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# Pathfinder

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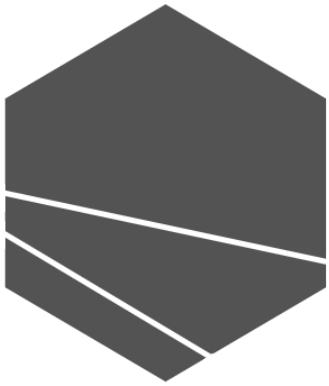



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# Welcome to Pathfinder

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## Abstract

Some opening remarks on the publication of our first regular issue including brief explanation of our name and founding principles and listing of persons to whom thanks are most certainly due.

*Keywords*: editorial

On behalf of the editorial team and myself, I am delighted to announce the publication of the inaugural issue of *Pathfinder: A Canadian Journal for Information Science Students and Early Career Professionals.*

Pathfinder was founded in 2018 to fulfill a vision of a scholarly venture in which all library and information studies students, both on-campus and online, at the University of Alberta's School of Library and Information Studies could all participate equally. However, as our founding team explored the publishing landscape, we noted where gaps existed and our scope quickly widened not only to a national scale but also to the many professional foci that LIS education encompasses including, but not limited to, archival studies and technician programs. Our core drive is to connect emerging information professionals through interdisciplinary conversations.

We chose Pathfinder as a name for the journal because of its association as a synonym to research guides, study guides, subject guides, and the like. These collections of resources are starting points for intellectual or pedagogical journeys and, importantly, they are not tied to any one discipline in libraries and information studies. Rather, they are created, maintained, accessed, and disseminated by many in our community to highlight critical, accurate, and trustworthy information. Something that, I am sure we would all agree, is sorely needed in these times. As such and simply put, we hope that this journal acts as a pathfinder, as a curated tool, leading users towards discovery by making use of the best resources on offer.

And I do truly believe that the articles in this issue are an excellent representation of the diversity of areas of research and interest in our community. In these manuscripts, authors

grapple with the continuing oppression of Indigienous and LGBTQIA2S+ communities, with our fundamental rights to accessing information, with exploring real world applications for scholarly research, and understanding the complexities of terminology in interdisciplinary study. All timely, all important.

On the occasion of our first issue, the journal would like to acknowledge the contributions of founding editor Caitlin MacRae and the work of the journal creation team including Aggie Sliwka, Alexis Poeschek, Amanda Lepage, Christopher Flint, Denise Rechlo, Graeme Tennant, Jennifer Coupe, Jessica Frechette, Kaitlyn Grant, Karina Dunna, Kathleen Oliver, Kathy Wise, Ren Milmine, Sanja Gidakovic, and Ashley Edwards who were all instrumental in determining the scope and editorial policies of the journal. We would also like to thank all of the authors who took the time to submit articles to *Pathfinder* with the faith that the journal would grow around them. I hope that your experience with the peer-review process was a beneficial one. Finally, thanks are due to Pathfinder's editorial team and peer review teams and the University of Alberta Library Publishing and Digitization Team who have generously donated their time to see this project to success. I appreciate their professionalism through the growing pains of a journal's first issue.

With recent events, I know that it was no coincidence that our first special issue in collaboration with the Forum For Information Professionals was on the topic of resilience; everyone involved in our journey has not only accepted the uncertainty of change but put up with the chaos of life admirably. It is my dearest hope that the continued publication of Pathfinder will remain as flexible and open to growth in years to come to best support the academic pursuits of students and early professionals across Canada.

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# Stories Re-Told: Synthesizing the Vocabulary of Adaptation

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## Abstract

This paper introduces three umbrella terms (Literal Adaptation, Spirit Adaptation, and Creative Adaptation) that define the broad approaches to creating an adaptation through a consideration of the literature of six different fields and their approaches to the study of adaptation: the study of Classical Mythology (a sub-set of Classics), Cultural Studies, Adaptation Theory (from Film Studies), Fan Fiction Studies (from Fan Studies), Folklore Studies, and Translation Studies. Although Library and Information Studies (LIS) does occasionally deal with adaptation, often in the form of Children's Literature and/or Fairy Tales, there is no widely-accepted theory or method for doing so. It is therefore absent from the six disciplines reviewed, despite having substantial cross-over with each. As scholarship becomes more interdisciplinary, juggling the terms of a variety of fields becomes more important and more challenging. This paper aims to provide three accessible terms for those interested in studying adaptions from a broad or cross-disciplinary perspective that can substitute for the lengthy and specialized vocabulary of each individual discipline. It may also provide an example for others looking to similarly synthesize a set of basic cross-disciplinary vocabularies.

*Keywords*: Adaptation, Storytelling, Interdisciplinary Studies, Translation

Studying the information that exists and evolves in individual stories that are told over and over can show us which pieces of information were prized across cultures, or through time. Studying adaptations can illuminate the pieces of a story that are present, forgotten, or changed between versions. These changes reflect the attitudes, values, and priorities of the people and culture that are choosing to re-tell them. Many disciplines in the humanities tackle the evolution of stories, yet they rarely agree on a common vocabulary.

In this paper, I will consider the approaches of six different fields with regards to the study of adaptation. They are as follows: the study of Classical Mythology (a sub-set of Classics), Cultural Studies, Adaptation Theory (from Film Studies), Fan Fiction Studies (from Fan Studies), Folklore Studies, and Translation Studies. They are all interdisciplinary fields which borrow heavily from each other and disciplines beyond, and all reflect similar, yet nuanced approaches to studying a story that is told in multiple instances, undergoing changes over multiple axes (such as time, medium, authors, etc.), i.e. adaptation. A deeper discussion of these disciplines' approaches to adaption can be found in Chapter 3 of "Exploring the Digital Medusa: Ssnakes, Sstorytelling, and Sserious Leisure" (Borynec, 2019). A visual summary of the majority of this discussion has been made available as an appendix, which provides context for this paper's goal: to provide three accessible terms for those interested in studying adaptions from a broad, or cross-disciplinary perspective that can substitute for the lengthy and specialized vocabulary of each discipline. This paper may also provide an example for others looking to similarly synthesize a set of basic cross-disciplinary vocabularies.

While Library and Information Studies (LIS) does occasionally deal with adaptation, often in the form of Children's Literature and/or Fairy Tales, my research determined that there is no set theory or method for doing so; it is therefore absent from the six disciplines that were reviewed. However, this paper can serve LIS researchers in several ways. First, as mentioned, information professionals study stories, especially when they are working in library contexts. Being able to broadly understand adaptation vocabularies will help LIS professionals evaluate, use, and recommend sources. Although adaptations do not always need to be treated differently from their originals, being armed with the knowledge of the method and reason behind an adaptation can help LIS researchers determine how to handle it in concert with (or apart from) the original story. Secondly, "Interdisciplinarians face much greater difficulties searching the literature than disciplinarians" (Szostak, 2013, p. 52). These difficulties include a larger scope, and the tendency for library catalogs to be organized around disciplines (using a separate terminology for each field, even though the concepts discussed might be exceedingly similar). Being aware of these challenges, regardless of the topic(s) being

studied, can help Academic Librarians provide high-quality support to interdisciplinary researchers.[1]

New definitions, rather than an introduction to existing terms, are necessary for interdisciplinary researchers. A glossary of terms for each discipline that studies a topic might prove prohibitively long, as well as unintentionally opaque for a researcher without a background in the field from which that particular definition comes. Furthermore, if such a glossary does not exist (and they rarely do), it is unlikely a researcher will have time to do a thorough literature review of each possibly relevant discipline. Moreover, finding relevant papers can be tricky when one is not already familiar with the language they use (Szostak, 2013, p. 52-53). Collaborative research teams from interdisciplinary backgrounds often develop a “pidgin” vocabulary can facilitate team communication and understanding regarding terms and definitions, because existing vocabularies can be contentious, insufficient, or irrelevant (Szostak, 2013, p. 50). This works for individual teams, but the pidgin vocabulary must be reinvented or re-taught for each new group of researchers, and it will not easily translate outside of the research group to non-affiliates. If interdisciplinary researchers intend to communicate outside their research group, whether through conversation or publications, it is often best to break complex concepts into more basic ones that will most readily contribute to shared understanding (Szostak, 2011). As prohibitive as researching endless definitions from endless disciplines can be for an interdisciplinary researcher, it is even more prohibitive to require the same amount of research from prospective readers of disseminated research. Including a list of terms and definitions in a paper is helpful, but only as long as those definitions are approachable and do not overtake the point the paper is trying to make. That is why this paper focuses solely on creating a small collection of basic concepts/definitions for use by interdisciplinary researchers (or readers) studying adaptation. Each definition is named intuitively and is designed to be easy to understand, whether or not one has a background in adaptation or any discipline mentioned by this paper.

1 For a set of suggestions for interdisciplinary research strategies, see Szostak (2013) pp. 52-53. Szostak has also written on possible ways to re-organize systems of document classification to be friendlier to interdisciplinarians and interdisciplinary research (Szostak, 2011).

When reading about the approaches to the study of adaptation used by the six fields dealt with in this paper, three overarching methods of adaptation creation consistently recurred. After comparing the adaptive methods and vocabulary used by each of the fields more intentionally, it became clear that each field tended to break down their understanding of adaptations along similar lines, mostly concerning how close the adaptations were to the original text, either in language or in meaning. I identified these approaches through the traditional humanities research method: I read a wide variety of scholarly material, entered into a dialogue (both written and verbal) with other scholars to test my results, and finally put forward my ideas more formally through conference presentations and publications ("How is humanities research conducted?", n. d.).

After identifying these three overarching trends demonstrated by the six disciplines when defining approaches to adaptation, it became important to give them simple and intuitive names. This is the purpose of this paper: to name each approach and give them simple definitions that scholars from any discipline can confidently apply to their research. It should be noted that not every one of these six disciplines used or studied all three of the approaches defined by this paper. Those that did and did not are outlined in the appendix. This paper chose to outline all three umbrella terms regardless of whether they appeared individually in each discipline because this triumvirate covers all of the approaches to adaptation that were identified in the literature review. Defining all three as a complete set remains the most productive way to provide an accessible vocabulary to interdisciplinary scholars.

The three definitions are designed to be straightforward and easily applied; however, as with any definition, there are edge cases that push against these intentionally simplistic definitions. This paper will first define the three methods of adaptation common to the six disciplines, and then illuminate some of the complications that arise when trying to apply the definitions to those edge cases, as the distinction between each method is not always clear-cut.

Much of the language used in this paper is borrowed from Translation Studies, as most people will have at least a passing familiarity with the general act and need for translating texts. Therefore, while the words "translation" (i.e. transferring the story from

one language to another) and “adaptation” (i.e. re-telling a story) may both appear in direct quotations used by this paper, they should be considered more or less interchangeable. After all, translating a story from one language to another necessitates its re-telling. This comparison likewise allows for the interchangeable use of the term “adaptor” and “translator.” Both terms will be used to denote a person re-creating a story that was created by someone else. “Author” will be primarily used to denote the creator of an original text.[2] “Text” is used in its broadest definition: the object of study, regardless of whether it is written, sculpted, filmed, painted, etc.

## Methods of Adaptation

Each of the six disciplines mentioned in this paper has its own robust collection of words that denote the different methods or processes of adaptation most relevant to their field. Translation Studies has words like “*intra*lingual translation” (rewording in the same language), “*inter*lingual translation” (translating between languages), and “intersemiotic translation” (translating between verbal and non-verbal languages) (Bassnett, 2002, p. 23). Film Studies uses words like “faithfulness/fidelity” (i.e. as close to the original as possible), “supplementation and surplus” (i.e. adding value by bringing fresh insights to an interpretation of the original), and “freeplay” (taking unspecified liberties to create interest and alter meaning) to describe different approaches to adaptation (Slethaug, 2014, p. 7). Fan Studies has an endless amount of words that denote the very specific way a text was modified by a fan author, such as “racebending” (changing the race of existing characters), or “alternate universe” (transplanting the whole story to some world) (Barner, 2017, pp. 90-91). There is a multitude of possibly relevant words for interdisciplinary researchers to familiarize themselves with. I only provided a couple of words from three of the six disciplines discussed in this paper to demonstrate the true breadth of definitions that might apply to an interdisciplinary study of adaptation. Be assured that there are plenty more terms available for consideration both in and beyond those six disciplines, many of which demand a certain level of familiarity with the discipline to be understood. That is why a glossary of terms is much

2 No text is truly “original” as every work is inter-textual, even if only within its creator’s subconscious, but “original text” is used in this paper to mean a select text that was used as the basis for an adaption or a translation at least once.

less feasible than is simplifying the concepts and synthesizing the terms provided by this paper.

Each of the words provided in the previous paragraph (as well as all of the further terms that were not mentioned) mean slightly different things. Each discipline must point to facets of adaptation that are most relevant to their field. It makes sense that Translation Studies will be preoccupied with language, while Film Studies is more concerned with the transition from book to film, and Fan Studies is interested in indicating the exact relationship the adaptation has to the original (i.e. what changes were made to the "canon"),[3] and so on. Each of these terms is useful to and valued by its discipline; however, when studying adaptations more broadly (or across many disciplines), it can be difficult to juggle all of these very specialized vocabularies. Therefore, I would like to introduce three terms that denote the three main approaches to the adaptation of a story: the "Literal Adaptation," the "Spirit Adaptation," and the "Creative Adaptation." Each of the six reviewed disciplines refers to at least one of these three umbrella approaches in their literature, and most of their specialized vocabulary (like the terms noted above) can be understood as a sub-type of these three methods of adaptation.

It should be noted that, while I describe them as "broad" or "umbrella" terms, these three definitions actually fall along a spectrum with Literal Adaptation at one end, Spirit Adaptation somewhere in the middle, and Creative Adaptation on the far opposite end. The boundaries between them are fuzzy, and often debatable. Creative Adaptations and Spirit Adaptations are particularly intertwined, and their relationship will be complicated in a later section of this paper.

The following section of this paper will be dedicated to defining and interpreting the terms that I have coined so that they may be used in interdisciplinary research into adaptation. This is a useful endeavor because interdisciplinary research often forces scholars to prioritize the language of one discipline over the other or redefine the terms

3 "Canon" can mean two very different things. In the traditional sense, canon is a term used for works of fiction and/or literature that are considered part of a representative collection of a period or genre of writing (Lombardi, 2019). The more contemporary definition, which is often used by fans of various media and/or by scholars studying those media, defines canon as the source(s) considered authoritative by the fan community ("Canon," n. d.). What is "canon" is often under debate, no matter which definition is being referenced, or which community is using it.

altogether before they can begin to speak about their research (Szostak, 2013, p. 50). Hopefully, this paper can spare them that work, at least when it comes to adapting stories.

