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There and Back Again: Resilience and Libraries

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An Introduction to Resilience: Library Students and Rocky VI

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Abstract

In this short introductory piece, I outline some of the struggles faced by MLIS students to highlight their resilience in the face of these issues.

Keywords: Resilience, Student Life

I would like to open this inaugural edition of Pathfinder's partnership with the Forum for Information Professionals with a quote from the excellent, if overly dramatic, boxing film Rocky VI. For any readers who may not have seen this masterpiece, in one scene Rocky is speaking with his son Robert, who blames his father for his failings. In what I boldly claim to be one of the greatest motivational speeches, Rocky tells his son: "You, me, or nobody is gonna' hit as hard as life. But it ain't about how hard you hit, it's about how hard you can get hit and keep moving forward" (2006).

Why, I hear you ask, would I begin with an overdramatic quote from a boxing movie? The theme we chose for FIP2020 was Resilience and Libraries, and I would argue that this speaks to some of the difficulties MLIS students face. The work of graduate students, while no doubt rewarding, is hard. Students are expected to juggle classwork, professional development opportunities, committee and volunteer work, job(s), and ideally some semblance of a personal life. Through this, the ever-present spectre of imposter syndrome questions whether that student belongs. And as that student prepares to graduate, they enter a field that is struggling to define its place in

the public sphere amidst shrinking public funds, often faced with precarious labour and temporary contract positions. In a phrase: nobody hits as hard as life.

Lest this opening piece stray too far into negativity, I think it prudent to return to the theme of resilience. The goal of this introduction is not to solicit pity or to place blame, but to recognise the incredible work of my fellow students in spite of the aforementioned problems they face. The extended abstracts collected here act as evidence that students are willing to actively and critically engage with these issues; that they are taking the hits thrown by life yet continue to push forward. Presentations this year tackled complex issues including information needs of refugees, global warming and misinformation, and reconciling the library and Indigenous peoples in Canada. These are among the most critical issues we face in our field, and that students remain willing to engage with these in addition to everything else should be a testament to their passion and their dedication to their work. Making the time in their busy schedules to present their research is a demonstration of fierce resilience.

To summarize, a lot is asked of MLIS students and unfortunately much of their work has a tendency to remain unseen and unappreciated. I hope that the partnership between Pathfinder and the Forum for Information Professionals will continue to offer the opportunity for students to be recognized for the substantial effort they put into their degrees. As you read through the extended abstracts collected here, I ask that you consider the passion, dedication, and resilience shown by my fellow students in presenting their research to you. While I will admit this may be a different form of resilience than that shown by a fictional boxer in a particularly cheesy movie, it remains an impressive show of resilience, nonetheless.

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Becoming a Librarian Amidst a Professional Identity Crisis

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Abstract

Adopted in the late 1930s, the Library Bill of Rights grounded the profession in the core value of intellectual freedom. This core value was challenged in the 1930s, the 1960s, the 1990s, and again in recent years by calls for social responsibility within our ranks. The recurrent discomfort with upholding intellectual freedom is particularly evident today in the case of public library third-party meeting room bookings by controversial speakers. Both the Toronto Public Library and the Vancouver Public Library have come under scrutiny by both specific voices within the field as well as the community more broadly. This is not the first time, nor will it be the last time, that publicly funded libraries are faced with controversy surrounding intellectual freedom. Using critical information theory, this presentation examines important questions: How is intellectual freedom defined, redefined, and confined today? What is the relationship between the core value of intellectual freedom and related core values such as social responsibility and diversity? How do we uphold professional ethics (e.g., International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions *Code of Ethics for Librarians and Other Information Workers*) in instances when our personal, professional, institutional, and/or association commitments do not align? These questions are rooted in my ongoing academic explorations with Dr. Toni Samek as a University of Alberta School of Library and Information Studies 2019–20 research assistant on the nature and extent library and information studies curricula (for both professionals and paraprofessionals) prepares graduates to negotiate the perpetually complicated core value of intellectual freedom from a position of confidence and not fear, defensiveness, or divisiveness.

Keywords: Intellectual Freedom, LIS curriculum, Professional identity, Room bookings

I want to begin by acknowledging that I am located on the unceded, current, and traditional territories of the hən̓q̓əmin̓əm̓- and Skwxwú7mesh-speaking peoples, including the Tsleil-Waututh, Qayqayt, Stz'uminus, Musqueam, and Kwikwetlam First Nations. The land is now known as Burnaby, B.C., a suburb of Vancouver. I would also like to acknowledge the privilege of growing up on Stó:lō territory in the Fraser Valley. Learning the histories of where I am is part of my personal decolonization practice.

Before delving into the complex topic of intellectual freedom and our professional identity, I want to take a moment to position myself within this research. An important aspect of any research is understanding and naming your positionality. This doesn't mean my position on the topic (as you'll see I'm struggling with that still), but how who I am influences my work. In Indigenous research methodologies, this is my relational accountability—to whom I am accountable. In this case I am accountable not only to my family, but also my fellow librarian students and my colleagues at Simon Fraser University. Part of this is recognizing, or trying to recognize, my own biases when I'm doing research. The question is often what to do about them: ignore them or allow them to guide my work? I'm still unsure about that answer.

According to Shawn Wilson (2008), it's an Indigenous paradigm to create a relationship with your topic and the ideas you are working with as a researcher. Wilson (2008) also says it's a Western tradition to "amputate" yourself during your work (i.e., remove emotion from intellect, be professional not emotional). If you don't compartmentalize things, your research will influence all aspects of your life; it changes you.

I'm approaching this work with a decade of library experience, mostly in an academic library, as a library technician. There are LGTBQA2S+ people in my family and friends. My heritage is Metis-settler, though I didn't grow up within that community. I'm the oldest of four children, and my parents divorced when I was twelve. These experiences make up the biases that I bring with me, that guide my work.

