

## Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada

- The final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) included 94 Calls to Action was released in 2015
- These Calls to Action focus on the educational system, as it **has contributed to the negative relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada**

- **Libraries**, as sites of learning in and of themselves as well as key units within post-secondary institutions, **have a responsibility and opportunity to contribute to reconciliation** through collaborations and partnerships
- The Canadian Federation of Library Associations (2016) recognizes this role, and has created a Truth and Reconciliation Committee to

“promote initiatives in all types of libraries to advance reconciliation by supporting the TRC Calls to Action and to promote collaboration in these issues across the Canadian library communities” (p. 1).



Senator Murray Sinclair, Chair of the TRC



Treaty 6 Recognition, Edmonton Mayor Don Iveson

## Decolonizing Description Working Group

- Fall of 2016, University of Alberta Libraries (UAL) struck a Decolonizing Description Working Group (DDWG) to investigate, define, and propose a plan of action for how we could represent Indigenous peoples and contexts through our descriptive metadata practices.
- DDWG included **Metadata and Cataloguing Coordinators, Public Service Librarians, UAL's coordinator of Indigenous initiatives and an Indigenous intern (MLIS student)**.
- A literature review sought out publications or presentations describing practical implementations.
- An environmental scan was aimed at discovering similar initiatives proposed or under way in institutions across Canada, and to seek opportunities for collaborations and partnerships.
- **An analysis of metadata from the ILS and local digital/digitized collections** was used to estimate the scope of work required to enhance existing metadata, and to revise workflows for metadata yet to be created.

## Current Initiatives

As part of UAL's Academic Residency Program, Sheila Laroque has been hired to work on these recommendations of the Working Group. Some of the things she is focusing on include:

- **Outreach with universities and institutions** that have already begun or are doing similar work
- Organizing a symposium, called *Making Meaning*, bringing together Indigenous librarians and faculty, both within Alberta as well as across the country
- Follow up to this symposium will include **further relationship building** among our college and community partners, and further a scholarly discussion
- Collaborating with colleagues in adapting and making changes to **2 different collections that can be used as 'proof of concept'** – updating the Peel's Prairie Provinces online database as well as a small collection of print materials for the Aboriginal Teacher Education Program.
- Each of these collections will include their own sets of opportunities and challenges, as different metadata schemes, subject headings, new classification schemes and knowledge and expertise is shared and reassessed.
- In building relationships and partnerships, **we are leaving space for other projects and initiatives that may arise, that we have not considered as of yet.**

## Key Recommendations

1. Cooperatively develop and incorporate revised subject headings that more **accurately, appropriately, and respectfully represent Indigenous peoples and contexts**, and which can be seen as a model for change and widely implemented.
2. **That UAL take the lead** on working with Indigenous communities and partners to develop revised subject headings reflective of the Alberta and appropriate Northern contexts.
3. UAL engage an individual to coordinate and conduct consultation and outreach which is groundwork critical to the success of moving forward with this project. This **outreach must occur before developing or applying new subject headings.**
4. UAL **retroactively apply revised subject headings** to appropriate library resources including all categories covered. Going forward, the same approved subject headings will be applied to new content added to our library resources, whether done by UAL staff or our cataloguing vendors.



