Indigenous worldviews more generally for the purposes of broad examinations of the distinctions between Indigenous worldviews and Western knowledge organization practices (Duarte & Belarde-Lewis, 2015).

Indigenous worldviews generally center on relationality (Duarte & Belarde-Lewis, 2015; Farnel et al., 2017; Littletree et al., 2020; Littletree & Metoyer, 2015; Loughheed et al., 2015). Relationality is a way of being, of moving through the world in kinship with others and the natural environment: indeed, “it is the product of the direct experience of nature and its relationship with the social world” (Dei, 2000, as cited in Littletree et al., 2020, p. 414). Relationality is also about accountability. Indigenous scholars such as Littletree et al. (2020) work “with relational accountability in mind, knowing that [they] are responsible to [their] respective Indigenous communities and the field of Indigenous librarianship” (p. 423). Relationality grounds the work of Indigenous scholars.

As a worldview, relationality manifests in the ways Indigenous Knowledges are created and shared. Whereas Western knowledge organization paradigms center on the written word and literary warrant (Loughheed et al., 2015), Indigenous Knowledges manifest in Indigenous ways of knowing, which include “ceremonies, dances, songs, oral histories, oratory, stories, hunting and growing practices, healing arts, weaving, painting, pottery, carving, dreaming, and vision work” (Duarte & Belarde-Lewis, 2015, p. 683). Indigenous Knowledges are created by “observing, creating art, relating to elders and children, planting, cooking, dancing, praying, hunting, fishing, listening, running, and dreaming” (Littletree et al., 2020, p. 419). Furthermore, cultural artefacts such as “wheels, charts, belts, totem poles, and stories are not merely objects to be analyzed

and classified independent of cultural context. Rather, they are dimensions of knowledge—interconnected to land, stories, and language—that inform and instruct contemporary societies” (Littletree & Metoyer, 2015, p. 647). These various ways of knowing mean that Indigenous Knowledge is dynamic and constantly evolving (Callison, 2014, as cited in Loughheed et al., 2015). Indigenous Knowledges are best understood in the context of relationships.

Through colonialism, Indigenous Knowledges have ended up in library and cultural memory institution collections around the world. Recognizing Indigenous worldviews is important because Indigenous and Western knowledge systems are “incommensurable” (Littletree et al., 2020, p. 418). And yet they must be brought together to provide Indigenous nations with access to the knowledge and artifacts that belong to them. In the words of Littletree et al. (2020), “preserving and providing access to Indigenous ways of knowing for the benefit of Indigenous peoples through colonial institutions was never the intended goal” (p. 423). However, it must be done to support access to collections and Indigenous Knowledge sharing.

Any knowledge organization work that is done in order to improve the access for Indigenous peoples to their knowledges held within libraries and cultural memory institutions, including cataloguing, must be done in consultation with the Indigenous groups to whom the knowledge belongs (Ball & Lar-Son, 2021). Non-Indigenous knowledge organization professionals can only guess at what will be most appropriate and beneficial to a particular Indigenous group. By fostering relationality, library professionals can be more certain that their actions are in the best interests of Indigenous communities, as determined by these communities (Camille Callison,

Tahltan Nation, lecture, January 2021). Furthermore, much Indigenous Knowledge is sacred, and should only be handled by members of the Indigenous group (Duarte & Belarde-Lewis, 2015). Indigenous peoples are experts on their own worldviews, and so they are the authoritative sources for guidance on adaptations to knowledge organization systems to better serve them (Duarte & Belarde-Lewis, 2015).