My presentation is on intellectual freedom, the controversy surrounding room bookings, and professional identity. This is a huge topic, one that could be studied for years rather than the five months I've been working with Dr. Samek as part of my graduate research assistant position.

To set the context, the controversy is public libraries permitting third-party room bookings by groups questioning transgender rights—specifically those of transgender women. Each group is bringing Meghan Murphy, founder of the website the Feminist Current. Murphy has been banned from Twitter due to her refusal to use preferred pronouns and deadnaming individuals (Goodyear, 2019). She is concerned about trans women using women's change rooms, playing sports on female teams, being in female prisons, and accessing services such as transition houses for those leaving abusive relationships (Murphy, 2019; Nickle, 2019). She has also repeatedly stated that men cannot be women, but also that she's not anti-trans ("Event featuring Meghan Murphy," 2019; Murphy, 2019; The Canadian Press, 2019).

Specifically, she has spoken out against An Act to Amend the Canadian Human Rights Act and the Criminal Code (Bill C-16), passed by the Canadian House of Commons and Senate in 2017, which added gender expression and gender identity as being protected under the Canadian Human Rights Act against discrimination. In her view it jeopardizes women's rights ("Event featuring Meghan Murphy," 2019; Goodyear, 2019; Murphy, 2019; Nickle, 2019; The Canadian Press, 2019).

In 2019 and 2020, Murphy was invited to speak at several events held in public libraries: Vancouver Public Library, Toronto Public Library, and the Seattle Public Library. A planned event for the New York Public Library was cancelled.

The transgender community and their allies were naturally upset about these events. People have claimed what Murphy is saying is hate speech and should not be allowed in a publicly funded institution ("Event featuring Meghan Murphy," 2019). It's claimed that public libraries have been chosen to add legitimacy to the speaker and topic (Slaughter & MacLeod, 2019). The libraries state they have allowed room bookings based on intellectual freedom.

The question is, should libraries be denying these radical feminist groups their room booking? Is that in conflict with the value of intellectual freedom? Or, is intellectual freedom in conflict with other values, such as diversity and inclusion? What does this mean for the professional identity of library staff?

The research I've done about this topic has been exploratory. I don't have answers for the above questions. Rather, I'd like to see this conversation happening within

library settings. One part of that conversation I've been having with my SLIS cohort is how, as students nearing the end of our programs, we don't feel prepared to enter this debate. Not everyone has taken the Intellectual Freedom and Social Responsibility course, and the subject hasn't necessarily come up in other classes. When it (or similar topics) has, our professors have given us space to explore and challenge not only each other but also the course readings and ourselves as we develop our professional opinions and beliefs. It's also understood that these may change during our careers as we gain experience and continue learning. It is the SLIS mission to foster "diverse, reflective and inquiring library and information leaders," which to me means we don't stop our education when the program ends. This is just the beginning.

Throughout the reading I've done for this presentation, it became very obvious that the profession is divided on this issue. One librarian put forward that the divisiveness we are seeing is a divide between those in management (aka those with power) and those on the front lines who may be members of a marginalized community themselves (Neigel, 2019). A trio of academic library deans and university librarians called out the Canadian Federation of Library Associations for using an outdated and simplified definition of what intellectual freedom means, urging for an updated policy that reflects a balance between intellectual freedom and human rights (Bird et al., n.d.). Others question why this is the issue that's gaining people's attention and not other events centred on equally questionable behaviour (Beaudry, 2019). Additionally, highly charged media accounts, sometimes with personal attacks, have become the norm for this situation. For myself, and my cohort, are we prepared for these nuanced conversations? Our education hasn't always taught us the ways in which libraries have not been neutral. Add in the fact that librarian work (professional and paraprofessional) is a feminized profession and the stigma that exists for females in management positions (Gluckman, 2018; Smith et al., 2018). There is a lot to consider.

As I've been engaging with the media reports about the controversy, literature about libraries and intellectual freedom, and gender politics, I've also been learning about two theories: intersectionality and critical librarianship. In an article published by *In the Library with a Lead Pipe*, Ettarh (2014) writes about intersectional theory and librarianship, stating that "various categories of marginalization and identity interact on

multiple (and often simultaneous) levels." In other words, the pieces of a person's identity cannot be looked at separately because they intersect and influence each other. As a result, people should not be looked at through one lens—you won't get the full picture. Should we be looking at organizations and their policies using intersectionality? To do so we may need to employ critical librarianship, explained by the Association of College and Research Libraries Instruction Section Research & Scholarship Committee (2017) as taking an "ethical and political approach to library work, using critical theory to expose and question the historical, political, and social bases of our assumptions and practices."

As we finish our formal education and begin our professional lives, it's important to remain open-minded and willing to engage in these tough conversations. One prominent theme within the reading I've done is that learning or change cannot occur without dialogue. The library profession is having an identity crisis, not just because of this controversy, but also in response to The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action (2015) and the need to decolonize the institution and education. The profession is being called upon to recognize and address its foundations in colonization, oppression, and white supremacy; this controversy is just one example. It's also an example of how easily divided colleagues, leaders, and our communities can become.

Through our discussions on this, Dr. Samek and I have talked about how this is a key moment in the history, and future, of libraries. As a student, this controversy and subsequent identity crisis made apparent how many of my courses could have talked about the nuances of librarianship and addressed the darker history of libraries. While I have enjoyed this program, and am looking forward to beginning my new career, if I was starting it now I would hope for more uncomfortable conversations, outside of the course Intellectual Freedom and Social Responsibility. Going forward, these topics will be ones I pursue in my professional development. This program, and graduate research assistant position, has been an introduction to them, but my education doesn't end here.