## Literal Adaptation

Literal Adaptation describes when the new text seeks to reproduce the original word-for-word, or scene-by-scene, and ultimately mirror the story exactly. This was once a popular style in Translation Studies before the discipline internalized the idea that each language has different affordances in meaning and that no 'true' equivalence can ever be found (Bassnett, 2002, p. 33). Film Studies, and Adaptation Theory in particular, was also once devoted to “faithfulness” as a measure of what made a film adaptation good: “the literal-minded transcription of the novel in film” (Slethaug, 2014, p. 2). Translation Studies and Adaptation Theory have since pushed beyond this style, recognizing its fallacious assumption that meaning can be exactly replicated when adapting a text. Literal Adaptation is still sometimes used as an interim text during the process of translating a text from language to language and may show up in the adaptor's notes as a way to add meaning and explain the adaptor's choices (Bassnett, 2002, p. 57). Literal Adaptation is evident in the process of adaptation in Classics, most notably when translating poetry, as the adaptor struggles with reproducing the words, the metre, and the rhyming scheme of the original text all at once (Bassnett, 2002, p. 87). The adaptor may use footnotes (or endnotes) to give the text in the original language and the word-by-word literal translation side by side so that the reader can gain a fuller understanding of the original. This comparison is often accompanied by the translator’s explanation of the choices they made in the final adaptation and how they interpreted the original (Morford et al., 2011, p. xvi). These are useful techniques, not only for understanding the text being read but also to make explicit the translator’s methodology and possible biases.

## Spirit Adaptation

Most of the disciplines I examined tend towards the second approach: The Spirit Adaptation. I named it this because it is dedicated to emulating the “spirit” of the original text, rather than its exact form. With this approach, adaptors break the text down into

chunks, translating section-by-section instead of word-by-word,[4] and trying to recreate the sense of that section for the reader in the context of the whole work (Bassnett, 2002, p. 120). “There is a *moral responsibility to the original*, but [the adaptor] has the right to significantly alter the text in the [adaptation] process in order to provide [the] reader with a text that conforms to [the new language or medium's] stylistic and idiomatic norms” [emphasis mine] (Bassnett, 2002, p. 121). This is a much less stifling approach. Films become free to use their conventions to adapt a text, substituting striking camera movements for textual tempo, or a thrilling soundtrack for a description of how the character is feeling, expressing the text in the visual language afforded by film. What prevents the added freedom of Spirit Translations from transitioning into Creative Adaptations is the “moral responsibility to the original” mentioned above (Bassnett, 2002, p. 121): Spirit Adaptations are made to share the original work with new readers, whether adapted through languages, mediums, or cultural times and spaces. Although these adaptations may give added value to the original source or provide fresh insights as to their meaning, their intention is not to create an entirely new work of which they become the author. Rather, they intend to share the work of an existing author. They are a steward of the existing work, not the author of a new work. They act as adaptor rather than author. Many stage productions could be categorized as a Spirit Adaptation: the actors are performing the words of the playwright for the audience, rather than re-inventing the play wholesale, even if significant changes were made.[5]

4 Section-by-section is not as easy as it sounds. Poems might “easily” break down into translation units via their lines, verses, and stanzas, but prose text is not as linear as it might appear on the surface. Chapters, sections, and paragraphs (as with a poem's lines, verses, and, stanzas), or even individual sentences, must always relate back to the overall work or risk losing meaning (Bassnett, 2002, p. 121).

5 Audiences are often very different to the ones that the playwright may have had in mind when writing, whether due to time, geography, class, etc. As language evolves over time, across space, and within isolated populations, different language must often be used to explain the same ideas to a different audience. Thus, even if the play changes dramatically from how it would have been historically performed, this does not necessarily mean it cannot be classified as a Spirit Adaptation. Of course, this opinion could be considered contentious. Each stage production would need to be classified on its own merits, as would all instances of adaptations, as the authorial (and adaptorial) intent of a text is often relevant to its classification. Furthermore, the role of playwright vs director has been heavily debated for centuries (Luere & Berger, 1994).

## Creative Adaptation

The final approach is that of the Creative Adaptation. These are works that abandon that moral responsibility to the original (although they may hold it in high regard and indeed emulate it), and where the adaptor becomes the primary author of the new text (Hellekson & Busse, 2014, p. 3), as opposed to claiming to be an extension of the original author's work. These works are *transformative*. Hellekson and Busse describe the "transformative fan" as one who "take[s] a creative step to make the worlds and characters their own, be it by telling stories, cosplaying the characters, creating artworks, or engaging in any of the many other forms active fan participation can take," (2014, pp. 3-4). Elements such as an alternate ending, or techniques like positioning what was once a minor character in the role of the protagonist, may prompt an adaptation to be classified as a Creative Adaptation (Hellekson & Busse, 2014, p. 1).[6] Film Adaptations tend to fall into this category, because turning a short story into a feature film may require a significant amount of elaboration on the original (Slethaug, 2014, p. 9).[7] Original authors are often included in the process of a film or television adaptation.[8] This might prompt us to categorize it as a Spirit Adaptation, as they can provide insight into the original text's meaning and intent, and ensure the moral obligation to the original work is fulfilled; however, an author is capable of creatively adapting their own works![9]

## Complicating Spirit and Creative Adaptations

The distinction between Spirit Adaptations and Creative Adaptations is the "moral responsibility to the original" (Bassnett, 2002, p. 121), or, to understand and represent the intention of the original author in the new work, of which the adaptor is a steward and not author. While this is not all that complicated on the surface, untangling these two approaches can be more difficult than first appears. One solution might be to place

6 Creative Adaptations are the bread and butter of fan studies, as "what if" questions are springboards for creating new fan fiction.

7 Similarly, turning a book series into a movie might require cutting a significant amount of material that jeopardizes the spirit of the original.

8 For example, George R. R. Martin was heavily involved in the early production of the television series adaptation of his books (D'Addario, 2017).

9 Arthur Conan Doyle originally killed off Sherlock Holmes, only to "resurrect" him when his fans demanded he continue writing the series. This could be considered a creative adaptation of the original! (Bianchi, 2017).

the two on either end of a sliding scale, but the distinction is messier than that due to the moral responsibility clause, without which the Spirit Adaptation becomes a Creative Adaptation. But, just because the adaptor believed they had a moral responsibility to adapt a work in a way that is faithful to the original author does not mean they will succeed in doing so in the eyes of the general public—or the original author.[10]

Economically, the distinction could be made by evaluating the rights-holder. Fanfiction is "often subjected to takedowns for either supposed terms of service or [a] copyright violation" (Hellekson & Busse, 2014, p. 1). Fans are rarely rights holders or employed by the original author to adapt their work, as might happen with language translations or film adaptations. But even this gets murky! Works in the public domain get adapted all the time. Rightsholders may not be the original author, but their estate or a large corporation holding the rights might have a very different idea as to what a moral obligation to the original might look like, let alone the intention and meaning of the original text.[11] Aspirational TV writers often write speculative scripts as an audition piece. They use an existing television show as a framework and a source of inspiration and then write a new episode for it, without being asked or paid for it (Breman, 2018). This, too, could be considered a Creative Adaptation; however, if that writer gets hired, their episode might be produced and aired. Does that retroactively make it a Spirit Adaption, now that the adaptor was offered a contract?

Cultural studies discusses the "structure of feeling" as something that ties people to a particular time and place (and culture), and prevents them from fully understanding those who possess a different structure of feeling (Williams, 1998, p. 53). This refers to the way that the shared lived experiences of a group affect the way they experience their present (Huehls, 2010, p. 420). Those common experiences shape the cultural context in which a person lives and influence any work they might create and leave

10 For example Michael Dante DiMartino and Bryan Konietzko (the creators of the original TV show "Avatar: The Last Airbender") at first expressed their enthusiasm for the planned movie adaptation that was to be directed by M. Night Shyamalan, stating that the director respected their material, but later expressed their disappointment with Shyamalan's version and even went so far as to say they would like to pretend the film adaptation does not exist (Szymanski, 2007; Channel Surfing Podcast, 2014).

11 Vladimir Nabokov instructed his publishers on how he wanted the cover for his famous book Lolita to look: "no girls." Of course, nearly every edition of the book has a girl on the cover, directly counter to the author's request (Reischl, 2015).

behind for others to experience and/or study in the future, leaving scholars to discover these commonalities through the study of the documentary culture of that time, place, and people (Williams, 1998, p. 48). These documents represent the body of intellectual and imaginative work that records human thought and experience (Williams, 1998, p. 48); however, *intellectual* understanding is not the same as *emotional* understanding. The most dedicated of adaptors will never have the same sense of a text as the original author does... and even the author's understanding of their work might shift over time. This, too, complicates the notion that mirroring the intent of the author is what differentiates a Spirit Adaptation from a Creative one.

The person attempting to undertake a Spirit Adaptation is unlikely to be able to interpret or understand the original spirit of the text as it existed through the author's eyes when it was created. Audiences of the adaption are unlikely to share the same structure of feeling that the audience of the original had, thus compromising their ability to understand the original text. A Spirit Adaptation must take this into account, doing its best to communicate the spirit of the text to an audience who may not have the intertextual roots needed to interpret the original text in the same manner that its original audience might have, though on the surface those changes might be seen as "unfaithful" to the original text.

Furthermore, examining author intention is always a risky business. The "notion of accuracy in translation is dependent on the translator's ability to read and understand the original... [translation] is viewed as a skill, inextricably bound up with modes of reading and interpreting the original text" (Bassnett, 2002, p. 60). And even if one might ask the author themselves about the meaning of a particular sentence, and what they intended for the work as a whole, Barthes argues that the author's intention is not equal to the experience of the reader (2006). The meaning of a text is not predicated on what an author intended the meaning to be when they wrote it. Rather, the meaning of the text is what the person reading it determines it to be, bounded by the set of possible interpretations of that text. A multitude of meanings can exist simultaneously, as each time a book is read its meaning must once more be constructed. Each reader will have a slightly different experience of a book each time they read it. The meaning they constructed the first time they read a text as a child might be substantially different from

the meaning they constructed from that text when they read it as an adult, and neither reading is more correct than the other. “It is language which speaks, not the author” (Barthes. 2006, p. 278); for Barthes, their opinion simply does not matter. The author writes a text that means nothing... until it is read (Barthes, 2006, p. 280).

## Conclusion

> The point at which a writer considered himself to be a translator of another text, as opposed to the use he might make of translated material plagiarized from other texts, is rarely clear. Within the opus of a single writer, there is a range of texts that include acknowledged translations, free adaptations, conscious borrowings, reworkings, and close correspondences. (Bassnett, 2002, p. 60)

The above quotation expresses the notion that a text does not exist alone. Adaptors must consider not only the original text itself but also all the texts with which it (and its author) interacts. Were these texts also adaptations? “Intertextuality... is a constant and irretrievable circulation of textuality, a returning to, a pointing toward, an aggressive attempt to seize other documents—the results of this procedure of referencing other texts are also complicitly and irrevocably circular and ideological” (Staiger, 1989, p. 399).

Just as all texts are intertextual, all of these disciplines are interdisciplinary. They borrow objects of study, theories, methods, scholars, and perspectives from each other. The lines between them are blurry and overlap. This muddiness extends to the method by which each discipline adapts stories or studies adaptations. Many of them reference similar processes. Some focus on very specific details, while others are only concerned with broad trends.

Although each discipline has its own nuances and preferences, three overall approaches to adaptation can be found: Literal Adaptations, Spirit Adaptations, and Creative Adaptations. Literal adaptation has largely fallen out of style, or has been absorbed as part of the adaptation process, and is no longer acceptable as the finished product. Spirit Adaptations and Creative Adaptations abound but can be hard to distinguish. Economic definitions of authorship, the inability for an adaptor to ever wholly understand an author's intent, and the question of whether author intent is even

important all serve to muddy the waters of what distinguishes Creative from Spirit Adaptations.

Even though intent is a word often used in this section, it should not be the only (or even the main) thing that differentiates Spirit from Creative Adaptations. Instead, the "moral responsibility to the original" as felt by the adaptors should be held as the standard. It is not the economic responsibility to the rights holders or the understanding and skill with which an adaptor duplicates the intent of an author. Indeed, a moral responsibility has nothing at all to do with how good adaptation ends up being (especially as "goodness" is as subjective as reader experience). This responsibility to a text could be expressed through a dedicated study of the documentary culture, insights into the original which heap upon it new and updated meanings, or just the affirmation from an adaptor that they were doing their best to be true to the spirit of the text they were adapting. The difference is a sliding scale, with no real dividing line or tipping point.

As can be seen, synthesizing an interdisciplinary vocabulary is not always an easy task. Specialized vocabulary is necessary precisely because it can serve a particular purpose and lessen ambiguity; however, these strengths often become weaknesses in an interdisciplinary context because researchers are looking for overarching trends across disciplines, or must communicate research to scholars without a background in the field from which those definitions derive. Therefore, even though a basic concept is likely to encapsulate a fair amount of ambiguity, it is often not expected to stand up to intense interrogation. Instead, it is expected to encourage communication and understanding across a wide swath of scholars. In that vein, this paper is being directed at LIS professionals, even though Library and Information Studies was not one of the disciplines included in the literature review. Information professionals are likely to encounter researchers, especially in academic settings, who are attempting an interdisciplinary research project.

Being aware of how many definitions can exist in specialized language across disciplines can help them refine their search strategies. Knowing that concepts often need to be simplified to be understood by an uninitiated audience can help them enable robust communication strategies. And, in the case of this paper, knowing the different

broad approaches of adaptation can help in the evaluation of adaptations: is it important that a text is as literal and faithful as possible, perhaps because the original text is not available and/or accessible to the researcher? Will a creative adaptation be relevant to the research project in question or beyond its scope? Is the researcher aware that it departs severely from the original text? Questions like these are important to consider during a reference interview, and even more important when actively working in an interdisciplinary context. LIS is an interdisciplinary field comprising people with a wide variety of academic backgrounds and research interests. Information professionals often collaborate on interdisciplinary teams among researchers unfamiliar with the LIS field. Whether an existing vocabulary is chosen, a pidgin vocabulary is developed, or a new simplified vocabulary is called for, LIS scholars should consider the words they choose to communicate.

