Truth and Reconciliation—a Canadian Perspective

Association of Research Libraries—Fall Meeting
October 4, 2017
Indigenous peoples

First Nations
Inuit
Metis
The Canadian Context

- Pre-confederation – named agreements
- Post 1867 – Treaties 1–11
  - Exchanged Land
  - Education
  - Health Care etc.
  - Federal Government responsibility (Indigenous Northern Affairs Canada)
  - 1876 – Indian Act
- Reserves
Canada’s Solution – Assimilation and Residential Schools

• I want to get rid of the Indian problem. I do not think as a matter of fact, that the country has to protect a class of people…

Duncan Campbell Scott – Deputy Superintendent, Indian Affairs 1913–1932

• Our objective is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic…

Duncan Campbell Scott – Deputy Superintendent, Indian Affairs 1913–1932
Residential Schools

• 1880–1996

(Holy Angela—Ft Chipewyan Alberta—Photo courtesy of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation)

John S. Milloy (1999)
Residential Schools, Continued

• Ages 7–15
  (photos courtesy of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation)
The Canadian Context—Honoring the treaties...

- Poverty, joblessness, housing challenges, alcoholism and drug addictions/ loss of purpose
- Access to adequate health care & education
- Self-determination and self-government, greater influence and involvement
  - Protests, sit-ins, blockades, marches
  - Idle No More (2012)
Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada
Calls to Action

94 recommendations including…

• Creation of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (archives)
• Child Welfare
• Language and Culture
• Justice
• Health
• Education
National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation
Canadian Federation of Library Associations Truth and Reconciliation Report and Recommendations
Adopting an indigenous world view
(Canadian Federation of Library Associations Truth and Reconciliation Report and Recommendations – Camille Callison)
Recommendations – 10 over-arching

- Standing Committee – medicine wheel framework
- Support & encourage 94 TRC calls to action
- Ensure accessibility moving forward
- Decolonize Access and Classification
- Decolonize Libraries and Space
- Enhance opportunities for Indigenous library, archival and information professionals
- Recommend the implementation of Indigenous Knowledge Protection protocols
- Establish an online database of “living documents” to highlight existing Best Practices of Indigenous Services in libraries, archives, and cultural memory institutions
- Maintain a database of Indigenous organizations or groups committed to preserving cultural memory
Moving Forward – University of Manitoba

- Supporting Indigenous Students & Scholarship
  - Migizii Agamik – Bald Eagle Lodge
  - Vice Provost Indigenous Engagement
  - Indigenous Scholars Fund
University of Manitoba Libraries

• Indigenous Law Collection
• Indigenous collections (Graphic novels, other)
• Indigenous Student Services (Camille Callison) - outreach
• Decolonizing the Catalogue
  – Manitoba Archives Project
  – LC Subject Headings
  – Indians to Indigenous peoples …
    (Christine Bone)
  – Brian Deer – TRC collection
Looking Beyond Manitoba

• Internships and Residencies (UAlberta)
• Spaces and signage
• Cultural incorporation – Round dances, Pow Wows, Indigenous Convocation
• Elders in Residence
• Indigenous Student Services – orientation programs focused on relationship development
• Cultural Awareness for staff – Blanket Exercise
• Decolonizing library websites and libguides
• Indigenous recruitment
• Exhibits of indigenous art and scholarship