

Info Policy News: Access Copyright, Library and Archives Canada, and more

By Joseph Haigh.

Recent Information Policy Committee (IPC) Activity

This spring the IPC has been busy communicating on a variety of pressing information policy concerns, such as the cutbacks at Library and Archives Canada. As usual, the listserv has been active, and we have now begun regularly updating the IPC blog (<http://bclainfopolicycommittee.wordpress.com/>) and Twitter account (@BCLA_InfoPolicy). If you are interested in information policy or have always wanted to learn more, now is a great time to join the discussion.

Media Concentration

On April 21, 2007, BCLA passed a resolution on Libraries and Media Concentration (<http://www.bcla.bc.ca/ipc/Resolutions/MediaCon.pdf>). The resolution stresses the primary role of libraries in ensuring access to a wide range of ideas and information and the negative effects that media concentration has for this role.

Recent announcements of cuts to the CBC's budget bring the concern for a diverse media landscape to the fore once again. With a public consultation on the CBC set to begin in November, Open Media has launched the Reimagine CBC campaign (<http://reimaginecbc.ca/>). The site includes a survey on public media priorities and an "Updates" section with ongoing coverage of changes being made to the CBC.

Community Access Program (CAP)

In April, the federal government announced it was terminating funding for the Community Access Program (CAP) (<http://tinyurl.com/Znvmmmf>). CAP provided funding towards free public internet access in libraries, community centres, and other locations throughout Canada.

Even if one excludes respondents who claim they have no use for internet access, the latest Canadian Internet Use Survey from Statistics Canada shows that approximately 10% of Canadian households do not

have internet access at home (<http://tinyurl.com/cwvmxnm>).

BCLA Resolution on Access Copyright and Academic Libraries in Canada

The IPC proposed a resolution on Access Copyright and Academic Libraries in Canada which was passed this May at the BCLA annual general meeting: <http://tinyurl.com/cchlmbf>.

This resolution speaks to an ongoing issue, with the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) and the Association of Canadian Community Colleges reaching model licensing agreements with Access Copyright. The licenses are being sold as a way for academic institutions to achieve price stability and avoid costly lawsuits.

The BCLA resolution voices concerns over intrusive monitoring practices and terms that go against the Supreme Court of Canada in defining copying to include "posting a link or hyperlink to a digital copy." Above all, the Access Copyright license provides, at a cost, potentially redundant permissions for educational uses that may be allowed under Canadian copyright law.

For further criticisms of the model license, see the analysis by CAUT (<http://tinyurl.com/88eqmkc>) and Michael Geist (<http://tinyurl.com/894efaz>). Ariel Katz has created a handy page compiling the announcements of institutions as they accept or reject the license agreement here: <http://tinyurl.com/82v2lom>.

Five Facts about the Library and Archives Canada Cuts

At this year's BCLA annual general meeting, a resolution was also passed to support the Canadian Association of University Teachers' Save Library and Archives Canada campaign (<http://www.savelibraryarchives.ca/>). BCLA members are urged to write their own letters concerning this issue.

Spending cuts in the 2012 federal budget have led LAC to announce staff reductions and cuts to the programs it oversees. This is a serious concern for BCLA members as it threatens to reduce public access to information, undercut the development and transmission of professional skills that make this information accessible, and impede the acquisition of new materials. Evidence-based policy making and the integrity of the historical record are some of the broader public goods being discussed in relation to these cuts. Below are five facts about the cuts, followed by links to further sources of information:

1. By 2014-2015, adjusted for inflation, LAC's budget will be 58% of what it was in 1990-1991 (<http://www.savelibraryarchives.ca/update-2012-05.aspx>).
2. On April 30, 2012, Library and Archives Canada eliminated the National Archival Development Program (NADP), a system designed to help archivists throughout Canada maintain archives and access national standards for their activities (<http://www.cdncouncilarchives.ca/CCAFactSheet v1.2Updated EN.pdf>).
3. Many local archives set to be closed due to funding cuts are run by volunteers (<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/story/2012/05/02/ottawa-libraries-archives-closing-budget-cuts.html>).
4. As of April 2, 2012, all in-person reference services at LAC will be in-person only (<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/whats-new/013-560-e.html>).
5. LAC digitization staff will be reduced by 50% (<http://www.savelibraryarchives.ca/update-2012-05.aspx>).

More on the cuts:

- "Annex 1: Responsible Spending." Budget 2012: <http://www.budget.gc.ca/2012/plan/anx1-eng.html>

- Library and Archives Canada, "LAC begins implementation of new approach to service delivery": <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/whats-new/013-560-e.html>
- "Be it resolved: save Library and Archives Canada," The Information Policy Blog: <http://bclainfopolicycommittee.wordpress.com/2012/05/12/be-it-resolved-save-library-and-archives-canada/>
- Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), Save Library and Archives Canada: <http://www.savelibraryarchives.ca/>
- Canadian Council of Archives Fact Sheet about the National Archival Development Program: <http://www.cdncouncilarchives.ca/CCAFactSheet v1.2Updated EN.pdf>
- Myron Groover, "The Wrecking of Canada's Library and Archives," The Tyee: <http://thetyee.ca/Opinion/2012/06/07/LibraryCuts/>

About the Information Policy Committee

The BCLA Information Policy Committee (IPC), a standing committee of the British Columbia Library Association, aims to advance and preserve access to information, and to advocate for the public interest in government decisions relating to information policy.

Any BCLA member is welcome to join the IPC's activities. For more information, join our listserv by using the BCLA website listserv management tool here: <http://www.bclibrary.ca/listservs/bcla/>

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