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Words That Start With E: Why Librarians Should Fight Climate Change and Climate Change Denial

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Abstract

Ecology, economy, equity. Exemplars, educators, enablers. Librarianship centers around the values of community-building, access to information, and advocating for the public good, and so librarians are poised to be leaders when it comes to environmentally friendly and sustainable practices and policies. Our commitment to intellectual freedom demands that we ensure facts about climate change reach the public, while social responsibility asks that we consider the harm that can be done by the spread of disinformation like climate change denial—the kind of harm that has led to the devastating, irreversible circumstances we're in today. To ensure there will continue to be a community for libraries to serve, librarians must allow sustainability to underpin all their choices, especially with regard to educating the public, devaluing disinformation, and advocating for concrete collective action.

Keywords: climate change, disinformation, sustainability, collective action, social responsibility

E cology, economy, equity. Exemplars, educators, enablers. These words are the first step to understanding the role of librarianship in fighting climate change and climate change denial. Librarianship centres around the values of community-building, access to information, and advocating for the public good. Intellectual freedom demands that all perspectives should be free from censorship; indeed, it is censorship that has prevented facts about climate change from reaching the public on numerous occasions. Social responsibility asks us to consider the harm that can be done by the spread of disinformation like climate change denial—the kind of harm that has led to the

irreversible circumstances we find ourselves in regarding climate change today. To ensure there will continue to be a community for libraries to serve, librarians must allow the ideology of sustainability to underpin all their choices, especially with regard to educating the public, devaluing disinformation, and advocating for collective action.

The Reality of Climate Change

Climate change is hardly a new concept, though it is becoming increasingly grim. Data collected since 1957 confirmed in 1979 that humans have altered, and continue to alter, the Earth's atmosphere by emitting greenhouse gases, most predominantly carbon dioxide from burning fossil fuels (Rich, 2018). Despite emission-reduction agreements like the 1997 Kyoto Protocol and the 2016 Paris Agreement, governments have continued to fail to reach an effective consensus on combating climate change (Rich, 2018). Long-term disaster is now the best case scenario, as the Earth warming by two degrees Celsius is almost guaranteed (Rich, 2018). Understanding the science behind climate change, making policies to reduce emissions, and innovating ways to fulfill those policies is not work that can be done by individuals alone. It falls to each of us to use our roles within the system of society to ensure collective action is taken.

Sustainability as an Ideology

Like scientific knowledge of climate change itself, the green library movement and the concepts of environmental and ecological literacy are not new, appearing in research in the early 1990s (Hauke, 2018). However, it is important to acknowledge that "sustainable" does not equate with "green" or "environmentally-friendly". Sustainability refers to an ideology best defined by what it is not: "A practice, relationship, or institution is not sustainable if it undermines the social, economic, or environmental condition of its own viability" (Thiele, 2016, p. 12-3). Sustainability is often thought of in terms of ecology, equity, and economy, as these concepts are so interwoven that fixing issues in one area without considering the others often serves only to cause more problems (Henk, 2014). As such, we cannot expect to see systemic change from piecemeal green choices, especially as they can become unsustainable as technology evolves (Barbakoff, 2012).

Influence of Climate Change on Libraries

In September of 2018, the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) published a document providing examples of how libraries serve as "exemplars, educators, and enablers" of sustainability. Prior to that, the American Library Association (ALA)'s 2015 "Resolution on the Importance of Sustainable Libraries" encouraged its membership to proactively apply sustainable thinking "in the areas of their facilities, operations, policy, technology, programming, partnerships and library school curricula." In January 2017, the ALA adopted the "Resolution on Access to Accurate Information", which affirms their 2005 "Resolution on Disinformation, Media Manipulation & the Destruction of Public Information". In this resolution, ALA provides a lengthy definition of 'disinformation' that includes propaganda, fake news, distortions of truth, and the suppression of scientific studies and data (American Library Association, 2017). The ALA argues that "access to accurate information, not censorship, is the best way to counter disinformation and media manipulation" and supports librarians in their endeavours to teach information literacy. In June 2017, ALA specifically made note of the American presidential administration's removal of data and information files regarding global climate change from government websites and asserted that librarians have a commitment to the preservation and availability of that factual scientific data. These resolutions imply that the role of libraries is not to give a platform to anti-science and disinformation, but they also emphasize that censorship is not the answer. The conflict between these two directives presents librarians with a difficult balance to achieve.

Role of Libraries in Fighting Back

Preventing climate change from becoming worse may seem an impossibly large task—hardly something the average librarian can possibly hope to influence. However, the reality is that our collective actions have resulted in this situation, and it is our collective actions that will have an impact on the future. As a profession steeped in advocacy, librarianship must be vocal. As it is, "the system as it exists shelters us from the true consequences of our collective actions … We live in a blissful ignorance that insulates us from the physical and social reality of our information system" (Henk, 2014). Our role as librarians is to stop living in that ignorance ourselves, do everything

we can to ensure we tear the blinders off as many people as possible, and use our influence to help those people integrate direct action into their everyday lives.

Devaluing Disinformation

In addition to combating climate change itself, librarians are at the forefront of the fight against climate change denial. Disinformation and climate change denial is rampant (Hargar, 2016). These beliefs are intrinsically tied to the economy, especially in industries that rely on fossil fuels. Libraries, especially those funded by public dollars, are hardly free from the demands of capitalism. However, libraries already oppose the neoliberal drive to solely consider the bottom line by providing shared services and materials. As librarians, ensuring access to facts is the least we can do to combat disinformation. Our core value of intellectual freedom is what allows journalists and scholars to publish information that exposes and discredits the actions of those in power, and we must stand in solidarity with them. In addition, we must use our position as advocates to undermine anti-science rhetoric by decentering it and to push back against capitalist structures by focusing on community and collaboration.

