



# Decolonizing Description

Sitka Cataloguing Working Group

2nd Summary Report - December 2022

## Background

The [1st summary report](#) on the work of the Sitka Cataloguing Working Group and work by Co-op staff was shared with the Sitka Business Function Group in November 2020 and covers the period March 2019-November 2020. This 2nd report summarizes activities, meeting discussions, and additional resources since the 1st report, up to December 2022.

## Timeline

### 2019-2020

- See 1st report, in the link above

### 2021

#### April - August

- Emily Carr University (ECUAD) local policy support / pilot for testing
  - Co-op staff met with staff from ECUAD to hear about their plans for decolonizing description
  - Subsequently, ECUAD staff provided a list of bibliographic items which Co-op staff used to provide a subset list of items that were not held by any other Sitka library. This list would enable ECUAD staff to begin making some local changes with very minimal risk to the records of other Sitka

member libraries. (The risk was deemed minimal, as ECUAD's collection is very specialized.)

- Letter sent to Co-op from VIU, Camosun, Selkirk and ECUAD expressing interest to further the discussion and to clarify Sitka cataloguing supports and policy
- Co-op staff continued to investigate some of the technical questions raised by the committee, including scoping of local subjects by library location and the ability to "hide", but still make searchable, certain headings.

September 28th - Cataloguing Committee Meeting (~20 participants public/post-sec/special)

- Hillary Webb and Jonas Emmett presented on work at ECUAD, their rationale for proceeding with Greater Victoria Public library's model (adopted by some other libraries, as well at least one major Canadian library materials vendor) and some of the technical analysis they had completed on their collection with some support from Co-op staff in providing lists.
- Discussion of proposal to move forward with "GVPL interim approach", with understanding that, as decisions from LAC and others were formalized, Co-op staff could support future changes. Discussion did not result in a recommendation for this approach and some questions were raised in the meeting that warranted more investigation
- Later the same day, LAC shared by email some additional decisions about changes to subject headings

## 2022

- January 11th - First meeting of Post-secondary Cataloguing Working Group (VIU/Camosun/Selkirk/ECUAD)
- January 25th - Sitka Business Function Group call - updated Group on work to date
- March 4th - Post-secondary Cataloguing Working Group meeting
- March/April - Staff testing of subject heading changes and ability to hide terms in public OPAC but still ensure searchable (i.e. only in Marc record with scope note) in test environment
- April 5th - Post-secondary Cataloguing Working Group meeting
- May 11th - Co-op staff and some CWG members attend virtual presentation on Respectful Terminology hosted by [NIKLA](#)
- May 12th - Post-secondary Cataloguing Working Group meeting
- September 28th - Post-secondary Cataloguing Working Group meeting
- December 7th - Post-Secondary Cataloguing Working Group meeting

## Additional Resources (since Nov. 2020 report)

- CSH updates - see [September 2021 email update from CSH](#) and link to MARC21.ca [CSH related to Indigenous Peoples: September 2022 \(Excel; 166 KB\)](#) with updates as of June 2022
- Proposed process for [LCSH changes](#) (June 2022)
- Proposal from NIKLA to create an open national indigenous [platform for respectful terminology](#) (May 2022)

## Key discussion items

Full Cataloguing Committee meeting - September 28, 2021:

- GVPL interim approach - presentation from ECUAD staff
  - concern that the approach did not include local consultation and can be built and improved upon by considering additional approaches and projects
- Some interest in “hiding” non-preferred terms, e.g. “Indians” from public display, but still allowing these to be searchable.

Post-Secondary Cataloguing Working Group - January - May, 2022:

Goal: To provide some focused review, expertise and “first step” recommendations to bring back to the Sitka Business Function Group’s Cataloguing Working Group

Accomplished by:

- a. Identifying a short list of priority headings from [GVPL’s interim list](#) to be changed in Sitka’s Evergreen;
- b. Recommending new headings for the short list of headings, based on work of other organizations
- c. Assisting Co-op Support staff to review changes and identify issues as they test scripts in a testing environment

Review and discussion of [September 2021 update from CSH](#) (links to email with link to spreadsheet) and key differences from GVPL’s recommendations. **NOTE that spreadsheet now shows updates to June 2022**

Identified and discussed [Priority headings to change](#) for each post-secondary library as selected from GVPL's interim list and identified common priority headings

Demonstration from Co-op staff (Jennifer and Mark) on a non-production server of a sample change scripting of [\\$650a Eskimos](#) to [\\$650a Inuit](#), with the non-preferred term "Eskimos" moved to \$690a (searchable but only visible in the MARC record)

Discussed drafting a statement regarding this work and the decision not to retain harmful terminology and the supports that Co-op staff could bring (policy, procedures, vendor advocacy)

Discussion about consultation with students, staff, liaison programs in some libraries.

## Decisions / Recommendations

Non-preferred headings will not be retained (i.e. as searchable, but not visible) in the catalogue.

Draft Statement on Decolonizing Descriptive Practice was developed, to be shared at February 2023 Sitka Business Function Group

To begin work early in 2023 to recommend subject headings to replace "Indians of North America -- " and "Eskimos".

## Co-op Cataloguing Support Tools

[Sample timeline and workflow](#) for Co-op Support to implement any scripted changes arising from recommendations (*Updated timeline will be provided as/when recommendations are made*)

Shareable spreadsheet of terms that are/will be changed, source of update terms, kept up-to-date, similar to interim [resource developed by GVPL](#) (*Pending, as decisions are made*)

Updates to [Sitka Policy & Best Practices Manual](#) as decisions are made, including any specific procedures and/or resources to support staff at Sitka member libraries (*Pending, as decisions are made*)

## Next steps (Pending for 2023)

- To share at February 2023 Sitka Business Function Group meeting:
  - draft Statement on Decolonizing Descriptive Practice
  - plans to provide space on Sitka Support page to share updates and gather resources, including a spreadsheet
- Begin work early in 2023 to recommend subject headings to replace “Indians of North America -- “ and “Eskimos”
  - Monitor [NIKLA](#) updates as well as reviewing other sources of alternate headings, e.g. [CKRN](#)
  - Develop process to engage, consult and communicate with member library staff
    - Including setting up a web page on the BCLC Sitka Support site to share resources and updates