Harms in Metadata Standards

Cataloguers in what is now known as Canada have several metadata standards that guide their work: Resource Description and Access (RDA), Library of Congress Classification (LCC), Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH), Canadian Subject Headings (CSH), and Répertoire de vedettes-matière, in addition to any local policies the cataloguing department of a library may choose to enforce. Adhering to these standards is intended to ensure interoperability between library catalogues and minimize duplication of work (Jaffe, 2020). The structures and contents of these standards have a strong bias towards a Western worldview that leaves little room for alternative and equally valid perspectives (Moulaison Sandy & Bossaller, 2017). This embedded ignorance of other ways of knowing the world enacts harm against Indigenous library users. The work of the modern cataloguer should extend beyond mechanical adherence to established standards; the work should include critical evaluation of the ethics of the harm cataloguing standards cause marginalized users (Jaffe, 2020). Much work has already been done to analyze and evaluate the shortcomings of the traditional library catalogue for capturing and displaying information related to Indigenous Peoples. In order to meet their obligations in the work towards reconciliation, non-Indigenous cataloguers and metadata professionals must, at a

minimum, utilize the products of this work and implement the recommendations of the CFLA-FCAB Truth and Reconciliation Committee's *Truth and Reconciliation Report and Recommendations* (CFLA-FCAB, 2017). As will be discussed below, colonialism in cataloguing manifests in the standards cataloguers follow, the MARC 21 (Machine-Readable Cataloguing) encoding schema, and the access points assigned to Indigenous works and authors.

Ethics in Cataloguing and Indigenous Metadata

The work of bibliographic description has undergone many iterations and codifications in the century and a half since Charles Cutter first discussed the objects of the catalogue (Reijerkerk, 2020). The latest iteration of the standards according to which cataloguers create bibliographic descriptions are laid out in RDA and encoded in MARC 21. RDA is a standard that determines the content recorded in a bibliographic description (Hart, 2014, as cited in Reijerkerk, 2020, note 14), and MARC determines the layout of this information and what recorded information is shown or hidden in the OPAC (Reijerkerk, 2020). The development of these standards in the North American context, led by the Library of Congress, has always taken place in a Western, positivist paradigm (Moulaison Sandy & Bossaller, 2017). In these standards, empirical and text-based information resources have data types to describe them fully and make them discoverable. In contrast, Indigenous materials do not have mandatory data types that make their presence in a collection apparent (Moulaison Sandy & Bossaller, 2017). This will be examined more closely in the coming pages.

Memory institutions, like libraries, in what is now Canada are paying increased attention to the needs of marginalized communities. For Indigenous Peoples, some of

these needs include metadata to describe resources that reflect an Indigenous worldview, recognition of Indigenous communities' authority and ownership over their heritage and knowledge, which they may have been restricted from accessing until recently (Reijerkerk, 2020), and bibliographic description that foregrounds the Indigeneity of resources. These principles have been codified in the First Nations Information Governance Centre's (FNIGC, 2021) OCAP® principles, which state that, with regards to their data and knowledge, Indigenous peoples must have ownership, control, access, and possession. These principles are in line with the concept of Indigenous sovereignty wherein Indigenous nations have the right to self-determination in all matters (Indigenous Environmental Network, n.d.).

Respecting and supporting Indigenous sovereignty in metadata is an ethical imperative (Jaffe, 2020; Reijerkerk, 2020). In current practice, interoperability is strongly favoured at the expense of ethical metadata and customization to best serve local users: “[cataloguers] are now most often instructed to not ... [customize and enhance records] so as to not compromise the quality, i.e., the interoperability and reusability of the records they create, or to expend more resources than are necessary” (Jaffe, 2020, p. 437). Budget cuts and efficiency have governed cataloguing workflows. Cataloguing must move beyond a strict adherence to neutral (Long et al., 2017), interoperable description to critical analysis and ethical reflection on what descriptive elements could be included to serve Indigenous users more equitably (Reijerkerk, 2020). There is power in the decisions that cataloguers make in their work with Indigenous materials and current practices must change to better serve Indigenous users.