Nonviolent Action

Nonviolent action is a proven strategy for social change (Nagler, 2014). Like sustainability, it centers building relationships and undergoing a shared learning process rather than struggling for power (Nagler, 2014). The goal is not to co-opt power from those who currently hold it, but to dismantle the structures that give them that power. Examples include hosting community conversations about the effects of using fossil fuels, boycotting, and demanding policy changes (Hargar, 2016). Librarians must open those conversations to the public and get both traditional advocacy organizations and small activist groups involved (Henk, 2014). They must partner with community organizations and businesses to encourage dialogue and support them in changing their policies in ways that will have a direct impact. This is an example of the kind of collective action that can be undertaken to fight climate change and climate change denial—community partners and individuals may have different ideas of what the end goal of sustainability is, but so long as they are having conversations and working together, change can be steadily worked toward.

Creating a Third Space with Indigenous Knowledges

Indigenous Peoples have been carrying out sustainable practices adapted to their Lands for centuries (Magni, 2017). Indigenous Knowledges have also proven highly valuable in preventing and mitigating the effects of natural disasters, especially with regard to early warning, preparedness, and post-disaster recovery (Rautela & Karki, 2015). The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change identifies Indigenous Knowledges as "major resource[s] for adapting to climate change" (2014, p. 19) and asserts that Indigenous Knowledges should be integrated with existing practices. However, it is not enough to simply state that Indigenous Knowledges are important. Librarians cannot serve as "exemplars, educators, and enablers" of sustainability (IFLA, 2018) if we do not actively seek out Indigenous voices, make the effort to learn for ourselves, and take on the responsibility of educating others.

Glasson, Mhango, Phiri, & Lanier (2010) use Wallace's notion of the third space to discuss how to work against the subjugation of Indigenous Knowledges by Western modern science. In the third space, neither the speaker nor the listener is "correct", but rather the knowledge shared hopes to co-construct new hybrid meanings (Glasson et al., 2010). Scientific knowledge is a product of culture, and it is impossible to return to a precolonial past. Thus, the use of Indigenous Knowledges to create problem-solving strategies will always have to deal with the effects of colonization and economic globalization (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 2008). It is therefore vital to engage in dialogue with Indigenous Elders to learn from them and gain a deeper, hybridized understanding of sustainability science—both to help Indigenous Knowledges survive and to provide crucial political allies for effective climate justice movements.

Conclusion

Libraries serve and support all members of their community, and there is no issue more pressing than the continued ability of those members to live on our planet. Therefore, libraries must envision a sustainable future and take steps to implement it by using their capacity to organize and the tools of power they possess. Furthermore, the profession must acknowledge that because climate change is not a debate and denial of that fact is actively harmful to our society, we should take steps to devalue anti-science rhetoric by decentering it. In order to do so, librarians must ensure access to

scientific facts about climate change, foster the ability to understand what can be done about it, and build relationships between community members to encourage collective action.

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Mobile Libraries & Information Needs in Refugee Camps

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Abstract

In this extended abstract, we use a postcolonial lens with a focus on global citizenship to outline some of the information needs experienced by refugees in refugee camps. A postcolonial approach, as it is defined by Vanessa Iwowo, allows us to challenge the ways in which Western ways of knowing advance a Western hegemonic worldview. We note how mobile libraries are used to address information needs and posit them as a useful tool for future work in this area. We suggest that LIS professionals ought to be actively involved in responding to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by considering and working to improve information access in refugee camps.

Keywords: Information behavior, Information needs, Refugee camps, Mobile libraries

Since the formation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in 1950, international governing bodies have been working to address the issues associated with the global experiences of refugees. According to the UNHCR, refugees are "people fleeing conflict or persecution. They are defined and protected in international law, and must not be expelled or returned to situations where their life and freedom are at risk" (UNHCR, 2020a). Our research focuses on refugees in refugee camps. Refugee camps are defined as "temporary facilities built to provide immediate protection and assistance to people who have been forced to flee due to

conflict, violence or persecution" (UNHCR, 2020b). In examining the role of mobile libraries in addressing information needs in refugee camps, our intention is to advocate for the importance of global citizenship, universal access to information, and the ethical obligation of libraries to consider library service systemically and globally. This abstract is informed by a literature review of information needs in refugee camps, as well as an in-depth search for what programs are currently available to address these information needs. As students pursuing MLIS degrees in the context of an ALA-accredited program, and intent on enacting our global citizenship, we think that it is productive to reflect on international library values, rather than privileging values that seem relevant in our local context.

Postcolonialism & Global Citizenship

We take a critical perspective when considering information needs in refugee camps, and frame our discussion using a postcolonial approach, with a focus on global citizenship. In the context of this presentation, we use Iwowo's definition of postcolonialism:

> Post-colonial theory decries the universalizing tendency of Western knowledge as being the negative enduring legacy of an imperialist colonial empire, one that has continued to silence and marginalize non-Western subjectivities. It stresses that rather than assume a totalitarian and universalist orientation, Western intellectualism should not only recognize the legitimacy of other, non-Western world views but, more important, should be positioned as part and parcel of a plurality of knowledges rather than as mainstream. (Iwowo, 2014, p. 6)

We also note the importance of recognizing inherent power dynamics associated with doing research in a global context, as is highlighted by Hesse-Biber's feminist postcolonial theory (Hesse-Biber, 2012). Within this theoretical context, global citizenship informs our understandings of the role we play as information professionals. To paraphrase Paehlke (2014), global citizenship involves locating, contacting, and communicating with each other globally. While global issues are difficult to address, citizens can act with global issues in mind in a variety of ways, and in their day-to-day activities. To further add to the notion of addressing global needs, Christie's arguments in Sidhu (2017) suggest a method to combat indifference to global suffering through an

ethics of engagement. This ethics comprises a responsibility to think through the social conditions that have produced refugees, a commitment to following practices that allow all people to best live together, and a care for the other that asks for nothing in return. This approach complements international library values. For example, The International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) endorses the values of Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (2019, b). The Article reads as follows: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers" (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, n.d.). The next section of this abstract will focus on one library service that supports these values: mobile libraries.

