Canadian Subject Headings related to Indigenous Peoples

CRKN Access to Knowledge Conference
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Overview

- LAC is responsible for describing published content and making it accessible.
- CSH is a subject headings list developed by LAC, contains over 2000 subject authority records in the English language on Canadian topics.
- CSH for indigenous related content is not appropriate, and that it is not how indigenous communities refer to themselves.
- LAC is grateful for the sharing of indigenous knowledge from our first consultations that helped identify more appropriate terminology.
- Goals:
  - to make the terminology in the catalogue more respectful
  - to make the terms in CSH cover the Indigenous people in Canada comprehensively
Current situation

• The problematic heading *Indians of North America -- Canada* comes from LCSH, a subject heading system controlled by the *Library of Congress*, not LAC.

• Follow the same structural rules: LCSH, CSH, RVM.

• *First Nations people* instead of *Indians of North America -- Canada*.

• LAC is the creator and editor of *Canadian Subject Headings* and as such can revise the current headings and add headings preferred by the communities.
Opportunities: Revise CSH

• The word Indian currently occurs in only 40 CSH headings for subjects or names of groups of people.
  – Use people following the names of groups of people instead of the qualifier (Indians)
    Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in people (CSH)

• LAC has identified headings in CSH that need to be changed. For example:
  Canada – Civilization – Indian influences
  becomes Canada – Civilization — First Nations influences
  Indian beadwork – Canada
  becomes First Nations people beadwork – Canada
  Indian reservations – Canada
  becomes First Nations people reservations – Canada
Opportunities: Add to CSH

- Add to CSH headings from vocabularies created by communities. For example: Deer system, X̱wi7xwa library at UBC, University of Saskatchewan Indigenous Studies Portal and the MAIN Manitoba Archival Information Network (MAIN).

- LAC has identified headings in LCSH that should have Canadian alternatives provided in CSH. For example:

  - Siksika people (CSH) *not* Blackfoot Indians (LCSH)
  - Haida people (CSH) *not* Haida Indians (LCSH)
  - Mi’kmaq people (CSH) *not* Micmac Indians (LCSH)

- The community has asked for alternatives to the LCSH subdivisions.
  - -- Traditional knowledge (CSH) *not* -- Folklore (LCSH)
  - -- Spirituality (CSH) *not* -- Religion (LCSH)
Opportunities: Revise existing bibliographic descriptions

- Indians of North America has been used for Native Americans, American Indians, First Nations people.
- The CSH heading Native peoples -- Canada is somewhat broader, equating to Indigenous peoples -- Canada, but this reflects language from a few decades ago.
- The revision of existing bibliographic records is possible in order to delete the Indians of North America -- Canada heading, but WorldCat is a shared environment...
Immediate changes:
- WMS interface allows for use of syllabics
- 500 note for preferred language not captured in controlled vocabulary
  “Stuart Lake is known as Nak’album in Dakelh”

Broader recommendations:
- Indigenous materials cataloguing/portfolio specialist position
- Indigenous student librarian opportunity (Co-op)
Next steps

• Maintain open lines of communication
  – Consult with the Indigenous Matters Committee Working Group on Subject Headings and Classification; and the Canadian Committee on Cataloguing
• Revise headings currently in CSH authority records
• Add new CSH authority records to provide Canadian alternatives to the LCSH headings
• Change how subject headings are assigned to bibliographic records
• Use First Nations people and the name of the specific group of people as appropriate
• Maintain the language equivalent via RVM (Université Laval)
• Change the headings already used in LAC bibliographic records