Catalogues and Indigenous Information Discovery

Cataloguers would generally agree that catalogue records should be created with the user in mind. This principle goes back to at least the turn of the twentieth century when Cutter (1904) designated the first object of the catalogue to be “to enable a person to find a book of which either (a) the author, (b) the title, [or] (c) the subject is known” (p. 12). Reijerkerk notes that according to the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions’ *Statement of International Cataloguing Principles*, “the most important principle used to create cataloguing rules is ‘the convenience of the user’” (Reijerkerk, 2020, note 15). Similarly, the National Information Standards Organization (NISO), in its publication *A Framework of Guidance for Building Good Digital Collections*, outlines six principles of good metadata, one of which is that “good metadata conforms to community standards in a way that is appropriate to the materials in the collection, users of the collection, and current and potential future uses of the collection” (NISO Framework Working Group, 2007, p. 61). With such a resounding commitment to users, the ignorance of the needs of Indigenous users becomes even more concerning. The following section will examine a few of the ways MARC 21 fails to meet the needs of Indigenous OPAC users, as well as introduce some of the projects taking place to improve library OPACs in service of Indigenous users’ needs.

At the beginning of a catalogue record, from the cataloguer’s viewpoint (see Figure 1), there is a control field, 008, made up of a series of characters that encode various aspects of the catalogue record, such as the date of record creation, date of publication, and the language of the material, among others (LC, 2015a). Among these characters are a set of four in positions 24-27 that indicate the nature of the contents of

a book being described (LC, 2015a). As shown in Figure 1, examples of accepted codes include “g – legal articles,” “r – directories,” and “y – yearbooks” (Campbell, 2020; LC, 2015a).

Figure 1. MARC 21 Field 008 Characters 24-27 – “Nature of Contents” (LC, 2015a)

24-27 - Nature of contents (006/07-10)	
# - No specified nature of contents	p - Programmed texts
a - Abstracts/summaries	q - Filmographies
b - Bibliographies	r - Directories
c - Catalogs	s - Statistics
d - Dictionaries	t - Technical reports
e - Encyclopedias	u - Standards/specifications
f - Handbooks	v - Legal cases and case notes
g - Legal articles	w - Law reports and digests
i - Indexes	y - Yearbooks
j - Patent document	z - Treaties
k - Discographies	2 - Offprints
l - Legislation	5 - Calendars
m - Theses	6 - Comics/graphic novels
n - Surveys of literature in a subject area	l - No attempt to code
o - Reviews	

While this list of resource types aims to be comprehensive and is representative of a typical colonial library’s holdings, it does not accommodate certain Indigenous information resources, such as oral histories (Campbell, 2020). Recordings of oral histories could be classed as “h - sound” computer files (LC, 2015b). However, recording oral histories as “h-sound” computer files fails to capture – and thus foreground – the Indigeneity of an oral history as compared to other sound recordings. The list of accepted codes is intended to be comprehensive, but it does not accommodate Indigenous Knowledges. However, the list does include “z – treaties” (LC, 2015a), which is an important document type for Indigenous research. This is appropriate, considering that the character codes privilege knowledge that fits a colonial

worldview: treaties between Indigenous peoples and the state are a product of colonialism in what is now known as Canada.

Figure 2. A MARC 21 record with field 008 and 041 highlighted (Western Libraries, 2021)

```
leader 02479nam a2200505 a 4500
001 992212083205151
005 20210218184227.0
008 150218t20152015mnua b 000 jdeng
020 ##sa9780816697267 $qpaperback $qalkaline paper
020 ##sa0816697264 $qpaperback $qalkaline paper
035 ##sa(CaOLU)b65043571-01ocul_uwo
035 ##sa(OCOLC)894746396
040 ##saDLC $erda $beng $cDLC $dYDX $dYDXCP $dBCTA $dBX SDCLCO $dMNT $dOCLCO $dCDX $dCaOLU $d
041 0#saeng $aoji
042 ##sapcc
043 ##san-us-mn
044 ##samnu $aenk
050 00saE99.C6 $bW47 2015
082 00sa398.2089/97333 $223
090 ##saE99.C6W47 2015 $9local
100 1#saWhipple, Dorothy Dora, $d1919-2016 $eauthor.
245 10saChi-mewinzha : $bOjibwe stories from Leech Lake / $cDorothy Dora Whipple, Mezinaashiikwe
246 30saOjibwe stories from Leech Lake
264 #1saMinneapolis ; $aLondon : $bUniversity of Minnesota Press, $c[2015]
264 #4sc2015
300 ##saxvi, 124 pages : $billustrations ; $c22 cm
336 ##satext $btxt $2rdacontent
337 ##saunmediated $bn $2rdamedia
338 ##savolume $bnc $2rdacarrier
504 ##saIncludes bibliographical references.
520 ##saIn the first ninety-five years of her life, Dorothy Dora Whipple has seen a lot of histo
546 ##saText in English and in Ojibwa.
600 10saWhipple, Dorothy Dora, $d1919-2016.
650 #0saOjibwa Indians $vFolklore.
650 #0saOjibwa Indians $xHistory.
650 #0saOjibwa Indians $xSocial life and customs.
650 #0saOjibwa language $vTexts.
651 #0saLeech Lake Indian Reservation (Minn.) $vFolklore.
651 #0saLeech Lake Indian Reservation (Minn.) $xSocial life and customs.
700 1#saGeniusz, Wendy Djinn, $eeditor.
700 1#saFairbanks, Brendan, $eeditor.
700 1#saGeniusz, Annmarie Fay, $eillustrator.
```