Information Needs in Refugee Camps

Before considering refugees' information needs, the contexts in which information-seeking takes place ought to be considered. Refugees experience different stages of settlement (Andrade & Doolin, 2019; Lloyd et al., 2013; Martzoukou & Burnett, 2018; Smith, 2008). Lloyd et al. (2013) posit that these are transitioning, settling in, and being settled, while Andrade & Doolin (2019) argue that the stages are comprised of orienting practices, instrumental practices, and expressive practices. Orienting practices involve scanning and monitoring information sources in order to orient to an unfamiliar environment; instrumental practices involve actively seeking and using information to solve a problem, for example seeking employment and local service providers; and expressive practices involve sharing among individuals, groups and networks (Andrade & Doolin, 2019). An understanding of these stages and practices is useful for information professionals who wish to foster connections between refugees and the information they require.

Some of the information needs that we identified include: information regarding daily tasks, security, shelter, health information, information on relocating their families, and information about their country of origin (Mansour, 2018; Martzoukou & Burnett, 2018; Obodoruku, 2014; Redmond & Associates, 2004; Sambo, 2017; Smith, 2008). Access to Information Communication Technology (ICT) is particularly important for refugees seeking information. ICT is "A rapidly growing area that includes

communication devices, applications, and services. Examples range from satellite sensing and communication systems, to network hardware and software, to devices such as radios, televisions, phones, and computers" (Schramm, 2017, p. 87). ICT allows refugees to access information about their home countries, maintain transnational ties to their family and friends in their country of origin (Andrade & Doolin, 2019; Benitez, 2012), and communicate with broader social networks (Lloyd & Wilkinson, 2019; Mansour, 2018).

Mobile Libraries and Refugee Camps

Mobile libraries address information needs on an international scale through the following roles and services: ICTs, childhood literacy, employment help, higher level education, health information, security information, and community-building (Asselin, & Doiron, 2016; Bausells, 2015; Knight, 2009; Lynch, 2017; Virgilio, 2003). We identified a number of examples regarding mobile libraries' operations in refugee camps (Asselin & Doiron, 2013; Bausells, 2015; Knight, 2009; Lynch, 2017); for example, Relief International focuses on promoting childhood literacy with a Library-in-a-Truck in the Kelenterli refugee settlement (Asselin & Doiron, 2013). We also found an example of a nurse who established mobile libraries in Tanzania to help health workers in refugee camps update their medical training; this program was in partnership with UNHCR (Knight, 2009). Engaging with the communities themselves to see the best, if any, role for the libraries is paramount. One resource worthy of highlighting is Libraries Without Borders' Ideas Box, considered to be a mobile library in the context of this research. The box provides satellite internet connection, a digital server, ICT (such as laptops), books, and more (Libraries Without Borders, Ideas Box). Importantly, these boxes are customized through collaboration with the community in order to ensure that the community's needs are being met (Libraries Without Borders, Ideas Box). If we consider Ideas Boxes through the lens of postcolonial feminist theory, we believe that community collaboration is important, but also that anyone doing this work needs to, as Hesse-Biber would suggest, be aware of power dynamics and willing to shift their approaches based on the needs and wants of the community.

Conclusion

To view libraries through a postcolonial lens and to practice our global citizenship, we found that library service to refugees in refugee camps is an important topic to discuss. We see the use of mobile libraries as a meaningful and flexible intervention in addressing the variety of information needs that refugees may have while in refugee camps. The incorporation of ICTs into mobile library service is particularly important for connecting individuals to the information they need. Libraries Without Borders' Ideas Box acts as an example of a creative service that other mobile libraries could model. Questions arise involving the role of libraries in addressing international information needs, what approaches libraries ought to take in addressing information needs, and how power dynamics and Western norms shape current approaches.

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Disrupting Literature: Facilitating Indigenous Book Clubs

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Abstract

Book clubs are typically spaces in which individuals can discuss their favourite young adult novel or interrogate controversial topics from best-selling non-fiction. At the same time, book clubs, and the literature read within, can also be used as tools of assimilation used to push political and social agendas. But what if the same book clubs that promote assimilation and conformity, privileging some literatures and forms above others, could be used as spaces to create new communities that celebrate other literatures? Book clubs can be a potential space for the discussion of lesser-known and suppressed Indigenous literatures while creating communities. However, facilitating Indigenous book clubs requires conscious planning and preparation to ensure that the book clubs engage with Indigenous literatures in an appropriate way. Additionally, facilitators, depending on the mandate, need to be in partnership with Indigenous communities to ensure that book clubs are the right program to incorporate. As such, this presentation will provide best practices for facilitating Indigenous book clubs, including topics such as determining book club mandates, selecting literatures, interpreting Indigenous texts, and creating respectful environments.

Keywords: book clubs, Indigenous literatures, Indigenous programming, relationality, community engagement

B ook clubs are typically spaces in which individuals can discuss their favourite young adult novel or interrogate controversial topics from best-selling non-fiction. At the same time, book clubs, and the literature read within, can also be used as tools of assimilation used to push political and social agendas. In many ways, literary traditions

are colonial products that serve to govern what is or is not literature, and, by doing so, privilege some voices while silencing others (Heath Justice, 2018). The same is often true of book clubs, in which the voices of marginalized communities are discounted as having little or no literary worth. Devin-Glass (2001) whose research looks at literary authority in women's book discussion groups, claims that book clubs tend to be spheres of discussion for white, middle-class females who use book clubs to "maintain their currency as literate citizens through group discussion" (p. 583). Within Indigenous communities, storytelling is vital means of remembering and preserving their identities, traditions, languages, and cultures. However, the exclusion of Indigenous literatures is a deliberate and political act, one which further legitimizes what has been referred to by others as a sort of "willful amnesia" in relation to past and ongoing colonial transgressions against Indigenous Peoples (Atkinson, 2017). It is within this social and political framework, that traditional book clubs become sites of epistemological struggle. But what if the same book clubs that promote assimilation and conformity, could be used as spaces to create new communities that celebrate other literatures? Within this framework, book clubs can provide spaces for broader community discussions while legitimizing Indigenous literatures as having literary worth.