Photo: Andy Grabia

## Community Context



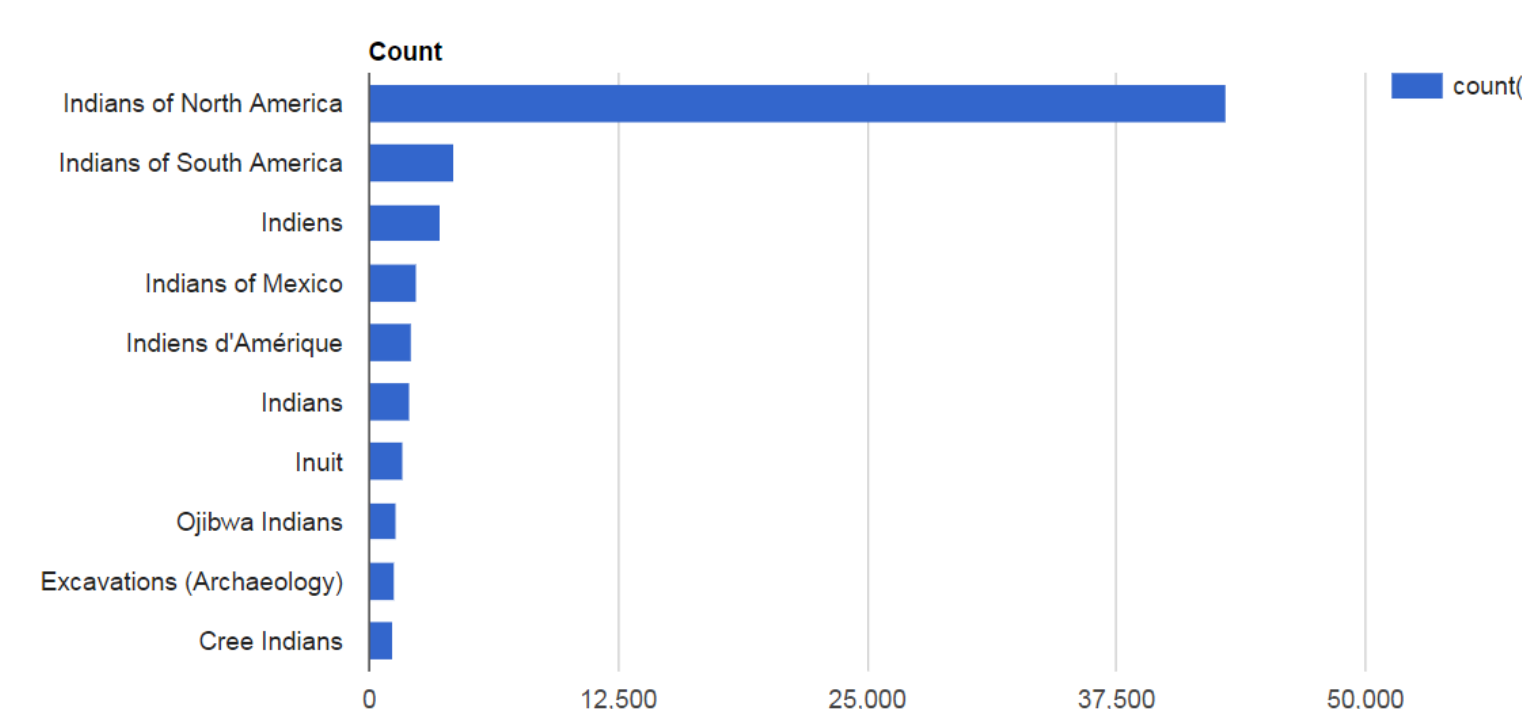
Numbered Treaties of Canada

Alberta is home to many diverse Indigenous communities, including Blackfoot (Niitsítapi), Cree (Nêhiyaw), Dene, Nakoda (Stoney), Saulteaux (Anishinaabe). There are **45 First Nations in three Treaty areas (Treaties 6, 7 and 8)**, as well as other groups who have not signed treaties. The most commonly spoken First Nations languages are **Blackfoot, Cree (mainly Plains Cree but some Woods Cree), Chipewyan, Dene, Sarcee and Stoney (Nakoda Sioux)**. Métis people live throughout the province, including in the Métis Settlements. In Alberta the Indigenous languages spoken by Métis people include **Cree and Michif**.

## Library Context

From June, 2017 there are **5,374,506** titles in the UAL database and **5,737,330** titles across NEOS (Networking Edmonton's Online Systems) including UofA.

- Based on the Manitoba Archival Information Network (MAIN) - LCSH Working Group's list of identified LCSH headings that could be either deleted or replaced, **62459** records were identified in the UAL's ILS that had matching LCSH terms
- From the 62459 UAL records extracted based on the MAIN headings, **9149** unique headings were identified associated with the titles, with the most common headings shown below:



## References

**Keywords:** metadata, cataloguing, decolonization, LIS practice, diversity of description, inclusive description, information ethics

**References** for this poster can be found here: <http://bit.ly/2xfMkGU>