Another character in the 008 field, in position 28, indicates the level of government with which a resource is associated, if applicable. There is no character on this list that explicitly indicates that a resource is associated with the government of an

Indigenous sovereign nation. A cataloguer could, of course, use “z – other” (LC, 2015a) to categorize an Indigenous government resource. But, the lack of guidance to do so from a content standard that has instructions on how to encode nearly every other possible type of information resource demonstrates a bias toward colonial governance. Furthermore, “z – other” fails to foreground that the resource is related to Indigenous government. The two 008 MARC codes just described are not visible to patrons in the OPAC. Nonetheless, they make up a part of bibliographic description, and as they exist now, fail to accommodate Indigenous Knowledges, worldviews, or information resources.

Another MARC 21 code that impairs the discovery of Indigenous resources in library catalogues is the 041 field for language codes (see Figure 2). MARC 21 uses a list of codes that indicate the language of a work and the original language of the work if it is a translation (LC, 2019). The design and implementation of this MARC field are barriers to the accurate description of Indigenous language resources in a collection. To illustrate, during a three-year project conducted to analyse and improve the language codes used to describe the Pacific Collection at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, Kleiber et al. (2018) found that the list of language codes in MARC 21 are based on the out-of-date ISO 639 standard, and not the updated and more comprehensive ISO 639-3 standard. This means that the rich diversity of languages in the Pacific Collection is obscured by collective language codes (Kleiber et al., 2018). In fact, “more than 3,500 Pacific-language items in the collection are assigned [to only five MARC collective codes]” (Kleiber et al., 2018, p. 112). Researchers looking for works in a particular language may not be able to find them because they do not know of, or think to search

for, the broader family of a language (Kleiber et al., 2018). Materials in the collection with less common Indigenous languages are consequently hidden by inaccurate cataloguing. As a result, Indigenous researchers and those researching Indigenous materials are left without their information needs met. There are around seventy unique Indigenous languages in what is now known as Canada (Rice, 2020). It is possible that this same problem that Kleiber et al. (2018) studied in a Pacific context is applicable to the cataloguing of Indigenous language materials in the “Canadian” context. One example of remedial work in this area taking place in Nunavut will be described below.

Innovations in Cataloguing Services for Indigenous Users

Beyond the codes for material type, government type, or language in a MARC record, there are many issues that remain with the utility of current bibliographic description standards for Indigenous OPAC users. Fortunately, there are several initiatives taking place in what is now known as Canada to expand bibliographic description to better meet the needs of Indigenous users. One example of such work is at the Xwi7xwa Library, which is part of the First Nations House of Learning at the University of British Columbia (Doyle et al., 2015). The Xwi7xwa Library has taken the standard systems of MARC and LCSH and expanded them to meet the needs of Indigenous users. For classification, the librarians have chosen to adopt an Indigenous scheme, the Brian Deer Classification System (Doyle et al., 2015). Deer first designed the schema for the National Indian Brotherhood (now the Assembly of First Nations) in 1974-1976 when he found that the existing classification schemas could not meet the needs of his library (Doyle et al., 2015). The Xwi7xwa Library continues to use MARC 21 for its catalogue as it is a branch of the University of British Columbia Library. However, the Xwi7xwa