I love the words that were quoted at the beginning of the conclusion because they both raise and answer the question which is central to, but does not define, this paper: why is it that the boundaries between adaptive methods and scholarly disciplines can be so undefined? Because, of course, humans are messy creatures. We build on the works of others, both consciously and unconsciously, to make new—and wonderfully messy—creations.

## Conflict of Interest Statement

None declared.

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# When knowledge goes underground: Cultural information poverty, and Canada's *Indian Act*

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## Abstract

This paper will examine information poverty, and how the Indian Act imposed a situation of cultural information poverty. Passed in 1876, the Indian Act imposed cultural information poverty within Indigenous communities. Through this piece of Canadian legislation, Indigenous communities were forced to send their children to Residential Schools, and all cultural practices such as the potlatch and Sun Dance were banned. These policies disrupted education practices, and the passing down of information, creating a disconnect between younger generations and their communities. However, the Indian Act's goal of assimilation failed with some of these traditions going underground, being practiced in secret. Through strength and resilience communities today are experiencing a cultural revitalization, and what one Indigenous author calls a renaissance. The paper concludes by sharing ideas on how academic libraries can better engage with their local Indigenous communities.

*Keywords*: information poverty, decolonization, Indigenous peoples, colonization, cultural genocide, Indigenous librarianship, academic libraries

Information poverty typically refers to countries or communities that are unable to access information (Britz, 2004; Childers, 1975). Today that understanding has expanded to include being unable to use or interpret that information (Britz, 2004; Marcella & Chowdhury, 2018). In this paper, I am going to examine the ways in which the Indian Act, a piece of Canadian legislation enacted in 1876, imposed information poverty on Indigenous communities through practices such as the residential school system and social services (i.e. 60's Scoop). Specifically, I am going to focus on the

disconnect between communities and their cultural information. The Indian Act was supposed to result in the assimilation of Indigenous peoples, and in this regard, it has failed. Due to the strength and resilience of Indigenous peoples, their cultural practices and traditional knowledge is being revitalized.

Academic libraries have a role in this process of revitalization and reclamation of Indigenous culture as the places that house information. As institutions, and as the people who work in these institutions, we must be aware of how academia has contributed to this information poverty and attempted erasure of Indigenous cultures.

This paper uses a framework inspired by Smylie, Kaplan-Myrth, and McShane (2009) who studied how some Indigenous community members seek out and engage with health information. They looked specifically at urban Inuit and Métis communities in Ottawa and a semi-rural Algonquin community- the Pikwakanagan First Nation- outside of Ottawa. The framework used for their study was informed by the 1996 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, and included several assumptions that I have adapted from the health context to the information context:

- before colonization, Indigenous communities had complex systems of education and knowledge transfer;
- reflective of the diverse groups of Indigenous peoples across this country we now call Canada, these systems were, themselves, diverse;
- due to colonization, these systems have been “actively suppressed and outlawed” (Smylie et al., 2009, p. 437) and;
- these actions continue to impact Indigenous peoples today.

Based on these assumptions, this paper will discuss cultural information poverty within Indigenous communities as a symptom of colonial tactics. Following this, I will suggest some recommendations for the future of academic libraries and Indigenous knowledge.

## Author’s Positionality

Following the guidance in Sean Wilson’s book (Opaskwayak Cree; 2008) regarding Indigenous Research Methods, before I continue with this paper, I want to take this moment to situate myself within my research and writing. I am a Métis-Western European woman with family roots grounded in the Red River area of Manitoba, Scotland, England, and the Netherlands. Growing up outside of my community, in Stó:lō

territory located in present-day British Columbia, I was disconnected from my Indigenous culture for a large portion of my life. I was not raised Indigenous, nor was I raised with knowledge of my heritage. My Oma faced so much racism growing up in the late 1930s and 1940s that she renounced her heritage. Despite this, I grew up proud to be “Indian” as my father said - even though I did not understand exactly what that meant. I hold a level of privilege because I am a “hidden” Indigenous person even though I have similar experiences as some Indigenous people such as being from a broken home and helping raise younger siblings. Sometimes I feel as if I am occupying a grey area, neither one nor the other, but a semblance of both.

This paper, and my studies more broadly, are influenced not only by my interest but also by my career trajectory. After graduating with my library technician diploma in 2009, I worked as the Assistant Librarian for the Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre for three years. It was during this time that I began learning about Canada’s Indigenous history and specifically of the history and culture of the place I grew up. In my work at Simon Fraser University, I assist students daily on our Research Help Desk and AskAway (BC’s virtual chat). Through my interactions with students, both domestic and international, I have an appreciation for the complex nature of Indigenous topics. Since the summer of 2018, I have served on the Decolonizing the Library Task Group, working to actively -though slowly- alter the library in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action released in 2015, and the SFU Aboriginal Reconciliation Committee’s report Walk This Path With Us (2017).

Before continuing, I want to make a note about the terminology I am using. Following the government definition and current practice (Joseph (Gwawaenuk), 2018; Justice (Cherokee Nation), 2018; Vowel (Métis), 2016), the term Indigenous will be used when discussing First Nations, Métis, and Inuit. Older and outdated terms may be used in context when discussing practices or as used by an author. Additionally, where possible, I have included the name of an author's community or Nation. I am responsible for any omissions or mistakes and apologize in advance for them. These practices are a part of my own journey out of information poverty regarding Indigenous history, culture, and traditions.

## What is Information Poverty?

Information poverty has been discussed as a concept in academic literature for approximately the past fifty years (Britz, 2004; Marcella & Chowdhury, 2018). While information poverty can be discussed as an issue faced by an entire country, it can also be more localized and experienced by a group within a country/province/municipality (Britz, 2004). Additionally, people can be information poor in specific areas but information rich in others (Lingel & Boyd, 2013), and living in poverty is not an indication of information poverty (Chatman, 1996; Marcella & Chowdhury, 2018). Experiences of information poverty will vary; however, there are some common reasons behind being information poor: technological barriers, educational barriers, cultural barriers, language barriers, and political barriers (Marcella & Chowdhury, 2018). Regardless of why someone or a community is information poor, Britz (2004) claims that it is the largest problem in the world affecting "economic, cultural, and socio-political development" (p. 192).

Similar to having many reasons or contexts behind why/how information poverty is experienced, there are many definitions. Childers (1975) states that the information poor have closed information systems which leads to "an inordinate amount of unawareness and misinformation" (p. 32). Marcella & Chowdhury (2018) identify information poverty as someone being "denied access to the information necessary for survival, self-sufficiency, sustainability or development" (p. 2). Britz (2004) expands the definition past access to include not having the skills to find and evaluate information, or the necessary infrastructure as part of being information poor. Lingel and Boyd (2013) uniquely refer to how "people locate, use, share, and evaluate information" (p. 981) as information practices. As such, they understand Chatman's work on information poverty to mean that the information poor are those who do not have a lot of "information resources that speak to their world view" (p. 983). It is using Chatman's (1996) explanation of the information poor that I will be looking at information poverty, the Indian Act, and Indigenous communities, examining the ability to locate, use and share information (Lingel & Boyd, 2013).

The Indian Act was written in an effort to assimilate Indigenous Peoples into a "Canadian" worldview or society (Joseph, 2018). Settlers did not understand or

recognize Indigenous informational practices (Burton & Point, 2006; Justice, 2018) and therefore decided they were inferior. Chatman (2001) discusses how experiences are a result of information that we use to create our realities. She questions whether someone can truly understand another's experiences because their worlds are different (1996). These differences, or worlds, creates insiders and outsiders where one is dominant and the other marginalized. Unlike dominant people, marginalized people, such as those living in information poverty, have two worlds "which are very different from each other" (Chatman, 2001, p. 3).

Information poverty is often researched within communities who are "marginalized" in some way. In the 1970s Childers defined marginalized or disadvantaged people as "having a low reading level, eyesight or hearing problems, and having English as a second language" (1975, p. 32). Today that definition should be modified to include occurrences of stigma, such as in Lingel and Boyd's 2013 study on information poverty and individuals who practice extreme body modifications. Location can also affect an individual's information poverty level if the infrastructure is not available (Britz, 2004; Lingel & Boyd, 2013, Marcella & Chowdhury, 2018). By looking at how the Indian Act, a Canadian legal document, impacted the traditional cultures of Indigenous communities, I am adding those who experienced cultural genocide to this definition.

## Information Poverty in Canada

When searching for "information poverty AND Canada" in both the database Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts with Full Text (LISTA), and Google Scholar, the majority of articles focused on immigrants and/or refugees coming into Canada. Other results were about information poverty and the digital divide, or information poverty, and information literacy. These results had me wondering about communities within Canada who may be, now or historically, in a state of information poverty. Britz (2004) writes that information poverty does not have to encompass an entire country, that it can be found within communities of a larger group. My response to his statement was to wonder about ways information poverty has been imposed on Indigenous communities through legislation and other governmental policies. Additionally, I wondered about in today's awareness of the cultural genocide, has this

state of information poverty persisted? This question is inspired by both my work on Decolonizing library practices and learning about my Métis heritage.

## Colonization Tactics

### The *Indian Act*

The Canadian government has a long history of trying to control the Indigenous communities that occupied this land for thousands of years before it was 'discovered'. The piece of legislation that has done the most harm is the Indian Act, a racist document that continues to be in effect today. The Indian Act was enacted in 1876, with the Bagot Report of 1844 providing the framework (Joseph, 2018). The Act made Indigenous Peoples wards of the Canadian government (Burton & Point (Stó:lō), 2006), and though originally it stated "that every effort should be made to aid the Red man in lifting himself out of his condition to tutelage and dependence" (as cited in Joseph, 2018) what it did was create a situation where Indigenous were demeaned, and treated as if they were unable to care for themselves.

It is important for all Canadians to understand the depth and reach of this document, and the impact it has had on Indigenous Peoples - and continues to have. As Joseph (2018) writes in his book, *21 Things You May Know About the Indian Act*, the Act controlled all aspects of First Nation's people's lives: where they lived, where they worked, went to school, if they could leave their reserve (there was a Pass System enacted and people needed permission slips), who was considered First Nations, and imposed a system of government. First Nations people were not considered people, as a person was "an individual other than an Indian" according to the Indian Act (Joseph, 2018, p. 27), a definition that was not changed until 1951.

The Indian Act also banned all cultural and spiritual ceremonies, a provision that is commonly referred to as the Potlatch Law (Burton & Point, 2006; Joseph, 2018). The potlatch is an integral ceremony to West Coast communities, where families gather to witness events such as passing on ancestral names, celebrating marriages and births, and honouring those who had passed away (Joseph, 2018). Judge Alfred Scow remarked that this ban "prevented the passing down of our oral history. It prevented the passing down of our values" (as quoted in Joseph, 2018, p. 47). This provision was

supposed to be specific to religious ceremonies, but often authorities punished those communities who hosted a powwow or Sun Dance (Henderson, 2018). By 1925 all dancing, on or off reserve, was banned (Henderson, 2018).

People could decide to move off reserve, attend university, and gain the right to vote — if they gave up their Indian status, and disconnected from their heritage. This process was referred to as enfranchisement, and the Act had both voluntary (such as those I have listed above) and involuntary (such an Indigenous woman marrying a non-Indigenous man) processes for enfranchisement (Joseph, 2018). Enfranchisement was included in the Act until 1985 when Bill C-31 was introduced (Joseph, 2018) which not only ended enfranchisement but added complexity to who was considered status Indian (Vowel, 2016). Being enfranchised meant an Indigenous person was viewed as civilized and as a British subject (Joseph, 2018), but it also meant they were disenfranchised from their family, culture, and home (Vowel, 2016).

Those changes in 1985 were not the first time the Indian Act was amended. In 1920, Duncan Campbell Scott added mandatory education for all Indigenous children to the Act, in an effort to “get rid of the Indian problem” (Joseph, 2018, p. 120). Residential schools were the institutions preferred by the government, since they took the children away from their homes, and therefore cultures (Joseph, 2018). Some parts of the Act were repealed or altered in 1951, but it fundamentally stayed the same until 1985 (Joseph, 2018). The changes in 1951 occurred as a response to the horrific actions in Europe during World War II; People in Canada began to examine how Indigenous people were being treated (Joseph, 2018).

In all its forms, the Indian Act has focused on the lives of status Indians - those who qualify for a status card from the federal government (Vowel, 2016). It is not the same as band membership and does not apply to Métis or Inuit communities, even though they may be impacted by it (Vowel, 2018).

## Residential Schools and the 60’s Scoop

While not the focus of this paper, it would be remiss if I failed to mention two major devastating outcomes of the Indian Act: Residential Schools and the 60’s Scoop, which refers to the practice of social services removing Indigenous children from their homes and placing them in foster care or up for adoption. The term “60’s Scoop” is

misleading because the practice did not stop at the end of that decade, but continues today (Vowel, 2016). There is an enormous amount of published works on these two government-endorsed systems, and I will not go into detail on either here.

The Indian Act does not include a social service or child welfare provision so, at a glance, the connection between it and the 60's Scoop may not be apparent. Children were removed under the assumption that parents were not fit and that homes were not suitable (Justice, 2018; Vowel, 2016). This belief is evident in Residential Schools, where children suffered physical, sexual, and emotional abuse (TRC, 2015a). How could they grow up and not be traumatized? What skills or affection were they taught and shown? Some survivors developed addictions and inflicted similar abuse on their families (Hanson, n.d.; TRC, 2015a; Vowel, 2016). For decades there was a cycle of intergenerational trauma, and this trauma has its roots in the colonizers' belief that their Western ways were more civilized than those of the Indigenous Peoples. This cycle continues to impact communities today.

What I want to highlight here is the outcome of Residential Schools and the Scoop: loss of language, sense of identity, culture, and family connections. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) report summary (2015a) goes into detail on the conditions of Residential Schools and the abuse inflicted on children therein. Stolen from families, these children were sent kilometers away to places where they couldn't speak their languages and were told repeatedly that they were less than non-Indigenous society, that they were savages and heathens (Hanson, n.d.; Joseph, 2018; Vowel, 2016). They were beaten for trying to keep their Indigenity through language, stories, and practices (TRC, 2015a). There is a reason those who went through Residential Schools are referred to as survivors. Regarding the children taken by social services, Vowel (2016) refers to them as "cultural amputees" (p. 183).