Establishing Mandate

The facilitation of book clubs with a clear focus on Indigenous literatures, provides avenues for Indigenous cultures and knowledges to be respectfully discussed and celebrated. More importantly, Indigenous literatures allow Indigenous individuals to see themselves in the works they read. When facilitating and planning Indigenous book clubs, facilitators need to consider the mandate of their book club program, as it will determine the tone of the book club and influence book selection. When considering your mandate, consider some of the following questions: Is the book club going to be aimed at Indigenous readership, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous readers, or will you specify at all? What is the proposed age of the group? What is the purpose of your book club? Are you seeking to emphasize and highlight Indigenous Literatures? Are you just looking to add a couple of Indigenous texts to an existing book club? Or, are you looking to continue to educate and inform individuals on topics such as Reconciliation or Indigenous Cultures?

Selecting and Interpreting Texts

Facilitators must be careful and understand that Indigenous literatures are diverse literary forms and are therefore not limited to text. An Indigenous book club could provide the opportunity for storytelling outside of textual restraints. The book club could incorporate podcasts and invite Indigenous storytellers, for example. However, for the purposes of our research, we have limited our scope to Indigenous texts, but we hope in the future to expand our research to include oral and pictorial representations of Indigenous literatures in the facilitation of Indigenous book clubs. That being said, how does one go about selecting appropriate texts for their book club? We have identified three areas to consider when selecting texts in the facilitation of Indigenous book clubs.

Ethical Considerations

Take into consideration the ethical implications when selecting texts. This requires more work on the part of the facilitator, as they are responsible for ensuring that research (i.e. works of nonfiction) has been conducted ethically and that the resulting literature is both reliable and verified by the communities in question. As part of the ongoing discussion around the wide range of Indigenous identity positions it is important to be representative of diverse identities and perspectives and to move away from Pan-Indigenous perspective. Thus, facilitators ought to avoid claims of universal values shared between Indigenous peoples around the world. In addition, facilitators should be aware of problematic identity claims and controversies surrounding the works of particular authors. There are many Indigenous book lists that can be consulted for ideas when selecting a title for your book club. However, it is still important to thoroughly research authors and titles.

Local and Diverse Voices

Selecting authors from local communities provides an opportunity for facilitators to build relationships with Indigenous authors and draw attention to diverse works. Some book clubs have taken the opportunity to extend invitations to authors to join their sessions in order to celebrate the author and engage in meaningful discussions. However, be sure to include an honorarium for the author to thank them for their time

and help work toward relationality that is not exploitive. (Fraser, 2020). Furthermore, given the disproportionate attention given to certain Indigenous voices (i.e. straight male), facilitators may choose to prioritize works of Indigenous women and queer/two-spirit authors. If engaging with well-known authors, it is a good practice to select their more obscure or underappreciated works. (Heath-Justice, 2018).

Format and Accessibility

Books should be made available (and thereby accessible) to members in both ebook and print form— ideally from a local book vendor or the library. Once an author has been selected facilitators can reach out to publishers who may be willing to provide free copies of a book or engage with their local library community in order to purchase copies on their behalf. It is also a good idea to establish a relationship with a local book vendor to ensure that titles are in stock if a member chooses to purchase the book rather than borrow it (Fraser, 2020).

Creating Respectful Environments

In the words of Gwichyà Gwich'in historian and RISE's former Lead Book Club Coordinator, Crystal Gail Fraser, "relationality is key" (Fraser, 2020). Arguably, book clubs could be used as a furthering of relationality as communities meet to discuss the themes, representations, and concepts present in Indigenous literatures (Health Justice, 2018). It is important to emphasize a mentality of relationality among book club members which will influence the mindset of participants and help to ensure respectful communication is maintained. Facilitators should also be mindful of what D'Angelo (2011) refers to as "white fragility" in which individuals with "white" perspectives shape and manage situations to avoid challenges to white hierarchies. As facilitators, it will be important to be aware of these pressures and take necessary action in order to mediate the situation and be an effective ally.

Emotional Labour

Furthermore, recognize the potential for added emotional labour on behalf of Indigenous volunteers and book club participants. Do your research beforehand and be prepared to step in to help ease the emotional labour. As well, there needs to be a privileging of Indigenous cultures, perspectives, and knowledges. It is not the responsibility of the Indigenous members to "educate" the non-Indigenous. Moreover,

the inclusion of non-Indigenous individuals may add to the pressure for Indigenous members to "conform to or manage white expectations and assumptions of Aboriginal life and culture" (Nolan & Henaway, 2017, p. 798). Non-Indigenous LIS workers who might be helping to facilitate the book club should keep this in mind and reflect on their position within the group, potentially giving the role to someone else if they feel as though their involvement will jeopardize the mandate of the book club

Cultural Protocols

Be considerate of Cultural Protocols as appropriate. Cultural Protocols will vary based on the community in which the book club functions. For Nolan and Henaway (2017), creating culturally appropriate settings means incorporating introduction protocols that provide information about the individual's "cultural and geographical location, personal history, context and relationships" (p. 792). As well, when facilitating the book clubs, LIS workers, following the lead of Heath Justice (2018) and others, should refer "to the specific name by which communities and writers most frequently identify themselves" (p. 8). Even advertising for the event should reflect respectful engagement with Indigenous perspectives. For example, capitalize Indigenous and refer to Indigenous Literatures as plural to avoid pan-Indigeneity. A great resource is Gregory Younging (2018)'s Elements of Indigenous Style: A Guide for Writing by and about Indigenous Peoples which provides a guide for appropriate terminology, specific to Canadian contexts.