Library has adapted standard cataloguing policies to make MARC 21 data, and therefore the OPAC, more useful and culturally appropriate for its Indigenous users. Most of the changes are related to the 246 “varying form of title” field, the 5XX “note” fields, and the 7XX “added entry” fields (Doyle et al., 2015). For example, in field 246, “when the title transcribed in the 245 [field] has omitted special characters, for the purposes of access and retrieval in the public catalogue, make a 246 for the truest representation of the title as represented on the title page” (Doyle et al., 2015, p. 129). This adaptation works within MARC 21 to balance the needs of access and retrieval with accuracy in transcription of resource information. The OPAC shows both the accurate title and the title that the computer system can understand. Many of the 5XX adaptations are related to identifying contributors to a work who are not identified in the first (and only required) statement of responsibility (Co-Publishers for RDA, 2010). To illustrate, fields 508 and 511 are used to transcribe the names of Indigenous producers, distributors, and performers who might otherwise be omitted from the catalogue because they are not part of the required statement of responsibility (see Figure 3). In addition, field 590 is used to indicate “when an author or illustrator self-identifies as First Nations” (Doyle et al., 2015, p. 129). Emphasizing the presence of this information enables researchers to more easily locate Indigenous agents in the collection. Altogether, the adaptations to MARC bibliographic data that the librarians at Xwi7xwa Library have made serve to foreground Indigenous metadata within catalogue records in order to better serve Indigenous users.

Another promising initiative for culturally appropriate cataloguing services is in development in Nunavut. The Nunavut Libraries Online Consortium (NLOC) is made up of “the Nunavut Legislative Library, the Nunavut Arctic College (NAC) Library, the Nunavut Court of Justice Law Library, and Nunavut Public Library Services (NPLS), which also hosts the holdings of the Pond Inlet Library and Archives Society” (Rigby, 2015, p. 622). The NLOC, in partnership with the Nunavut Government translation bureau, is “creating multilingual and multiscript MARC-compliant, Integrated Library System-compatible records that accurately reflect the multilingual content of material published in and about Nunavut and Inuit” (Rigby, 2015, p. 615).

Figure 3. MARC Record from Xwi7xwa Libra SEQ

Indigenous connections to land... ! : I am the land! written and directed by Alannah Young Leon and Francine Burning.

000 02533cgm a22003615a 4500
001 5954749
005 20200203124119.0
007 vd cvauju
008 120801s2011 bcc005 v eng d
035 — |i 03ag2012ejw
090 — |a DVD PE L46 N35 2011
245 00 |a Indigenous connections to land... ! : |b I am the land! |c written and directed by Alannah Young Leon and Francine Burning.
260 — |a [Vancouver, BC] : |b [Publisher not identified], |c 2011.
300 — |a 1 videodisc (4:37 min.) : |b sd., col. : |c 4 3/4 in.
336 — |a two-dimensional moving image |b tdi |2 rdacontent
337 — |a video |b v |2 rdamedia
338 — |a videodisc |b vd |2 rdacarrier
508 — |a Written and directed by Alannah Young Leon and Francine Burning.
508 — |a Crew, Francine Burning, Alannah Young Leon, Renna Button, Ashley Gaudry, Sadie Burning, Art Leon, Jr.
511 1 |a Contributions by Rose Point, Larry Grant, and Renna Button.
511 1 |a Singer, Reena Button.
520 — |a "Coast Salish Indigenous Elders demonstrate through intergenerational conversations that oral traditions continue to reaffirm and revitalize Indigenous Knowledge intellectual traditions as a vital education process. This visual story is an example of an Indigenous resurgence project, in that local Indigenous protocols were followed and Indigenous ways of teaching and learning are central. In part, this work responds, in our own ways, to make visible the truth about access to lands and resources as the root of the ongoing wars waged against Indigenous peoples. Despite this and the nostalgic imperialist attempts to render Aboriginal peoples otherwise requires we all reconcile responsible relationships to original peoples of this land.! To make visible these facts and retell these aspects of our shared history, to challenge ourselves to make better relationships with the peoples whose territories we live and work within inspired the film. The film serves as a reminder to engage in civic responsibility, to take action and to recall what Our home and Native Land really means in Canada.!" - Container
538 — |a DVD video.
540 — |a Restrictions: BC public post-secondary educational institutions only.
590 — |a First Nations author.
650 7 |a Aboriginal Canadians |x Elders |2 fnhl
650 7 |a Aboriginal Canadians |x Oral tradition |2 fnhl
700 1 |a Leon, Alannah Young.
700 1 |a Burning, Francine.
700 1 |a Point, Rose.
700 1 |a Grant, Larry.
700 1 |a Button, Renna.
710 2 |a Xwi7xwa Collection |5 CaBvAU