## Information Poverty and the *Indian Act*

Based on my understanding of information poverty and the Indian Act, I would suggest that two instances of information poverty were created. The first instance is by not adequately educating children to succeed in the dominant (i.e. Western) society of Canada. The second instance is one of cultural information poverty, or cultural genocide (Joseph, 2018; Vowel, 2016). This instance of information poverty is a direct result of

the Indian Act and Residential Schools prohibiting Indigenous languages and cultural practices (Joseph, 2018; Vowel, 2016). As Childers (1975) wrote, Indigenous peoples have “unique information needs” (p. 80) regarding culture.

## Inadequate Educational Practices

Residential Schools were supposed to assimilate Indigenous children into Western culture by providing them an education (Burton & Point, 2006; Joseph, 2018). This education was conducted in English, a language not all children understood at their arrival at the schools (Hanson, n.d.), and was on topics the church-run institutions deemed appropriate. Children were taught up to maybe a grade five level by age eighteen, and their education focused on manual labour or domestic work (Hanson, n.d.). Due to inadequate government funding, students often spent half their days working around the school or in the fields to help the schools stay open (Hanson, n.d.; Joseph, 2018).

In 1996 the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples stated that “public education had failed Aboriginal peoples” (Burton & Point, 2006, p. 46). As mentioned above many graduates had a grade five education, and so were not encouraged to further their education (Hanson, n.d.). Even if or when someone wanted to, any Indigenous person who pursued higher education was automatically enfranchised until 1951 (Joseph, 2018). Meaning they would have a Western education, at the cost of their status as First Nations, cutting them off from their culture - their world view, or information.

Prior to contact, Indigenous communities had a system of education, just not one recognized by Western standards (Burton & Point, 2006). Education was community and land based, with children learning from their parents, grandparents, and community members through observation, participation, and storytelling (Mccue, 2018). It was unnecessary to remove children from their homes since communities were open to having their children educated at local schools (Burton & Point, 2006). The real reason behind making residential schools mandatory was to remove children from their community, so they could not participate in cultural practices (Burton & Point, 2006; Hanson, n.d.; Joseph, 2018). It was through this removal of children that the Indian Act,

through Residential Schools, severed their ties to culture and worldview, therefore imposing cultural information poverty.

## Cultural Genocide

As defined in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission summary (2015a), cultural genocide is “the destruction of those structures and practices that allow a group to continue as a group” (p. 1). The report then names practices of banning languages, restricting movement, confiscating spiritual items and outlawing spiritual practices, and disrupting family units “to prevent the transmission of cultural values and identity from one generation to the next” (p. 1) as indicators of cultural genocide. As discussed above, Canada did all of these (and more) to Indigenous communities, specifically First Nations.

The government sent children outside of their community in the hopes of assimilation into Western culture. It was believed that education would “kill the Indian in the child” (from the TRC, as cited in Joseph, 2018, p. 53) and “get rid of the Indian problem” (Duncan Campbell Scott, as cited in Joseph, 2018, p. 120). By no longer living in their communities and surrounded by their families, children lost touch with their culture. Children were placed in religious run schools that did not understand or respect their traditions. In fact, children were punished by those who worked in the schools if heard speaking their language or seen interacting with family members of the opposite gender (Joseph, 2018; TRC, 2015a). School officials even denied children their traditional names and gave them a Christian one (TRC, 2015a).

All of these actions were deliberate steps to strip Indigenous peoples of their culture, their knowledge/information, and therefore their identity. The Indian Act forced a state of cultural information poverty on Indigenous communities.

## “A living legacy”[1]: Indigenous Cultural Survival

Despite decades of abuse and government policies designed to eradicate Indigenous cultural practices, languages, and knowledges, they have survived. In the years since the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report, there has been a significant increase in social awareness for the need to Decolonize and Indigenize.

[1] Justice, 2018, p.53

Why? Because the Indian Act and Residential Schools failed in their mission to destroy Indigenous culture by assimilation. As stated in the TRC (2015a): “[a]lthough Aboriginal peoples and cultures have been badly damaged, they continue to exist. Aboriginal people have refused to surrender their identity” (p. 6).

From the beginning, Indigenous communities resisted the Indian Act’s declarations of what people could and could not do. Some activities such as the potlatch went underground, with ceremonies being conducted in secret even with the threat of imprisonment (Joseph, 2018; Vowel, 2016). It is through the bravery and strength of people who continued to practice their culture, and speak their language, that Indigenous culture is poised to thrive today. While “old traditions and old ways have endured” (Justice, 2018, p. 65), they are being reworked with modern technology creating new “opportunities for cultural expression” (p. 65).

One way that cultural information has been protected by communities, and spearheading cultural reclamation, is through stories. As Justice (2018) discusses, stories are medicine which show that Indigenous peoples “are the descendants of those who survived the colonizing apocalypse” (p. 5). There has been a rise in the presence of Indigenous authors, and music artists, in the years since the TRC, as Alicia Elliot (Tuscarora) writes in an article for CBC entitled “The Indigenous renaissance was truly here in 2018 - and it’s not going anywhere” (December 27, 2018). She writes that while Indigenous art, music, and storytelling have never gone away, there is more awareness and support for these endeavours, partially as a result of the TRC Calls to Action (TRC, 2015b). In her article (2018), she states that it is difficult to create and share art in any form when you are experiencing cultural genocide.

Stories and songs are only part of cultural reclamation though. As reported by Kaitlyn Swan in CBC (2019), there is a movement in Nova Scotia of Indigenous people seeking their family’s traditions. Younger generations want to formally change their names to those that were taken away during the Residential School era (Swan, 2019). An episode on CBC’s Unreserved podcast from February of this year looks at ways both communities and the government is working to protect and restore languages (CBC Radio, 2019). These are just a few ways that Indigenous communities and people are reclaiming and sharing their culture. Others include video games, such as *Never Alone*

which is set in Alaska and written with Iñupiat Elders (Upper One Games, n.d.), movies such as *Indian Horse* based on the novel by Richard Wagamese, and TV shows such as the upcoming *Marrow Thieves* series based off the novel by Cherie Dimaline.

## Implications for Academic Libraries

While there are a multitude of ways for libraries to better engage with their Indigenous communities, I want to look at two areas where academic libraries can: first, access and second, programs and services.

### Access

Access to information written by and about Indigenous Peoples has been a contentious issue for years. When ethnographers and anthropologists entered communities to conduct research, they wrote down stories, songs, traditions, and customs. What happened then was that information became ‘owned’ by those authors under copyright. Further, the resulting book, article, or other work was likely never shared with the community. Today that means some information is inaccessible to the communities it came from.

During the Q&A session of the Collection and Community Panel at the Sorting Libraries Out symposium (2019), Bruce Muir and Marvin Williams (Lake Babine Nation) talked about how difficult it can be to locate and access materials. Williams shared a story about conducting research for treaty negotiations and needing to bring twelve people to a special collections library so that each could copy ten pages of a book to bring home. This seems like an extraordinary amount of work and money for the nation to have gone through to have information about themselves.

An easy answer might be to digitize documents and ensure that they are open access. However, while good in principle, not all Indigenous information should be freely open and accessible (Callison, Nayyer, & Ludbrook, 2019; Justice, 2018). Some information should only be available to certain communities or select people within that community based on role or gender. Some should only be accessed during certain seasons (Callison, Nayyer, & Ludbrook, 2019).

With this in mind my recommendations for academic libraries based around access issues are these:

- Provide any Indigenous person living in Canada a library card, similar to how the University of British Columbia Library (n.d.) does.
- Collaborate on initiatives such as the Community Scholars Program (Simon Fraser University Library, 2019), which provides collections access to charitable and non-profit organizations.
- If there is an archive or special collection within the library, work on identifying Indigenous materials belonging to which community and share or repatriate the information.

## Programs and Services

With Indigenous enrolment in trades, colleges, and universities on the rise (Statistics Canada, 2018), academic libraries should examine what programming and services are being offered. With the addition of initiatives such as maker spaces, digital initiatives (e.g. GIS and data visualization), and digital publishing tools to traditional library services, libraries have a lot to offer their academic community.

My recommendations and suggestions include:

- Dedicated time, space, and workshops in a maker space. Workshops could be on traditional practices beading, weaving, regalia making facilitated by an Elder or Indigenous artist. Alternatively, workshops could be on how to use the equipment to continue oral traditions (through the creation of podcasts or videos).
- Engage in participatory research with digital initiatives, such as mapping communities and including place name stories.
- Provide a dedicated study space within the library.
- Collaborate with Indigenous Student Centres on scholarly publishing opportunities. The Public Knowledge Project offers well-paced, autonomous courses on topics.
- Establish an Indigenous Storytelling in Residence, similar to the program at the Vancouver Public Library (n.d.).

# Conclusion

I am by no means an expert in Indigenous history, cultures, or literature. Often I have more questions about how to Decolonize and Indigenize my personal and

professional lives than I have answers. What I do know is that I am surrounded by Indigenous voices, in my work and personal life. Yes, I am seeking them out, but what is important is that they are there for me to find. This would not have been the case if the Indian Act had been successful in destroying Indigenous cultural knowledge and traditions. While there may have been a period of cultural information poverty, this is changing.

In July 2019 I attended a powwow where an Elder from the community opened the Grand Entry with a prayer. She shared with us (I apologize; I did not have anything to take notes with so do not have her name) her story about growing up without these cultural practices, being afraid to sing and dance. There were hundreds of people at the powwow, of all ages, yet I bet her story is not the only one like that. As the cultural information poverty declines, Indigenous cultures and teachings are being started with all Canadians and offering everyone a richer world view.

For decades Western culture in Canada has privileged one knowledge system and/or culture while punishing anyone who practiced another. The Indian Act, and subsequent practices such as the residential school system, were put in place to destroy centuries of Indigenous information practices. These failed. Today's Indigenous communities are leaving behind a state of cultural information poverty to enter an "Indigenous renaissance" (Elliot, 2018).

## Conflict of Interest Statement

None declared.

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# Internet filters in Canadian libraries: Impact on intellectual freedom & social responsibility

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## Abstract

Internet filters are a method to block access to web content (Lawrence & Fry, 2016). Instantaneously, the word 'blocks' causes advocates of intellectual freedom to stand at attention. Intellectual freedom is one of the core values of librarianship which guide the decisions librarians make, as outlined within the American Library Association's (ALA) *Code of Ethics* (1939/2008). The ALA's *Library Bill of Rights* (1939/2019) states that, "a person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views" (para. IV). More specific to the topic at hand: "the use of Internet filters to block constitutionally protected speech … compromises First Amendment freedoms and the core values of librarianship" (ALA, n.d., para. 1). This paper will investigate and discuss the function of and methodology behind internet filters, with specific attention to their application in Canada. Following a general overview, a discussion follows of what library professionals in public and school libraries should do to uphold and protect intellectual freedom.

*Keywords*: Internet filters, Canadian libraries, intellectual freedom, school libraries, public libraries

Intellectual freedom can be boiled down to the ability for all individuals to have free, unobstructed access to all forms of information and the beliefs contained within that information (Jensen, 2004). Alfino (2014) further emphasizes its importance and states that intellectual freedom "places fundamental value on the autonomy of the individual to hold and express beliefs without fear of political or social punishment" (p. 9). Therefore, it is understandable why internet filters can be viewed as an attack on this right. Historically, the filtering of materials – completed by state actors – was explicit, as physical media was removed from the prevue of the general public. Examples of this form of censorship are events such as Die Säuberung in the 1930s: the Nazi

government book burning events, and the Cultural Revolution in China under Chairman Mao Zedong (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, n.d.; Hu, 2017). In the age of internet communication, the filtering of content is covert; a user may not even realize they have been subject to filtering, as may be the case with location-based search results using search engines such as Google (Franti, Tabarcea, Kuittinen, & Hautamaki, 2010).

This paper will investigate the application of internet filters by state or government authorities and what they mean for library professionals in relation to upholding and protecting intellectual freedom. In section 1, an overarching overview of internet filters is introduced; their function and method of implementation is discussed from a generalized, global perspective. Section 2 narrows the scope and description of internet filtering to their manifestation in Canada. Next, section 3 looks at the effects of internet filters in Canadian public and school libraries. In addition, this section also discusses our professional duty as librarians and what we can do to ensure that the right to intellectual freedom is protected for our patrons. Finally, section 4 summarizes the findings of this paper and suggests an area for future research.

## A General Overview of Internet Filters

Before delving into the topic of internet filters, a basic definition of what they are is necessary. Lawrence and Fry (2016) review internet filtering software and explain that its purpose is to:

> Restrict users' access to web content. There are varied methods for blocking content to meet this end. For instance, filtering software might limit access on the basis of keywords or text strings, scanned pixels, third-party site ratings, or some other information source. (p. 404)

Filtering software was first developed in the mid-1990s in response to mounting concern and anxiety regarding potentially controversial topics on the internet, and the perceived vulnerability of minors who may gain access to it (Lawrence & Fry, 2016). Additionally, the term 'filters' may be used to describe "algorithmic personalization" (Peterson, Oltmann, & Knox, 2017, p. 4584); this relates to one's social media feed, for example, as the information presented there is curated for each user depending on their activity, beliefs, and interests.

When a government decides to filter the internet, “laws and technical measures [are put in place] to block their citizens from accessing or publishing information online” (Zittrain & Palfrey, 2008, p. 32). Zittrain and Palfrey (2008) further explain that these laws are generally “extensions of pre-existing media or telecommunications regulatory regimes” (p. 32), but may sometimes be “Internet-specific statutes and regulations” (p. 32). The United States Congress passed the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA) in 2000; this Act “required American public schools and libraries seeking federal funding to implement [filtering technology]” (Peterson et al., 2017, p. 4587). CIPA was challenged by a coalition led by the ALA, which argued that it “imposed an unconstitutional condition on public institutions to block access to constitutionally protected speech” (Peterson et al., 2017, p. 4587). However, the Supreme Court ultimately upheld CIPA in 2003 (now called COPPA: The Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act) and, since then, all American public schools, as well as most public libraries, have implemented technology to filter content (Peterson et al., 2017). At present, Canada does not have an equivalent federal law to protect children’s online privacy (Lawton, as cited in Campbell, 2014, para. 5).