Community Engagement

Community engagement is a critical component in establishing successful book clubs. Facilitators should begin by consulting and collaborating with Indigenous community members so as to ensure that in devising their mandate, the book club also meets the needs of the community and adheres to the cultural expectations and protocols that fit within the context of the book club. It's also important to engage in relationship building. Work in collaboration with Indigenous community members to help facilitate the book clubs and select books. Also, be prepared for and receptive to feedback from Indigenous community members.

Finally, facilitators should consider engaging with local sponsors who may be willing to donate their space to host meetings or to even fund events (such as Q and A events with authors.) Applying this to a local context, Edmonton book clubs may choose to seek out partnerships with The Edmonton Public Library, the University of Alberta, or other organizations willing to donate their space and time.

Concluding Remarks

Ultimately, although historically used as means of political and social control, book clubs can have the potential to serve as viable Indigenous programming when planned with Indigenous communities, to create respectful spaces for discussion and reflection. By attempting to create culturally appropriate and respectful settings, LIS workers can hopefully build spaces for open dialogue about the works while also helping to foster a sense of community. In doing so, book clubs can challenge preconceived notions of Indigenous literatures while creating safe spaces to explore themes and create relationships. Our research will have hopefully provided some best practices and areas for consideration when planning and engaging in Indigenous book clubs.

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Decolonizing Description: First Steps to Cataloguing with Indigenous Syllabics

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Abstract

In light of the TRC Calls to Action from 2015 and the CFLA's Truth & Reconciliation Report and Recommendations from 2017, many libraries in what is known as Canada have begun to take steps towards decolonization. Decolonizing bibliographic descriptions in library catalogues is an important part of this process, as this can impact both the ability to access Indigenous materials and the representation of Indigenous Peoples and Knowledges in the library.

While various efforts to work towards accurately and respectfully representing Indigenous Peoples and Knowledges in library catalogues are ongoing, the inclusion of Indigenous Syllabics in bibliographic records is one way in which cataloguers can begin to put these efforts into action. In addition to collaborating with Indigenous community members and Indigenous librarians on this work, there are a variety of resources and tools available online that can aid cataloguers in creating accurate and culturally appropriate descriptions of Indigenous materials. This extended abstract provides context and information that is central to this work, and gives a cursory overview of how one might insert Indigenous Syllabics into bibliographic records.

Keywords: Syllabics, Decolonization, Indigenous Syllabics, Cataloguing, Cree, Inuktitut

In recent years, efforts to revitalize and bring awareness to Indigenous languages have continued to grow. Particularly in what is known as Canada, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) Calls to Action and the ensuing Canadian Federation of Library Association's (CFLA) Report and Recommendations have encouraged libraries to adopt more respectful practices regarding Indigenous Knowledges, languages, and cultures (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2015;

Canadian Federation of Library Associations, 2017). For settler librarians, this emphasis on Indigenous representation in libraries highlights the demands for decolonizing their work and brings opportunities to decolonize the very institutions at which they are employed.

As a settler of European descent, the author of this paper respectfully acknowledges that his work on this topic is taking place on Treaty 6 Land and in Métis Region 4, and he recognizes that he still has much to learn about Indigenous Ways of Knowing. As a student employee at the University of Alberta Library, the author has taken on this work in an effort to ensure that it is transformative rather than performative, to learn from any mistakes made along the way, and to challenge assumptions that are often made in cataloguing processes.

Many libraries have responded to the TRC's Calls to Action and the CFLA's recommendations by decolonizing spaces, collections, or services (Robinson, 2019), yet there is much work that remains to be done to decolonize descriptions in bibliographic records created for Indigenous materials. Working towards reconciliation in libraries, preserving the connection between Indigenous languages and cultures, and accurately representing Indigenous Knowledges in a culturally appropriate manner are all crucial factors in this process.

Reconciliation In Libraries

To better understand why this work is important and how it can be beneficial to Indigenous Peoples, we must consider how it contributes to reconciliatory efforts in libraries. As Desmond Wong states about decolonizing public libraries, many librarians want to contribute to these efforts but often feel paralyzed or overwhelmed by the work involved (Robinson, 2019). However, Wong affirms that this non-action is damaging because it perpetuates harm to Indigenous library users and continues to maintain the settler-colonial oppression of Indigenous Peoples (Robinson, 2019; Blair & Wong, 2018).

In response to the TRC's Calls to Action and the CFLA's ensuing Report and Recommendations, the University of Alberta Library created a Decolonizing Description Working Group. The purpose of the group was to create a "[...] plan of action for how descriptive metadata practices could more accurately, appropriately, and respectfully

represent Indigenous [P]eoples and contexts" (Farnel et al., 2018, p. 12). While the current status of this plan is not known, this kind of work will require a long period of time to properly put into action (Farnel et al., 2018, p. 21).

However, there is at least one way in which bibliographic records can be decolonized relatively quickly and it does not require the authorization of governing bodies or major systemic changes in the cataloguing world. By inserting Indigenous Syllabics into records, cataloguers can create a more accurate representation of Indigenous Knowledges and their associated contributors in library catalogues.

Language & Culture

In preparing to catalogue with Indigenous Syllabics, the author of this paper set out to challenge the assumption that Indigenous Peoples want to have their languages represented in bibliographic records and library catalogues. Making assumptions about what is beneficial to Indigenous Peoples may lead to culturally inappropriate representations and can continue to perpetuate colonial harms. Whenever possible, creating opportunities for collaboration with Indigenous community members can ensure that decolonization work is meaningful and beneficial. With the intent to represent Indigenous languages more accurately in the University of Alberta Library's catalogue, it was important to consider whether this work would be beneficial to Indigenous Peoples.