To do so, the consortium has developed cataloguing policies that treat the three official languages of Nunavut, “Inuit language”, English, and French, as equals (Rigby, 2015, p. 615). The Inuit language has two main varieties: Inuinnaqtun, which is transcribed in Roman letters, and Inuktitut, which is transcribed in syllabics (Rigby, 2015). Inuktitut and its syllabics transcription are treated equally as a fourth type of cataloguing language. The NLOC uses a Unicode integrated library system that can accommodate syllabics (Rigby, 2015). The equal treatment of languages and the NLOC’s adoption of the IFLA’s (2009) *Statement of International Cataloguing Principles* predicates the NLOC’s language-based cataloguing policies: a resource’s catalogue record is in the language(s) of the item and access points to the item are provided in the other languages and scripts to enable discovery (Rigby, 2015). The use of all four languages balances the various language priorities in Nunavut. As an official territory of the Government of Canada, government resources must be described in the official languages, English and French. To serve Inuit users, both syllabics and Roman script are required as Inuit people should expect to have descriptions of resources in their language’s script, but users have varying levels of mastery of the script (Rigby, 2015). One aspect of this project to note is the significant consultation with local Inuit that took place. Cataloguing in the NLOC’s libraries focuses on the convenience of the user, accuracy of the description, and an economy of labour (Rigby, 2015). The equitable treatment of languages in this library allows the user population, which is 85% Inuit, to access the library and therein find culturally appropriate bibliographic descriptions (Rigby, 2015).

Inaccurate Demographics: Access Points

The duplication of access points across languages is a main tenet of the cataloguing policy for the NLOC (Rigby, 2015). It increases resource discoverability, which is important for Indigenous users, especially when other MARC fields, such as the “041 language” field discussed previously, are often unable to accurately describe the Indigenous content of a resource. Access points are standardized names of people, corporations, families, work titles, and subjects that are used to group related materials together in a catalogue. This process, known as collocation, is fundamental to resource discovery in an online catalogue. One method available to advertise Indigenous information in resources through access points is to include demographic terms for creators and contributors in the MARC 21 field 386 (Hobart, 2020). These demographic terms provide important contextual information for users researching Indigenous agents in the catalogue. Unfortunately, the controlled vocabulary for this field, *The Library of Congress Demographic Group Terms*, contains only fifteen terms related to Indigenous nations and tribes (Hobart, 2020). Controlled vocabularies are used to enforce uniformity in catalogue records. As mentioned in the introduction, this permits record duplications and economy of labour between libraries. It is impossible for this list to represent the hundreds of independent Indigenous nations on Turtle Island (North America) alone. Hobart outlines the inaccuracies of the current list: one issue is that these demographic terms are categorized as ethnic group terms, when nationality is more accurate. Another issue is that the Library of Congress has committed to using the names ethnic groups prefer, and yet it does not use “Hodenausonee and Tsalagi instead of Iroquois and Cherokee” (Berman, 1995, para. 8), for example; and creator nationalities must often be subsumed into broader categories due to the short list of

authorized terms, which is not how Indigenous agents would identify themselves (Hobart, 2020). Access points are an important part of a bibliographic description for locating resources by the same creator, on the same subject, or related to the same work. As a result, the shortcomings of the Library of Congress' list of demographic terms for Indigenous authors are a serious impediment to our ability to support the information needs and research activities of Indigenous users.