A nation may block access to content based on the political or religious message it expresses, or even the social connotations it has (Zittrain & Palfrey, 2008). China, for example, has employed varying degrees of content restrictions which “disallow citizens from publishing or accessing certain content online” (Zittrain & Palfrey, 2008, p. 33). France and Germany both have a requirement wherein the government body limits internet access to certain materials, including “a ban on ‘propaganda against the democratic constitutional order’” (Zittrain & Palfrey, 2008, p. 33). Nations may also block sites that host content that infringes on intellectual property rights. The United Kingdom arguably has “one of the most developed and advanced regimes in Europe” in this regard (Alexander & Hepburn, 2019, para. 1). The process has been reviewed and streamlined so that the court process can grant right-holders relief more efficiently (Alexander & Hepburn, 2019).

How do nations go about filtering the internet? From the studies completed by Zittrain and Palfrey (2008), they found that most countries rely on “preidentification and categorization of undesirable Web sites” (p. 36). This manual process takes time, and

they state that the evolution and growth of Web 2.0 makes this process more difficult "as citizens have the ability to publish online content on the fly and to syndicate that content for free" (Zittrain & Palfrey, 2008, p. 36). Web 2.0 is "the stage of the Web that allows users to connect through interactive technology [(i.e., social media websites)]" (Mazzei, 2019, Definition of Web 2.0 section, para. 1). The manual process involves identifying URLs that lead to undesirable content and disabling access to those sites (Zittrain & Palfrey, 2008). They highlight that this system – besides being labourious – is not perfect; for example, based on URL alone, "blogging or generic free Web-hosting sites like www.geocities.com" (p. 36), may be blocked. However, this action blocks all content: 'good' or 'bad,' as the URL doesn't provide information about the content on the sites. While filtering software has become more context-sensitive over time, both under- and over-blocking of content can occur (Lawrence & Fry, 2016). Commercial software programs are available to assist with implementing block lists, such as *K9 Web Protection* (Peterson et al., 2017). These types of programs come with extensive, categorized lists that allow countries to block content at a categorical level (Zittrain & Palfrey, 2008). However, this can lead to over-blocking since the commercial filters have nations decide between "allowing or blocking all URLs within a category" (Zittrain & Palfrey, 2008, p. 39). Overall, at least at this time, there does not seem to be an easy way to effectively identify and categorize websites for the purpose of filtering.

Internet filtering is not necessarily viewed in a negative light in all instances; for example, internet filtering may be a method to uphold the law. Zittrain and Palfrey (2008) cite the example of child pornography; no one would protest a state's right to block such content. "The need for states to be able to exercise some measure of control online is broadly accepted" (Zittrain & Palfrey, 2008, p. 44). Most people would also not raise issue with the state having some form of control in order to prevent online fraud or other crime, as well as to protect intellectual property (Zittrain & Palfrey, 2008). Contemporary justification of online censorship and surveillance is that it's a method to "counteract international terrorism" (Zittrain & Palfrey, 2008, p. 45); that is: "Internet filtering and surveillance, in an environment where the Internet is considered a form of territory alongside land or sea or air, are an expression of the unalterable right of a state to ensure its national security" (Zittrain & Palfrey, 2008, p. 45).

This becomes an issue for many when internet filtering and surveillance may encroach upon individual civil liberties (Zittrain & Palfrey, 2008). Online surveillance is the monitoring of online activity by an overseeing government body (Zittrain & Palfrey, 2008). It is an individual's right to freely express their opinions: filtering and surveillance in the name of defending national security may be seen as an attack on one's "basic rights of *freedom of expression and individual privacy* [emphasis added]" (Zittrain & Palfrey, 2008, p. 49). Individuals are sharing more personal data and information online than ever before. Social media may be said to be largely responsible for this increase. Mon (2015) affirms this with her statement that "Web 2.0 media creates opportunities for social participation and contribution" (p. 1). In order to achieve these social aspects, users have increasingly shared personal data and aspects of their lives online. The primary critique of internet filtering – one that aligns with our professional duty as librarians:

> Boils down to a belief in the value of a relatively open information environment because of the likelihood that it can lead to a beneficial combination of greater access to information, more transparency, better governance, and faster economic growth. … The internet can give rise to a more empowered, productive citizenry. (Zittrain & Palfrey, 2008, p. 51)

With this stated critique in mind, I will now move on to looking at internet filters in Canada, both generally and with respect to libraries, and what they mean for our profession.

## Internet Filters in Canada

Internet filters in Canada are far less widespread and encompassing compared to other countries in the world; however, this does not mean that the internet is unregulated in Canada (O'Keefe, Palfrey, & Seltzer, 2008). In Canada, O'Keefe et al. (2008) explain that content is restricted via legal and technical regulations in certain environments (e.g., school libraries); further, publishing hate speech is also restricted in Canada. O'Keefe et al. state that internet filtering has primarily been through "government-facilitated industry self-regulation" (p. 226). Additionally, "with the exception of child pornography, … content restrictions tend to rely more on the removal of content [rather] than blocking: … rely[ing] upon the involvement of private parties"

(O'Keefe et al., 2008, p. 226). O'Keefe et al. outline four areas in which internet filtering occurs in Canada: 1) regulation of obscene and explicit content, 2) defamation, 3) copyright, and 4) national/computer security; I will now provide a brief overview of their research findings in these areas.

With respect to sexually explicit content, Canada, compared to its neighbour to the south, has tended to act more conservatively in its approach (O'Keefe et al., 2008). O'Keefe et al. (2008) describe how Canadian legislators have made revisions to "existing obscenity provisions to encompass online offenses" (p. 227), rather than pursuing broader definitions and mandates. One such example is the passing of the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 2001, which:

> Established online acts of distributing and accessing child pornography and luring a child as crimes. The Criminal Code mandates a system for judicial review of material (including online material) alleged to be child pornography. It does not, however, require [Internet Service Providers (ISPs)] to judge the legality of content posted on their servers … [However,] if a judge determines that the material in question is illegal, ISPs may be required to take it down and to give information to the court to help in the identification and location of the person who posted it. (O'Keefe et al, 2008, p. 227)

Important to note is that, since both accessing and making child pornography accessible are illegal in Canada, this instance of internet filtering "does not infringe on rights of access or speech afforded by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms" (O'Keefe et al., 2008, p. 228).

In 2006, in partnership with Cybertip.ca, Canada's largest ISPs launched Project Cleanfeed Canada, which is intended to protect their customers from "inadvertently visiting foreign Web sites that contain images of children being sexually abused and that are beyond the jurisdiction of Canadian legal authorities" (OpenNet Initiative, 2010, p. 375). The program is voluntary and blocking is left to the discretion of the ISPs; SaskTel, Bell Canada, and Telus all claim to only block specific URLs, not IP addresses, "in an attempt to avoid overblocking" (OpenNet Initiative, 2010, p. 375). Over-blocking would likely result in significant public outcry, as it may be viewed as 'a

step too far' and infringe on Canadians' rights. OpenNet Initiative (2010) also highlights that this could be illegal under the Telecommunications Act.

Defamation is the "publication of an untrue statement about a person that tends to lower his reputation in the opinion of right-thinking members of the community or to make them shun or avoid him" (Law, 2018, Defamation section, para. 1). Legal liability constrains publishers of content on the internet and some ISPs (O'Keefe et al., 2008). This can result in a "'chilling effect' on lawful online content and conduct and can threaten the anonymity of users" (O'Keefe et al., 2008, p. 230). While ISPs in the United States are provided with greater protection with respect to liability, this is not the case for Canadian providers and they "may be compelled to take down allegedly defamatory content (e.g., postings to message boards) under threat of suit" (O'Keefe et al., 2008, p. 230).

As with other areas when compared to the United States, Canada has been slower to evolve the law for issues arising from copyright (O'Keefe et al., 2008). O'Keefe et al. (2008) cite an example from 2004 of the *Interim Report on Copyright Reform*, which "proposed a notice-and-takedown policy … under which Canadian service providers would be compelled to remove content immediately upon receiving notice of an alleged infringement from a professed copyright holder" (p. 231). This report received a lot of scrutiny and negative reaction from the public (O'Keefe, 2008). Since publishing their research, Canada has since passed and received Royal Assent for Bill C-11 in June of 2012, which is otherwise known as the *Copyright Modernization Act*. This Act states that, upon receiving notice of a claimed infringement, adhering to section 41.26(1)(a), the ISP shall forward the notice to the party in possible breach and retain records on the identity of that individual, as per section 41.26(1)(b) for the claimant to use if they choose to move forward with legal proceedings (Copyright Act, 1985).

The primary driver behind state-mandated limitations in Canada is security concerns; namely, national and computer security (O'Keefe et al., 2008, p. 232). This concern has resulted more in online surveillance rather than content filtering (O'Keefe et al., 2008). While related, internet filtering and online surveillance are different; surveillance can be understood as the monitoring and gathering of information about usage, while filtering may take that information in order to create filters to block access

(Stalla-Bourdillon, 2013). Even the *perception* of online surveillance is enough to make individuals pause before publishing or accessing certain content, particularly if it may be viewed as going against societal norms. O'Keefe et al. (2008) state that, in Canada, online surveillance is undertaken by the National Defense's group, Communications Security Establishment (CSE), which works closely with the United States. Interestingly, "although bound by Canadian laws and prohibited from eavesdropping on solely domestic Canadian communications without explicit ministerial approval, the CSE's activities are highly secret and oversight is minimal" (O'Keefe et al., 2008, p. 232).

To assist in computer security, particularly against spam, Canada assembled the National Task Force on Spam in 2005 to study the issue, which concluded that legislation should be put in place to limit spam from reaching computers (O'Keefe et al., 2008). As a result, Canada's Anti-Spam Legislation (CASL) came into effect in 2014 to "reinforce best practices in email marketing and combat spam and related issues. These issues include identity theft, phishing and the spread of malicious software, such as viruses, worms and trojans (malware)" (Government of Canada, 2019, About CASL section, para. 1). This legislation has resulted in Canadians receiving less spam – "one study showed that within a year of the legislation being introduced, there was a 37% decrease in Canadian-based spam and 29% less email (spam or legitimate) in Canadians' in-boxes" (Government of Canada, 2019, About CASL section, para. 4). However, while it may be perceived as 'spam' by the majority, some individuals may argue that they should retain the right to make their own choice about what they receive, without government oversight.

Overall, the Government of Canada has "experienced significant resistance to their content restriction policies" (O'Keefe et al., 2008, p. 233); therefore, internet filtering is fairly limited in this country. The areas that internet filtering apply to relate to law-keeping practices: the regulation of explicit content, defamation cases, copyright issues, and national/computer security. With their possible connection to upkeeping law and order, internet filters may be viewed differently with respect to intellectual freedom. However, in the realm of public and school libraries, does this add another layer of complexity as we consider how to protect 'vulnerable minors?' Therefore, I now turn to a

discussion on internet filtering in Canadian public and school libraries, as well as what our duty is as librarians in protecting intellectual freedom.

## Internet Filters in Canadian Public and School Libraries: Our Duty as Librarians

Library professionals have always been advocates for intellectual freedom. Cooper (2010) argues that "by allowing individuals to have intellectual freedom, libraries help their users to develop information access skills … [which] promotes responsible democratic citizenship" (p. 219). This relates to the social responsibility of libraries; Tise (2011) remarks that "libraries have always been – and will continue in that vein to be – that societal institution that propagates democracy and growth and development" (para. 1). Libraries "must use available technologies to provide innovative information services … [and] interrogate future scenarios and challenges" against intellectual freedom (Tise, 2011, para. 3). For librarians, access means making "unbiased materials and services physically available in a structure organized for easy consumption, and hope for their use and utility" (Barniskis, 2016, p. 106). As makerspaces become more widespread, their role in intellectual freedom could be said to involve "ensuring equitable access to not only informational media, but also tools, spaces, and social networks that support knowledge, as well as facilitating users' knowledge creation" (Barniskis, 2016, p. 103).

In general, society believes that minors should be protected against 'bad' and/or 'harmful' information. Evidence of this belief in action was discussed earlier through the example of the United States Congress enacting CIPA/COPPA (Peterson et al., 2017). This belief is also evidenced through assigning ratings to programming to indicate its intended audience (e.g., G, PG, or 18+) (Canadian Broadcast Standards Council, n.d.). School and public libraries often come up against unique challenges when it comes to intellectual freedom and censorship (Cooper, 2010). However, the ALA's *Library Bill of Rights* (1939/2019) states: "a person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views" (para. IV). Internet filters are seen as "antithetical to the mission of the library to provide free and open access to *all* [emphasis added] information" (Houghton-Jan, 2010, p. 40). Therefore, it becomes necessary for librarians to "provide students [(or children, in general)] with free access to information while also heeding to laws restricting what children can access and

respecting the concerns of parents" (Cooper, 2010, p. 221). Cooper (2010) suggests the following guideline for school librarians: "consider the suitability of materials in their collection based on age-appropriateness rather than on other agendas" (p. 221); personal or otherwise. In addition, Cooper emphasizes that they should work to build collections that represent all views and types of people, work with parents to educate them on library practices, and teach students socially responsible information access skills. Cooper's suggestions can easily be extended to librarians in public libraries for patrons of the general population. More in line with this paper's discussion of internet filters, Cooper also notes that "*acceptable use policies* [emphasis added] can alleviate some of the restrictions that arise because of laws requiring schools [or public libraries] to use filters to protect children from harmful sites on the Internet" (p. 222).

A principal concern with internet filtering is how commercial software programs classify and categorize content; "the automated classification processes and the whitelists and blacklists that filtering software companies develop are ferociously protected and never made publicly available to their customers" (Houghton-Jan, 2010, p. 42). Houghton-Jan (2010) articulates the following points as the issues libraries should consider before implementing, or re-assessing the use of, internet filters: "data collection, library privacy policies, confidentiality of information needs, and alternatives to filters" (p. 44). Stripling (2013) stresses that "individual librarians cannot afford to be complacent by assuming that [professional associations like the ALA] are 'handling' intellectual freedom issues" (p. 8). Each community must adopt policies and procedures and be diligent to update them as elements such as technology evolve in order to combat local intellectual freedom challenges (Stripling, 2013). Stripling discusses how, in recent years, libraries have gone through a shift in focus in how they advocate for their patrons with respect to intellectual freedom. Rather than maintaining a position of what the library can do, the role of the library should be to educate users; that is, "the intellectual-freedom question for librarians in user-centred libraries should be: 'What must our libraries give patrons the freedom *to do* [emphasis added]?'" (p. 8).