Métis writer and educator Chelsea Vowel, also known as âpihtawikosisân, states in a blog post that "language cannot be taught in a vacuum" (Vowel, 2011, para. 15) and expresses that it is incredibly empowering to see Indigenous languages being taken seriously. Teneya Gwin, a Cree Métis woman working as the Indigenous service design lead for the Calgary Public Library, learned from Elders in communities on Treaty 7 Land that language was the number one thing that would make libraries more welcoming to them. On this, she says "[t]o revitalize a culture you need that connection to language" (Robinson, 2019, para. 25). This perspective implies that the representation of Indigenous languages in libraries can contribute to the preservation and revitalisation of Indigenous cultures. Additionally, Vowel (2011) believes both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students lack information about Indigenous history and culture and argues that one cannot "effectively engage in this kind of historical and

cultural learning without at least some language learning" (para. 17). Representing Indigenous languages in library catalogues is therefore a crucial step towards creating opportunities for all to learn about Indigenous cultures, which may have historically been inaccessible.

With this notion in mind, how can non-Indigenous academics and librarians contribute to this work? In speaking with Métis colleagues and continuing to research these topics, the author has come to believe that librarians can do their part by building capacity for such work to continue. By taking down restrictions and barriers, by building bridges but not forcing people to cross them or taking credit for it, and by being an ally while respecting boundaries, decolonization can create opportunities for work like language revitalization, which lies in the realm of Indigenization and Indigenous Resurgence (Betasamosake Simpson, 2016).

Origins of Indigenous Syllabics

We must also try to understand where Indigenous Syllabics come from in order to carry out this work respectfully and culturally appropriately. According to the Lexico online dictionary powered by Oxford, a syllabic can be defined as a written character that represents a syllable (Lexico, n.d.). A concept equally integral to this work is transliteration, which refers to the method of mapping from one system of writing to another based on phonetic similarity (Google, n.d.). It is worth noting that a "transliteration" is different from a "translation", as the conversion is based on the pronunciation rather than the meaning.

It is equally important to know that some Indigenous Peoples believe Syllabics are a colonizer invention, while others believe they were a gift from the Creator unrelated to the arrival of settlers (Rigby, 2015; Cree Literacy Network, n.d.; Stevenson, 1999). The name often associated with origin stories of Cree Syllabics is James Evans, a Methodist missionary (Stevenson, 1999). Some claim he invented Syllabics, while others claim that he simply popularized them (Cree Literacy Network, n.d.). However, the belief that Inuktitut Syllabics were later adapted from Cree Syllabics is a belief that appears to be widely shared and accepted (Rigby, 2015). Regardless, we must ensure that Indigenous languages are treated as their own distinct languages with their own distinct dialects and histories, and thus avoid employing pan-Indigenous perspectives

whenever possible. Using pan-Indigenous terms when referring to particular communities can promote the misconception that all Indigenous Peoples have one shared identity and culture, thereby promoting the erasure of their distinct cultures and histories. In any case, the multitude of different perspectives at play demonstrates that many voices are present in this conversation and they must be included and welcomed in the process of this work.

Cataloguing with Indigenous Syllabics

Keeping in mind the connection between Indigenous languages and cultures, we must also have knowledge of cataloguing standards to consider when cataloguing with Indigenous Syllabics. For example, the Library of Congress Program for Cooperative Cataloging (PCC) has guidelines for creating records in multiple characters sets, and Resource Description and Access (RDA) stipulates that information should be recorded as it appears on the resource (Library of Congress, 2017; RDA Toolkit, n.d.). While many vendors will provide ready-made bibliographic records in dozens of languages in order to adhere to these standards, there do not appear to be any companies that provide records containing any Indigenous Syllabics. For this reason, cataloguers must be prepared to respectfully and accurately represent the Indigenous languages spoken on the Land where they work and beyond.

To be able to catalogue with Indigenous Syllabics, one must ensure they have the appropriate fonts and keyboards installed. The font Aboriginal Sans Serif and the Cree keyboard layout available from LanguageGeek are both commonly cited and recommended in online blogs (Ogg, 2017; LanguageGeek, n.d.). Inuktitut keyboard layouts are currently available in both Microsoft Windows and Mac OS language settings. Keyboard maps can be found linked from their respective LanguageGeek webpages and an Inuktitut keyboard map can be found on the Government of Nunavut's website (Government of Nunavut, n.d.). Once cataloguers have installed the appropriate fonts and keyboard layouts of the Indigenous languages they wish to catalogue with and have familiarized themselves with the process of typing, they can begin inserting Indigenous Syllabics into bibliographic records. The ability to create parallel MARC fields in records on platforms such as OCLC's Record Manager is quite

convenient in this work. Without this ability, a separate 880 MARC field would have to be created for each field in which Syllabics are to be inserted. This results in several 880 MARC fields present in the record to represent common MARC fields such as the 100, 245, 264, or 700 fields, acting as surrogates of each respective field. These 800 MARC fields are the fields in which Syllabics can be inserted. The author encourages cataloguers to consider inserting Indigenous Syllabics into Master Records on shared platforms such as OCLC's WorldCat, as the records can then be copy-catalogued by other institutions and would increase the representation of Indigenous languages beyond a single library's catalogue.

Future Steps

In conclusion, there is much work left to be done to ensure that Indigenous Peoples and Knowledges are appropriately represented in library catalogues. A key component of this process that cannot be overlooked is relationship building and community collaboration with Indigenous Peoples. Long term or permanent librarian roles should be created to ensure the longevity of this work in libraries and beyond, and Indigenous librarians should be given priority when seeking candidates to catalogue in Indigenous languages. These efforts should be ongoing throughout every stage of implementation for cataloguing with Indigenous Syllabics. Non-Indigenous librarians cannot continue to make assumptions about the ways in which Indigenous Peoples are represented in library catalogues, and they must be prepared to engage in culturally appropriate cataloguing.

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