Culturally Appropriate Metadata and Cognitive Justice

The common thread of initiatives to decolonize catalogues is the motivation to provide culturally appropriate metadata (Farnel et al., 2017). Moulaison Sandy and Bossaller (2017) describe this metadata as “cognitively just” (p. 129). Cognitive justice involves information access that “respects [an Indigenous] worldview” (Moulaison Sandy & Bassaller, 2017, p. 129), which is not possible without making adaptations to the current standards for bibliographic description. An example of an attempt at providing cognitively just metadata is the use of Passamaquoddy Traditional Knowledge (TK) labels for the Jesse Walter Fewkes collection at the Library of Congress (Reijerkerk, 2020). These labels indicate the access rights and permitted uses of Indigenous materials held by memory institutions (Reijerkerk, 2020). The purpose of these labels is to return some autonomy to Indigenous Peoples whose intellectual property has been stolen and stored away from them for so long while leaving the information resources in the custody of cultural memory institutions (Reijerkerk, 2020). Reijerkerk (2020) finds many issues with the Library of Congress' use of TK labels as they are now, such as: the layout of the OPAC, which does not emphasize the importance of the labels for access rights and permissions to these information resources; the inclusion of this

information in the MARC 21 540 field for legal use statements, which inaccurately casts TK labels as legal information; and that the inclusion of the labels, without meaningful inclusion of Passamaquoddy peoples in the curatorial process, is only a performative act of reconciliation (Reijerkerk, 2020). For the TK labels to serve their intended purpose of returning control over TK back to the Indigenous nation to which it belongs, the members of this nation must be involved in the process. The curators can only guess at what TK labels would be valuable and accurate to the Passamaquoddy Tribe First Nation without meaningful consultation. Reijerkerk (2020) provides many suggestions for improvement that would reflect a cognitively just catalogue record for Indigenous users. Among these suggestions is that the inclusion of bibliographic information related to the Indigeneity of resources should be mandatory, and that meaningful action should be taken to return to Indigenous peoples the authority over their information resources (Reijerkerk, 2020). Cognitive justice for Indigenous users is only possible when they are involved in the curation of their own knowledge. TK levels operate under the same principles as OCAP (FNIGC, 2021): that Indigenous peoples must be able to exercise sovereignty over their data and knowledge.

Discussion

Indigenous users' needs cannot be met by the current standards of bibliographic description because they were not designed to do so. Unfortunately, adaptations to the standards are challenging, costly, and time consuming. While there are ongoing efforts to challenge and undo the Western bias in the cataloguing community (Moulaison Sandy & Bossaller, 2017), significant challenges remain. A major challenge to generating motivation to Indigenize catalogues is the cost efficiencies created by

interoperability (Jaffe, 2020). Nonetheless, cataloguers must consider the ethical motivation to do this work (Jaffe, 2020; Reijerkerk, 2020). Other challenges include the lack of money and time for community consultation, the lack of meaningful relationships between libraries and Indigenous communities (Reijerkerk, 2020), the legacy records that are inaccurately described (Hobart, 2020; Kleiber et al., 2018), and the seemingly unmoving forces of the standards that govern cataloguing practice. These challenges are excuses and are unacceptable in a post-TRC Canada. Indigenous peoples across this land came together to record the truth of their trauma at the hands of the Canadian Government through the Indian Residential Schools, as well as the ongoing impacts of this legacy. In the TRC's (2015b) "Calls to Action," libraries and cultural memory institutions are called out specifically for the role they must take to enact reconciliation (CFLA-FCAB, 2017).