This is where social responsibility manifests itself in the librarian's duty to protect intellectual freedom. "If library patrons are going to be intellectually free, then librarians must teach them … to be *socially responsible* [emphasis added] in the access and use

of information" (Stripling, 2013, p. 9). There are five areas of social responsibility that should be taught in order to empower patrons to exercise their right to intellectual freedom. These responsibilities are: "evaluating information; active searching for multiple perspectives; constructing one's own ideas, opinions, and conclusions based on evidence; responsibly interacting with others; [and] monitoring one's own online publishing and behavior" (Stripling, 2013, p. 9).

> By teaching social responsibility, librarians can both provoke and support their users' behavior in ways that guarantee their intellectual freedom to construct their own ideas. By sharing responsibility for intellectual freedom with their patrons, librarians strengthen the foundation of intellectual freedom for our society as a whole. (Stripling, 2013, p. 12)

As a final point of consideration, librarians do certainly have a professional responsibility to protect intellectual freedom and fight against censorship. However, Jensen (2004) argues that "parents should [also] take on their responsibility to teach their children what is appropriate. Internet filtering will not keep children from accessing or receiving inappropriate material" (p. 15). Parents have "both the right and the responsibility to choose whether to limit their children's choices in the library" (Morgan, 2004, p. 6). Therefore, I believe that while we, as professionals, should uphold our responsibilities and duty, it is also our role to work *with* members of our communities – including parents – to promote intellectual freedom and educate the public on responsible use and access.

## Conclusion

While not having nearly as many restrictions as some countries, internet filtering does still occur in Canada. Indeed, as highlighted by Zittrain and Palfrey (2008), the need to exercise some measure of restriction online is broadly accepted; particularly, in areas related to the distribution of unlawful content such as child pornography. In fact, this is one example of an area that Canada *does* implement the use of internet filters and content restrictions, with the other areas being cases of defamation, copyright issues, and matters of national/computer security (O'Keefe et al., 2008). Despite the existence of areas where filtering may not be questioned, there are many areas that do not fall under these categories. Therefore, library professionals play a key role in

upholding and protecting the patrons' right of intellectual freedom. Stripling (2013) argues that, "if library patrons are going to be intellectually free, then librarians must teach them … to be socially responsible in the access and use of information" (p. 9). Protecting intellectual freedom cannot, and should not, be assumed to be handled by professional bodies such as the ALA alone. Each library, regardless of its type, must adopt policies and procedures and be diligent to update them as technology changes in order to combat local intellectual freedom challenges (Stripling, 2013). A more in-depth look and examination of social responsibility in relation to internet filters is worth future research. While the importance of teaching social responsibility was briefly touched upon in this paper, this is an aspect that I believe can be discussed more thoroughly on its own.

In conclusion, internet filters go against one of the core values of librarianship; however, through examination of their implementation in Canada, this paper has highlighted their 'appropriate' use, and provided guidance for librarians to protect intellectual freedom in today's ever-evolving technological world. While not always a simple topic to understand, I believe that keeping the value of educating patrons on responsible use and information access in mind will allow intellectual freedom to live on – even in the presence of internet filters.

## Conflict of Interest Statement

None declared.

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# Suppressing communities: An analysis of LGBTQ+ censorship in libraries

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## Abstract

Librarians serve as defenders of intellectual freedom and social responsibility, and this includes speaking out against censorship. Censorship of information, materials, and books occurs in the public, but it can also occur in libraries. Marginalized communities are affected the most by such censorship, such as the LGBTQ+ community. The purpose of this paper is to explore how internal, external, and institutional censorship affects the LGBTQ+ community, and what librarians can do to defend against censorship. Internal, or self-censorship, occurs at the librarian level where LGBTQ+ materials may be hidden by librarians or library staff, or simply not ordered due to pressure from the communities that libraries serve. External censorship occurs at the community level, where the community culture pushes for the censorship of LGBTQ+ materials. Lastly, institutional censorship occurs at the classification level, where classification models such as the Dewey Decimal System or subject headings may not provide accurate representations for LGBTQ+ materials. To put an end to these forms of censorship, trained and certified librarians must act as agents of change, committing to their due diligence to provide information to all members of their communities.

*Keywords*: Censorship, librarianship, LGBTQ+, internal censorship, external censorship, institutional censorship

Long gone are the days of librarians quietly shelving books or scanning the card catalogues, pushing their glasses up the bridge of their noses, and keeping their heads bowed. Long gone are the days of shushed libraries or libraries as hallowed and inflexible neutral grounds, as Berninghausen (1972) so boldly claimed in his essay. Many librarians are progressive within their field, actively engaging in social responsibility by allowing access to information and protecting their communities from censorship. As Lankes (2016) states: To be a librarian is “to be a radical positive change agent within [one’s] community” (p. 3).

LGBTQ+ collections and resources are often a source of controversy within American and Canadian libraries, where they face direct and indirect forms of censorship. The annual release of the American Library Association's (2013) Top 10 Banned Books displays LGBTQ+ censorship. For the past two years, books containing LGBTQ+ themes have made up half of the Top Ten lists of challenged books in libraries across the United States (American Library Association, 2013; Cavar, 2017; Glazer, 2017). As defenders of intellectual freedom and social responsibility, librarians have an obligation not only to serve and provide access to information to underprivileged communities but also to educate the general public about those communities. The purpose of this paper is to explore the impact of various forms of LGBTQ+ censorship within libraries. In it, I will discuss internal, external, and institutional forms of censorship, concluding with what librarians can do to serve the LGBTQ+ community better.

For inclusivity and the purpose of this paper, I will be using the acronym LGBTQ+ to represent the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, and Queer communities, along with those who do not identify as one of the former labels. According to McEachreon (2016), there are currently no best practices to determine the proper acronym, however, the plus sign (+) is a way to include the communities not represented in the former LGBTQ acronym. As the paper's author and a supporter of the LGBTQ+ community, I acknowledge the various identities represented only by the plus sign, and respect the communities within LGBTQ+ that have not been listed to the fullest extent.

## Internal Censorship

Grandiose forms of censorship, such as book burning or statements of public outrage, are often associated with the censorship of LGBTQ+ materials (Downey et al., 2013). However, censorship is not always so vocal. It can be an inside job, so to speak, conducted by the library staff themselves. This is known as self-censorship and is defined as "the act of a librarian and his or her library promoting materials in accordance with a desire to avoid challenges from the public" (McEachreon, 2016, p. 192). Downey et al. (2013) claim self-censorship is often invisible and can easily be hidden by those committing the censorship through acts such as neglecting to replace a damaged book, claiming the materials were too expensive, or that the collection does not need new

additions. These are cases where patrons would have no idea that, through the passive acts of librarians, materials were being censored (McEachreon, 2016). Downey et al. (2013) describe the “traps” librarians can fall into in regards to self-censorship, which include difficulties in finding LGBTQ+ books, claiming the books do not circulate, posing the question “what will it say about me?”, professing there are no LGBTQ+ people in the community, and claiming there is no room in the budget for the purchase of such materials. Librarians are the gatekeeping intermediaries between patrons and books. They are the leaders in book selection and their own biases or prejudices should never impede this process, nor should popular opinion (Downey et al., 2013). Librarians must seek “a myriad of opinions represented by books that reflect the social and intellectual diversity of the world” (Jamison, 2018, para. 3). Self-censorship is an internal barrier to LGBTQ+ material access, and by participating, librarians are setting “a dangerous expectation that only certain groups should be allowed representation” (Pierson, 2017, p. 248).

Another common reason for self-censorship is the fear of backlash or controversy from the public. In the case of self-censorship in school libraries, librarians have been known to fear negative reactions from the parents of their student patrons (McEachreon, 2018). In fact, “according to a 2009 survey on self-censorship by *School Library Journal*, 70% of the library professionals claimed that concern about possible parent reactions factored into their decisions to acquire controversial titles” (Garry, 2015, p. 76). Parents, however, are not the only concern. Negative reactions can also come from the administration, the community, and the students themselves. Fear of this controversy, especially from those who have experienced it before, drives librarians to self-censor (Garry, 2015; Houde, 2018; Jamison, 2018; McEachreon, 2016). Garry (2015) claims librarians would go to great lengths to hide “controversial” LGBTQ+ materials. These librarians would claim there was no room in the budget, “hide” LGBTQ+ books in the adult shelves or remove searching identifiers within the catalog records to make the books more difficult to find (Garry, 2015). Self-censorship contradicts the ethical mindset a librarian is meant to represent – one meant to fight for intellectual freedom and social responsibility as a whole – which reflects poorly on the profession. As per the American Library Association’s (2006) *Library Bill of Rights*,

librarians should challenge censorship and ensure no one is denied access to resources based on their sexual orientation. Librarians have a moral and professional obligation to the LGBTQ+ community. Making these resources available to not only the LGBTQ+ community but also to allies and even the naysayers has the potential to teach those who may not understand the LGBTQ+ community and expand their horizons on the subject, thus creating a positive impact within the broader community.

If these issues are occurring internally within our libraries, how do we solve the problem of self-censorship? Pierson (2017) proposes furthering librarian education and training focused specifically on LGBTQ+ needs. In a study conducted in 2006 on more than one thousand school librarians from Arkansas, Delaware, and North Carolina, it was found that self-censorship was evident within librarians "holding no formal collegiate education degree (BSE or MS/MSE) with library media certification or licensure" (Rickman, 2010, p. 15). Formally trained librarians who have been educated in library studies, particularly on the subject of inclusion and social responsibility, are more likely to avoid censorship as they have the skills needed to develop well-rounded collections (Pierson, 2017). As Pierson (2017) states, "training is integral" (p. 254) to combating the lack of LGBTQ+ materials within library collections, reminding those in the profession of their professional and moral code and the patrons they serve, which, of course, includes the LGBTQ+ community. External assistance also exists in forms of LGBTQ+-focused groups within the library sciences field, such as IFLA's LGBT Users Special Interest Group (Glusac, 2018) and the American Library Association's (2009) Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Round Table. The overall mission of these groups is to provide members with a "forum for discussion and an environment for education and learning regarding the needs of the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender professional community and population at large" (American Library Association, 2009, para. 2).

## External Censorship

According to an interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*, librarians are obligated to "select materials without regard to the sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation of their creators" (American Library Association, 2007, para. 4). Internal censorship is often committed by the library staff themselves, but another common form of censorship

is one committed by external influences, such as the library's community itself. In the previous section, parents of students were briefly discussed as external forms of censorship, but this section will focus on the library's community at large. In Canada, homosexual acts were decriminalized in 1969; however, the United States' federal decriminalization of homosexual acts did not occur until 2003 (McEachreon, 2016). Canada preceded the United States in the legalization of same-sex marriage in 2005, while, as of 2014, only 35 states have legalized same-sex marriage (McEachreon, 2016). Despite the differences between these countries' societal shifts, the acceptance of LGBTQ+ materials has grown over time (Chemerinsky & Gillman, 2017; Houde, 2018). Laws and legislation are changing, making gay rights relevant and current events (McEachreon, 2016). Despite the increasing acceptance of LGBTQ+ persons and materials available to the public, there are still several cases where these materials are censored. Although there are many examples,  highlight the censorship of Drag Queen Story Hour and discuss a case study of the Iowa LGBTQ+ book burning.

To showcase Drag Queen culture, libraries across Canada and the United States have partnered with Drag Queens in their communities to read stories to children. Drag Queen Story Hour (DQSH) (n.d.) "captures the imagination and play of the gender fluidity of childhood and gives kids glamorous, positive, and unabashedly queer role models" (para. 1). Yet, despite the program's positive message on gender fluidity, some libraries have encountered community backlash for hosting this program. At the Toronto Public Library, for instance, claims were made that the program was indoctrinating and "grooming" children (Shakeri, 2018). DGSH was deemed a "cancer" by a blogger discussing the program in Illinois libraries (Higgins, 2017). Much like the previously discussed instances of self-censorship, librarians are feeling pressure from their communities to pull these types of LGBTQ+ programs due to public outcry. The mayor-president of Lafayette, Louisiana was concerned about DGSH at a local public library and said he planned to cancel the event (Mastricolo, 2018). However, in this case, the citizens of Lafayette supported the program, and the National Coalition Against Censorship stood against the mayor-president's decision (Mastricolo, 2018). Even those who disagreed with the program argued it was not right to cancel it (Mastricolo, 2018).

Another case of external censorship was the Iowa book burning. Paul Dorr, a resident of Orange City, Iowa, and director of a pro-life, anti-homosexuality group, checked out LGBTQ+ books from the local public library and burned them on video broadcasted across the internet (Dockter, 2018). Dorr's protest is an extreme example of censorship from the public, but his actions showcase a real, shared mentality that still exists within the public today. Additionally, while this was an isolated event, it showcases the lengths to which the public may go to censor ideas they do not believe in. Librarians find themselves in a unique position of serving both sides of the community: those who oppose LGBTQ+ materials and the LGBTQ+ community itself. How do librarians protect the LGBTQ+ community from external censorship?

Libraries' openness and transparency are key in developing a positive relationship between them and their community. Libraries can be powerful allies in providing LGBTQ+ materials for the LGBTQ+ community, while simultaneously educating the rest of the public. The first step, and a simple one that starts at the source, is for librarians to understand the LGBTQ+ community (Houde, 2018). Dispelling misconceptions and myths, and keeping oneself informed about the LGBTQ+ community aids in educating the greater public (Houde, 2018). Librarians can also map out their communities to know more about their LGBTQ+ population and the services needed (McEachreon, 2016).

Another method by which librarians can limit LGBTQ+ censorship from external sources is through library-community partnerships. Partnerships with community organizations and volunteers to support LGBTQ+ communities and interests has the potential to engage not only members of the LGBTQ+ community, but members of the greater public as well, providing an educational opportunity (McEachreon, 2016). The normalization of the LGBTQ+ community through community partnerships streamlines its public acceptance. Finally, librarians can display collections, materials, and art to convey their support for the LGBTQ+ community. An example is the Reverse Vandalism project undertaken by the San Francisco Public Library in 2004 (McEachreon, 2016), which was conducted as follows (San Francisco Public Library, n.d.):

> "In early 2001, San Francisco Public Library staff began finding vandalized books shoved under shelves, hidden throughout the Main Library. Ultimately over 600

> torn and sliced books, on gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender topics, women's issues and HIV/AIDS were deemed beyond repair and withdrawn from the Library's collection. Rather than discard the damaged books, the Library distributed them to interested community members in the hope of creating art. The wide variety of artistic responses to this hate crime resulted in "Reversing Vandalism," an exhibition of over 200 original works of art, displayed in the Main Library from January 31 through May 2, 2004" (para. 1).