Other scholars have called for support for initiatives wherein Indigenous scholars have the freedom to take time and space to imagine Indigenous ontologies, which are "alternative information structures guided by Indigenous concepts of realities" (Duarte & Belarde-Lewis, 2015, p. 682). Duarte and Belarde-Lewis (2015) propose the following methodology for imagining Indigenous ontologies:

First we have to open our awareness to how colonization works through subjugation of Indigenous documents and knowledge artifacts. Second, we have to identify and conceptualize the tools, techniques, values, institutions and processes that shape decolonization. Third, we have to build partnerships to spread awareness and acquire formal acknowledgment of the epistemic value of Indigenous knowledge in context. Fourth, we have to identify our Indigenous

epistemic partners, those community members with deep domain knowledge essential to the design of useful Indigenous ontologies. Finally, we have to free ourselves to create, as Indigenous thinkers, experimental designs and pilot systems, building our theoretical awareness of work in this area, so that we guide each other through the pitfalls of decolonizing knowledge organization efforts (p. 687).

Many Indigenous scholars justly identify that cataloguing and classification as it stands cannot be adapted to serve Indigenous users. Work in this domain, in the words of Littletree et al. (2020): “is far less about attempting to reform or revise existing tools and methods, and far more about finding ways to discern and advance Indigenous systems of knowledge” (p. 413). Indigenous users should expect cognitively just metadata that accurately represents their worldviews, and at present they are unlikely to find it in the library catalogue.

As mentioned earlier, a fundamental difference between many Indigenous worldviews and a Western worldview is the role of relationality (Duarte & Belarde-Lewis, 2015; Farnel et al., 2017; Littletree et al., 2020; Littletree & Mettoyer, 2015; Loughheed et al., 2015). Indigenous peoples take responsibility for their relationships to each other and to the land. All non-Indigenous librarians should embrace relationality so that they can acknowledge their responsibility in their relationship to Indigenous library users and take action to remedy harms. There are many ways to work in the spirit of reconciliation in LIS. Librarians interested in decolonization and Indigenization should first reflect on their relationships with Indigenous Peoples. In the case of non-existent relationships, self-reflection as to why that may be is strongly encouraged. Each of us must evaluate

our positions, our power, and our abilities, and make a plan to take action to reduce ongoing harm in our work. The many Indigenous scholars cited in this article and the CFLA-FCAB (2017) report have done the work to identify what LIS professionals must do to decolonize this field. It is up to each of us, in consultation and ideally under the direction of the Indigenous community we are serving, to take these actions.

Conclusion

The presence of Indigenous Knowledges and resources cannot be made sufficiently apparent to the Indigenous OPAC user in cataloguing practice as it stands. From the lack of language codes for the multitude of Indigenous languages, to the inaccuracy of the standardized language available to describe Indigenous creators' nationalities, OPACs, and therefore libraries, are failing Indigenous users. Spearheaded by the CFLA-FCAB Report on Truth and Reconciliation, momentum is building for more widespread implementation of Indigenized cataloguing policies. This paper has highlighted just a few examples of harms in bibliographic description, as well as libraries and projects that have developed policies to remedy them.

Every LIS professional should feel empowered to take action in their workplace to embrace the TRC's (2015b) "Calls to Action." In the face of excuses or apathy, librarians can turn to the hundreds of pages of articles in the LIS literature that advocate for this work and the CFLA-FCAB (2017) Report on Truth and Reconciliation that is sponsored by the highest professional librarianship body in what is now known as Canada. As keepers of Indigenous information resources, librarians have an ethical obligation to handle the Indigenous Knowledges in our holdings with the respect they deserve. To do so, LIS professionals must first become educated on the history of the

mistreatment of Indigenous Peoples in what is now known as Canada, as well as the ongoing injustices they face. Then they must read the CFLA-FCAB (2017) Truth and Reconciliation Report and Recommendations, the summary of the final report of the TRC (2015a), and the TRC's (2015b) "Calls to Action." Once educated on the basic challenges Indigenous peoples face in libraries and in this country, LIS professionals must work to cultivate relationships with local Indigenous communities so that they may make their voices be heard in their libraries. Bibliographic description is only one part of the shortcomings of library services to Indigenous peoples in what is now known as Canada. The necessary radical change cannot take place overnight, and so it is up to each of us to do our part.

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