Projects such as Reverse Vandalism are a way to educate the public by introducing alternate lenses that address discrimination in LGBTQ+ communities and remind the public that censorship is still alive and well in the present day.

As indicated by McEachreon (2016), there has been great progress towards the improvement of LGBTQ+ human rights, but "there is still work to be done" (p. 190). Libraries who continue to create partnerships within their communities can be a part of the solution, much like the San Francisco Public Library's 'Reverse Vandalism' project, to create a community that is no longer 'us vs. them', but rather a cohesive community of understanding.

## Institutional Censorship

Lastly, censorship of LGBTQ+ materials can originate at the institutional level. This institutional censorship can be seen in library subject headings; controlled vocabulary and cataloguing methods, such as the Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC); and curriculum restrictions and internet filtering within school and public libraries. Subject headings in library catalogues are used to guide a patron to a material's categorization and aid them in finding the material right for them (Library of Congress, n.d.). Commonly used subject headings are the Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH) and Sears subject headings. The LCSH have been used to catalogue Library of Congress (LOC) materials since 1898 and are used as subject headings in various libraries throughout the United States and Canada (Library of Congress, n.d.; McClary & Howard, 2007). These subject headings reflect the current culture of the times in which they are developed, and, "designed to provide access to materials to non-specialists" (Johnson, 2010), they determine how materials are categorized for the general public. Over time, outdated subject headings reflected in the LCSH have been improved or

corrected (Johnson, 2010; McClary & Howard, 2007). McClary and Howard (2007) note that terms referring to homosexuality “are not static, but are continuously changing and evolving, making the selection of appropriate and useful catalogue terms particularly challenging” (p. 152). McClary’s and Howard’s (2007) study looked at the use of subject headings for LGBTQ+ young adult (YA) and adult fiction in urban Canadian libraries. They found “YA titles in general have a higher rate of being assigned [Gay, Lesbian. Bi. Trans]-specific subject headings than do adult titles” (McClary & Howard, 2007, p. 157); however, less than half of the books they analyzed had the appropriate subject headings for their content. While this lack of proper cataloguing may not be intentional censorship, it arises within a system grounded in institutionalized censorship (Pierson, 2017), which limits discovery and access to LGBTQ+ materials for patrons, hiding the materials within the catalogue.

Sears subject headings were developed in 1923 and, like LCSH, the “changes in subject headings have reflected the changes in society” (Marcus, 2012, p. 5), particularly for LGBTQ+ terminology. In 2007, after more states began embracing marriage equality, the Sears headings were changed to reflect LGBTQ+ terminology, including headings such as “Gay rights, Gay parents, and Ordination of gays and lesbians” (Marcus, 2012, p. 5). As with the LCSH, Sears headings were slow to change, but Marcus (2012) addresses the crucial point that “keeping track of changes in terminology is especially important for young people and others who search for books that mirror their personal experience” (p. 5). Developing more current and familiar subject headings decreases the potential for institutionalized censorship, reminding librarians to adhere to their obligation to provide access to anyone, regardless of their sexuality or identity.

Censorship through curricula has a trickle-down effect that enhances the previously mentioned forms of censorship within the public and among librarians. The culture in which the school or school district resides will affect the curricula (Pierson, 2017); If the education system creates barriers to LGBTQ+ information and materials, this will be reflected in the public’s perspective on LGBTQ+ communities (Pierson, 2017). As discussed by Pierson (2017), these barriers are often seen in the American

educational system as “eight states in the United States [...] legally prohibit LGBTQ+-inclusive curriculum development” (p. 248).

Additionally, internet filtering is common within school and public libraries and, depending on the institution and the culture surrounding it, words and subjects relating to the LGBTQ+ community may be filtered (Pierson, 2017). Pierson (2017) acknowledges that this may be an extreme case of censorship; however, restricting online access to LGBTQ+ information within public spaces can negatively impact members of the LGBTQ+ community, especially young people who seek information in what are meant to be safe spaces (Pierson, 2017). The Kaiser Family Foundation conducted a study in 2002, which focused on testing “access to health information sites for teens by surveying seven commonly used filters” (Schrader, 2009, p. 108). The results of the study found that “60% of lesbian and gay health sites” were blocked for teens (Schrader, 2009, p. 108), indicating a significant form of censorship restricting LGBTQ+ teen access.

## Conclusion

The legalization of same-sex marriage in Canada and the United States, and the subsequent immersion of LGBTQ+ perspective into media, have caused a cultural shift. With any cultural shift controversy emerges. Censorship is meant to hide or suppress controversial topics, in that it is “an action that seeks to remove parts or all of a work, and [is] usually due to what in the material the censor deems as obscene” (Houde, 2018, p. 63). I have discussed the causes of internal, external, and institutional censorship, and suggested resolutions. The suggestions I have presented may impact communities on a small scale, as more significant reductions in the censorship of LGBTQ+ materials will require a larger shift in cultural perspective. As Pierson (2017) suggests, the most feasible solution to the problem at hand is time. The removal and censorship of LGBTQ+ materials within libraries has gradually decreased and will continue to do so; however, it is up to librarians to make an impact by observing due diligence and upholding their commitment to intellectual freedom and social responsibility. Librarians must provide access to information for all members of the community (American Library Association, 2017). It is through this access they can be

agents of change (Lankes, 2013), establishing an inclusive community in which valuable information about and for its LGBTQ+ members is no longer restricted.

## Conflict of Interest Statement

None declared.

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# *The Librarian's Guide to Homelessness: An Empathy-driven Approach to Solving Problems, Preventing Conflict, and Serving Everyone*

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## Book Information

Ryan J. Dowd, The librarian's guide to homelessness: an empathy-driven approach to solving problems, preventing conflict, and serving everyone, ALA Editions, 2018, ISBN: 978-0-8389-1626-1, 248 pp, $75.05 CDN

A common challenge for early-career librarians is learning to deal effectively with all potential patrons, and an excellent place to start is Ryan Dowd's *The Librarian's Guide to Homelessness: An Empathy-Driven approach to solving problems, preventing conflict, and serving everyone.* The book works as a primer for new library staff, as well as a refresher on strategies to work with patrons currently experiencing homelessness. Beginning with common myths regarding homelessness, the author quickly moves into different strategies staff can take to better serve all of their library's patrons.

The director of a large homeless shelter in the Chicago area, Dowd uses his legal background and Master's in Public Administration to inform his book. Although not a librarian himself, Dowd establishes his credibility with two decades of experience working with the homeless and his local shelter in Illinois; he has volunteered there since he was 13-years-old, and since served as the executive director after finishing law school.

The majority of the book discusses empathy-driven tools for staff and the best situations in which to use them. For instance, Dowd explains "The Cup Full of Pennies" concept, wherein every time you do something positive for the patron you add a mental penny to your cup. This can be as simple as introducing yourself or asking how you can help them. Whenever you roll your eyes, raise your voice, or use a punishment, you lose five pennies. In short, you want to keep a positive number of pennies. The 5:1 ratio balances the single negative interaction with five positive ones. The book is written in a conversational rather than academic tone with personal stories throughout, giving the book an accessible style. Dowd also uses popular culture in his writing, aligning the empathy tools with Jedi mind tricks and something that Batman would have in his tool belt.

Dowd uses catchy and engaging titles for the tools he describes as a way to keep his reader engaged. With names like "The Jerry Seinfeld," "The Echo," and "The 22 Pound Chocolate Smile," the book is an engaging read. It further divides the tools into three categories: mind, body, and words. It also explains interesting points, like how people experiencing homelessness pay more attention to physical cues. So, although one may be speaking politely, a clenched fist is not putting anyone at ease. At the same time, the tools cover a wide array of situations. A majority of the situations and tools that the author describes can be relevant for patrons in general. Another highlight of the book is Dowd's personal stories. Because he has significant experience, he draws on his past. Those who have worked with the public may find sentiments reflected here.

Although beneficial for a number of organizations, this book would be a great addition to any library, especially those with patrons and staff who are interested in a social work career path. For smaller libraries, it would be a good idea to ensure that the

book is available through interlibrary loan or a library consortium because it should be made available wherever staff interacts with the public.

## Conflict of Interest Statement

None declared.

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# The Impact of Knowledge Management on Innovation in Academic Libraries

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## Abstract

In an ever-changing environment, innovation is a key concern for nearly every organization, including libraries. Innovation is not necessarily spontaneous; in fact, workplace factors including knowledge preservation and management can have both positive and negative impacts on the innovativeness of organizations. But how can knowledge management translate into innovation? What kind of knowledge do knowledge management systems capture? And most importantly, why should academic libraries care? This paper aims to assess the impact of knowledge management tools on innovation within an academic library context and highlight areas of further research. Based on the literature reviewed, common findings include that an effective KM system supports innovation and learning within organizations and that there are several variables within the framework of KM which can increase the effectiveness of the KM system. These variables include the use of KM tools for staff and customers alike, cooperative and supportive management attitudes, and the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to codify and share knowledge between institutions

*Keywords*: Innovation, Knowledge Management, Academic Libraries, Literature Review

The importance of innovation within the field of library and information studies cannot be overstated; libraries are no longer expected to simply exist as a welcoming repository for physical books. With decreased budgets and an exponential increase in digital literacy needs, libraries are forced to continually adapt to these changes or risk becoming obsolete to the community they are trying to serve. These ongoing adaptations often lead to innovative new ideas that positively impact the services that are provided by libraries for their patrons, particularly in academic libraries where the library users are at the leading edge of research and development. But how

are these innovations captured and codified? How are they shared? Do the current systems help or hinder innovation? While the personal knowledge of staff can contribute to the progression of a library, what happens when those key staff members leave -how do you keep that level of expertise and experience when you cannot keep the individual? This literature review seeks to analyse how knowledge management (KM) tools and processes impact the levels of innovation within academic libraries. Sources were found within library-centric, peer-reviewed publications, and were chosen based on their completeness and recency. The studies used include both qualitative and quantitative data and offer several variables that impact innovation in positive ways. Common findings include that an effective KM system supports innovation and learning within organizations and that there are several variables within the framework of KM which can increase the effectiveness of the KM system. These variables include the use of KM tools for staff and customers alike, cooperative and supportive management attitudes, and the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to codify and share knowledge between institutions. At the end of this paper, areas for future research will be examined.

## Defining Terms

In this literature review, innovation is defined as the introduction into the organization of a new product, service, technology, or administrative practice; or a significant improvement to an existing product, service, technology, or administrative practice (Damanpour, 1996). While innovation can take many different forms producing many different outcomes, the focus of this literature review is examining the impact of KM practices on the implementation of innovations within the academic library.

Knowledge can be a somewhat nebulous term, but for in this review, it can be defined as an individual’s application of information, and the subsequent usefulness of that application (Roberts, 2000). Knowledge itself can be broken into two main categories. Explicit knowledge is that which has been codified and can be utilized immediately. Implicit knowledge is often harder to capture and can be thought of as the "know-how" of staff. While harder to qualify and quantify, implicit knowledge is a critical element to the success of any organization as it keeps the organization on track by ensuring the smooth operation in day-to-day tasks. Implicit knowledge is often linked to

individuals, which will be discussed later in this review. This review examines both explicit and implicit knowledge since both forms of knowledge can facilitate innovation.

An important point to note is that the existence of knowledge does not necessarily directly translate into innovation. The knowledge within an organization must be operationalized to contribute to change and innovation. Subsequently, the generation, capture, and codification of knowledge allows for innovation within an organization only when it is managed and disseminated correctly. With that focus in mind, it becomes important to define how KM is used and applied in a broad sense.

According to Agarwal & Island (2014), knowledge management is operationalized in three distinct phases that form the KM cycle. The first phase is knowledge capture/creation, which defines the knowledge within the organization. The second phase is knowledge sharing and transfer, during which the knowledge that was previously captured is made available to others for use. The creation of a foundation of knowledge and making that knowledge accessible to the required users within the organization are the first steps in successfully integrating a knowledge management system (KMS) into an academic library. Finally, the third phase is knowledge application and use. From there, the KMS can be used as a tool to inspire innovation within the organization by ensuring that lessons learned in the past are captured, and that past experiences can help the organization grow.

At its core, a knowledge management system (KMS) is a program or platform that allows for the capture of formal and informal knowledge, and the subsequent operationalization of that knowledge into the processes and daily work of the organization's members (Maier, 2007, p. 86). It can be as simple as a shared Google Drive, or as complicated as a multi-national intranet with automated resources. The unifying element of any KMS is the support it provides to the process of knowledge management.

## Knowledge Capture and Creation

"Academic libraries are knowledge-creation enterprises in which a large amount of knowledge is created regularly for their customers" (Daneshgar & Parirokh, 2012, p.8). As the first step of the knowledge management cycle, knowledge creation and capture are crucial to innovation in that it creates the knowledge that is applied to

systems to improve them. Koloniari et al. (2018) suggest that an organizational culture that promotes collaboration, learning, and trust is a critical foundation for an innovative organization and that the organizational culture has the largest impact on both knowledge creation and innovation of any other variable. The importance of a collaborative and innovative culture was echoed in Jantz (2017), where the onus for innovation was placed on management, who have the responsibility to promote continuous organizational change and development. Management sets the tone for the overall culture within the workplace and actively affects the job satisfaction of its employees. Evener (2015) states that employees who feel engaged and valued within their organization, and who are encouraged by their supervisors to work to their full capacity, try new methods or procedures, and celebrate their mistakes have higher overall job satisfaction. Not only are they more involved in the workplace, but the innovation within the organization is higher when the employees feel valued and supported.

As well as having supportive management, libraries should utilize all sources of knowledge that are available to them to improve their services. Daneshgar & Parirokh (2012) suggest that customer knowledge is an incredibly useful tool in guiding the innovative development of academic libraries. They break down knowledge into three broad categories: knowledge for customers (KFC), knowledge about the customer (KAC), and knowledge from the customer (KRC). Knowledge for customers is the knowledge that is used to respond to the customer's knowledge requirements and is personal in that it answers specific questions or responds to the specific needs of the customers at the time. This type of knowledge is situation dependent and is a primary output of a knowledge management cycle that results from the combination of KAC and KRC (Daneshgar & Bosanquet, 2010). Knowledge about customers, or KAC, is the information that the staff collects about the patrons to respond to them in a personalized way, and best answer their questions (Daneshgar & Bosanquet, 2010). A prime example of the collection of this type of knowledge is the reference interview when reference librarians gather the requirements, parameters, and expectations of the patron to respond to their inquiries. Finally, knowledge from the customer, or KRC, is the knowledge gains from the customers themselves. This could include their local area

knowledge, thoughts, opinions, and other personal knowledge that is shared, explicitly or otherwise, with the library. (Daneshgar & Bosanquet, 2010). This third type of knowledge is one that is underutilized but can also have a large impact on the assessment of customer needs, which can, in turn, prompt innovation in response to changing needs. When knowledge from the customer and knowledge about the customers are combined and disseminated amongst the staff, an improved output of knowledge for the customer can be achieved (Daneshgar & Bosanquet, 2010).

These three types of knowledge can (and should) be codified and shared as another avenue of assessing the needs of customers. From their study, they found that the use of KMS primarily facilitates the creation of knowledge for customers but requires using all three knowledge types for the best results. When all three forms of customer-related knowledge are operationalized throughout the institution via a KMS, the potential for innovation that centers around improved customer service is increased.

In the first phase of the KM cycle, there seems to be a consensus that the organizational culture promoted by management has a positive impact on innovation within the organization, and that codification of a variety of knowledge sources contributes to a more holistic understanding of the needs and wants of the customer base. By capturing knowledge from customers and knowledge about customers, academic libraries can then provide a higher quality of knowledge for the customers and increase the potential within the library for service-centric innovation.

## Knowledge Sharing and Transfer

The next step in the KM cycle is the sharing and transfer of knowledge that was created previously. This step can be limited to within the organization or can extend to sharing information between organizations. Agarwal & Islam (2014) suggest that there are two different types of tools that libraries can use to facilitate knowledge sharing and transfer: technology and non-technology tools. Technology tools encompass methods such as video conferencing, file sharing, intranets, and social networking. Non-technology tools include collaborative workspaces, storytelling, and directories of experts (Agarwal & Islam, 2014).

Stosic & Sofronijevic (2011) identify ICTs as a key element in supporting the improvement of work processes and that ICTs are applicable in all aspects of library

innovation, from customer service to upper management. In the second stage of the KM cycle, ICTs “facilitate the rapid collection, storage, and use of explicit knowledge [...] and enhances knowledge sharing and creation” (Koloniari et al., 2018, p.794). Ugwu & Ekere (2017) also emphasized the importance of understanding the tools available to the staff that can increase innovation and service quality. In their study, focusing on university libraries in Nigeria, they found that the main activities that supported innovation included learning about new practices, user interfaces, and the application of new technology to meet the needs of the students and staff. ICTs can also be used to eliminate communication and collaboration barriers between different departments within the organization (Lee & Choi, 2003), which in turn leads to better overall communication and problem-solving. Smith and Farquhar (2000) argue that the role of technology, and particularly ICTs, is to create a knowledge hub that facilitates the communication of new ideas and procedures to those that use them. The ICTs should enable members of those communities to discuss and share new ideas, validate them as a group, and implement successful innovations in their workplace (Smith & Farquhar, 2000). The cycle then begins again, allowing for continual conversation and learning within the community. Some examples of ICTs that enable this sort of interaction could be intranet SharePoints, collaborative workspaces such as the Google Suites, or even regular meetings and brainstorming sessions in person.

## Organizational Culture & Change

Wen (2005) and Jantz (2017) both note that libraries are often hesitant to accept change. Academic libraries are known for sticking with their traditional roles and what has worked in the past. Past studies have shown that one of the biggest roadblocks for innovation and knowledge sharing is the organizational culture of the workplace (Smith & Farquhar, 2000). It is up to management and the human resources department to encourage and incorporate both explicit and implicit knowledge sharing within the organization. Some staff are hesitant to share their knowledge because they see themselves as indispensable; once they share their carefully curated experience, they may not be valued as the sole user of that knowledge (Wen, 2005). This hesitancy can be enhanced during times of change and upheaval, where staff are already under other stressors. Another aspect that might hinder the open sharing of knowledge is the

traditional culture of the academic library. That sense of doing things the way they have always been done preserves the long-standing status quo (Jantz, 2017) and that type of organizational culture can stifle the desire for change. Moving away from a strictly hierarchical organizational framework into a more flexible one can contribute to the shift in culture that would allow for more innovation and creativity among the staff. Resistance to that sort of change can limit the library's ability to innovate. Chen et al. (2010) argue that a supportive work environment will create a climate that facilitates knowledge sharing and encourages employees to put their efforts into applying their collective knowledge towards innovative new projects and ideas. The flatter, more integrated the organizational structure is, the more autonomy workers are given (Chen et al. 2010). That autonomy and freedom is another contributing factor that positively affects innovation within academic libraries. With a more open approach to knowledge sharing, the organization can then make use of the ICTs and other knowledge capture tools to codify staff knowledge and add it to the collective understanding of their work.

However, Biranvand et al. (2015) note that without a managerial understanding of the factors that influence knowledge sharing, most knowledge management systems will fail no matter the organizational structure. Organizational culture comes into play once again, because if there is a prohibitive culture, even the most state-of-the-art KMS will fail (Lee & Choi, 2003). With the correct understanding of their impact on the KMS within the organization, managers can promote positive learning interactions among their employees, which in turn is "one of the most effective ways to increase specialized knowledge" (Lee & Choi, 2003, p. 3) in staff members. Wen (2005) argues that using existing staffing and technology in the implementation of a grassroots KMS is the most practical and cost-effective way for academic libraries to start their KM journey. It will allow a library, which may already be fiscally constrained, to prove the effectiveness of a KMS before potentially investing in more complex and expensive systems. By encouraging the current management structure to implement a basic KMS into their daily work, the organization creates a "network of Knowledge Management managers" (Wen, 2005, 3.2.1) that can focus on the information and knowledge relevant to their department of the organization. From there, managers can begin pulling "knowledge

relevant to their operations from other units/departments" (Wen, 2005, 3.2.1) to improve their processes.

## Conclusion and Future Research

The literature discussed within this paper covers a large scope of research, all falling under the umbrella topic of KM. For most of the sources, there are some general points of consensus regarding the importance of KM within academic libraries, particularly concerning the level of innovation within those libraries. The KM cycle is broken down into three phases: knowledge creation/capture, knowledge sharing/transfer, and knowledge application. All three of those phases within the KM cycle have an impact on the level of innovation in the services provided within academic libraries (Islam et al. (2017). There is some discussion as to whether knowledge sharing had a noticeable impact on innovation (Islam et al., 2017), but more localised studies have found that all three phases of the KM cycle do contribute to innovation, albeit on a lower scale than phase one and three of the KM cycle (Ugwu & Ekere, 2017).

One primary finding of many of the sources was that organizational culture and management style directly impacts the willingness and openness of staff in all phases of the KM cycle. A collaborative, trusting environment is a critical element to a successful work environment that will in turn foster a more innovative organization (Biranvand et al., 2015). Trust in their parent organization is directly linked with more motivation and knowledge growth among staff (Biranvand et al., 2015), and encourages staff members to take the initiative, and adopt an active role in decision making (Koloniari et al., 2018).

Another key point is the use and integration of ICTs in the development of KMS, and their positive impact on innovations and their implementation. ICTs can facilitate the propagation of knowledge, and there are several different styles of ICTs that can be tailored to libraries in general, and academic libraries in particular. They also do not need to be state-of-the-art bespoke systems, nor do they have to be expensive. A KMS can be built from existing, commercially available software (such as Microsoft Office or Google Suites) and integrated into the current organisational hierarchy. With the implementation of ICTs or simply new KMS, staff should be given the education and training required to successfully implement the new system, and to create the buy-in required for positive and enthusiastic forward movement.

Now more than ever, academic libraries are being asked to change at an ever-increasing rate to support their parent institution. While the concept of knowledge management and its positive impact on innovation within organizations is not new, the operationalization of KMS and ICTs within academic libraries is still not perfect. Areas of future research could include the involvement of customer knowledge into institutional KMS, and the impact of different organizational cultures in response to the increased use of technologies in the workplace. These findings should apply to academic libraries of any size or function and could even be expanded to include other similar organizations that strive to capture and apply new knowledge to improve their best practices.

## Conflict of Interest Statement

None declared.

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# Confronting the Democratic Discourse of Librarianship: A Marxist Analysis

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The notion that libraries are pivotal to the proper functioning of a democracy is ubiquitous, especially within libraries themselves and within Library and Information Studies programs. It is repeated ad nauseum by library CEOs, trustees, and professors, and has, especially, become prevalent in the current debate regarding objectionable speakers being allowed to use the public library as a platform. For example, Vickery Bowles, CEO of the Toronto Public Library and a central figure in the controversy surrounding Trans* Exclusionary Radical Feminist (TERF) speakers, made this explicit in a statement released on October 19, 2019, in which she wrote: “While [Toronto Public Library] encourages public debate and discussion about differing ideas, we also encourage those with opposing or conflicting viewpoints to respectfully challenge each other’s ideas and not the library’s democratic mandate to provide space for both” (Bowles, 2019, n.p.). In this formulation, “democracy” cannot be challenged.

In truth, this idea is rarely actively questioned and the result of this privileging of discourse is that when it is challenged, the alternative position presented seems almost heretical. In *Confronting the democratic discourse of librarianship: A Marxist approach*, Sam Popowich goes beyond this and offers an alternative model of viewing both our society and libraries, as well as the roles that libraries play in individual and communal life. Providing a necessary antidote to the anodyne of the democratic discourse, Popowich dissects the model of librarianship accepted today, gives insight into the deeper roots of our inherited practices, demolishes prejudices, and issues a provocative call for librarians to re-examine librarianship and its role in the modern world.

The most basic issue Popowich raises is surprisingly simple but powerful nevertheless: the statement that libraries are cornerstones of democracy *presumes* that we live in a democratic state. But is this a presumption? Do we live in a democracy? Popowich would argue that no, we live, rather, in an "authoritarian state which manages the affairs of capital to the detriment of people's lives and the planet" (Popowich, Two democracies, 2019, n.p.). What we call democracy, Popowich argues, is "a noble lie, serving to support an unjust, unequal, and exploitative state of affairs" (Popowich, 2019, p. 30). In a sense, then, this statement serves to discourage any close reading of the nature of our culture and government that could jeopardize that presumption; it is a mystification of the real or material relations at play and serves to reproduce the conditions under which it arose, namely, Enlightenment Liberalism and capitalism.

Popowich, currently Discovery and Web Services Librarian at the University of Alberta Libraries and a Ph.D. candidate in political science at the University of Birmingham, is well-placed to write this critique. He is also a prolific blogger, as can be seen from the number of times his excellent work on *Red Librarian* is cited in this review. His research in Marxist theory (particularly Italian Marxism, or autonomist Marxism) and his ongoing interest in "a critique of hegemonic intellectual freedom and the ways in which constituent power might offer an alternative perspective more adequate to the current socio-political context" (Popowich, 2020, n.p.) make him eminently qualified.

Popowich's work falls squarely within the realm of "critlib." Critlib can be vaguely defined as the emergent constellation of writers and thinkers who are active in critical

librarianship, a group to which Popowich could rightly lay claim as a member. As Popowich himself points out, critlib is less a group than a position (or a series of interrelated positions) that queries how libraries and archives, as institutions, are "implicated in structures of domination organized around class, race, gender, sexuality, disability, etc." (Popowich, Rifts and divisions, 2020, n.p.). In this context, Popowich's use of Marxist analysis is particularly insightful. By focusing on the material realities at the base of our social structures and relations, Popowich avoids the sentimentalities that sometimes take the place of analysis in LIS and to expose the ideas that we take for granted for the contingent ideologies they are. Further, Popowich devotes considerable attention to the ways in which identities intersect, showing how race, gender, and sexuality have been subsumed into capitalist logic to further the goals of capitalism itself, i.e., domination and self-reproduction.

It is tempting to see libraries as existing outside this sphere, to see them as somehow exempt from the demands of a culture based on marketplace transactions and the dominion of capital. This wishful thinking arises, in part, because library workers fail to see themselves as *workers as such* and instead identify, wrongly, with bourgeois class-consciousness (Popowich, 2019, p. 146), and, in part, because by identifying our work with the perpetuation of democracy, we essentially sacralize it and render it untouchable by the profane hand of labour (cf. Ettarh). In the resulting system, libraries, while not erasing the good work done by many librarians, essentially serve "the reproduction of capitalist ideology and social relations" (Popowich, 2019, p. 123).

Although the situation Popowich describes may seem bleak, it is not entirely damning. The final chapter proposes two strategies that Popowich sees as having potential as methods of resistance to capitalist hegemony. This is not a practical guide, however, and is more of a theoretical discussion of potentially disruptive ways of existing prior to the revolution.

Popowich's work is powerful and is well-argued. It is, however, quite academic and many of the basic concepts require significant explanation. Popowich does not presume that every reader is a master of, for example, Gramsci's conceptualization of hegemony, and therefore devotes significant space to the careful explication of relevant ideas and thinkers. However, this is still a substantial work and requires a certain

amount of prior critical knowledge to be impactful. This would be an entirely appropriate text for any academic collection and would certainly have a strong impact were it to be taught as part of a critical librarianship course.

Popowich problematizes the linkage between libraries and democracies by foregrounding the ways in which libraries act to reproduce the Enlightenment narrative of classical liberalism and capitalism. Although not every reader will agree with his analysis, or be convinced that capitalism is the enemy, it is, nevertheless, a valuable text that disrupts the hegemony of the democratic discourse of librarianship. In an era in which this discourse is being used as the justification for what Popowich has termed "intellectual freedom absolutism" (Popowich, Two democracies, 2019, n.p.), or the privileging of a concept of neutrality which allows for those with power to actively oppress the already marginalized, this disruption is sorely needed.

## Conflict of Interest Statement

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