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Canadian Libraries on the Agenda: their accomplishments and directions

Gwynneth Evans

Réjean Savard

Abstract

The authors present an analysis of Canadian libraries in the light of the current president's theme: Libraries on the Agenda. Claudia Lux chose this theme with colleagues to emphasize the role of libraries in the information society and to encourage them to contribute to all sectors of society and to national development. The article is based on the review of a number of studies and on reports and research found in and beyond library literature. Canada is a very large country and its society is quite diverse. This article explains the major trends affecting all libraries in Canada: funding, digitization of collections, consortial arrangements for electronic collections, education, etc. The authors then review the situation in the various types of libraries; national, academic, public, school and special libraries. They conclude the paper with a reflection on leadership and the observation that Canadian libraries are on the agenda and active.

Keywords: Canada; Québec; libraries; library and information services; library education; librarianship

Introduction

For some years, the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) has organized its activities and interpreted its role as 'the leading international body representing the interests of library and information services and their users' through the use of the model of three pillars.[1] The model recognizes that IFLA's core functions relate to the societal contexts in which libraries and information services operate, to its membership and professional matters.

A second organizing principle for the Headquarters staff, governance structures and members has been the incoming president's choice of a theme to focus and encompass the priorities of the most senior elected officer's two-year tenure. Former presidents Kay Raseroka and Alex Byrne chose respectively 'Libraries for Lifelong Literacy' and 'Partnerships' as their themes.[2]

The theme of the current President, Claudia Lux, 'Libraries on the Agenda', was developed in consultation with the members, the Professional Committee and the Governing Board. It appeared timely, after the efforts IFLA dedicated to the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and the resulting recognition the organization received.

During her tenure, Claudia Lux' top priority will be to have the concerns and needs of libraries put on the agenda of governments and local policy makers.[3]

'Libraries on the Agenda' provides a useful lens through which to introduce readers to Canadian libraries and the library and information community. It allows the authors not only to identify the major achievements, challenges and issues facing the community in this rapidly changing technological, economic and social environment, but also to raise questions and make observations about the present state and directions of libraries in Canada. In order to see how the library community is faring, it is necessary to provide the Canadian context, both generally and in each of the particular areas of interest, need or concern. Where possible, the authors have used articles and documentation provided by governments, associations, institutions, communities and the media to assist in reviewing Canadian libraries and library and information professionals from the perspective of their funders, partners and users.

The Context: Profile of Canadian Society and the Library Community

Canada Year Book 2007 provides a detailed profile of Canadian society. In a large landmass bounded by three oceans, Canadians number 36.2 million people. They live in ten provinces in the southern part of the country and three territories across the North. While the territories account for 40 percent of the continental mass, they harbour only 1.3 percent of the population. Three provinces: Quebec and Ontario in central Canada and British Columbia on the Pacific coast, account for 75 percent of Canada's residents.

Most Canadians live along a narrow corridor close to the American border. Over 80 percent live in cities and, through immigration and amalgamation schemes over the last decade, the

Figure 1. Map of Canada. Original map data provided by the Atlas of Canada http://atlas.gc.ca © 2008. Data reproduced with permission of Natural Resources Canada.

six largest metropolitan areas have 45 percent of the population or 14.1 million people. Just fewer than 6 million people (about 16.5 percent) live in small towns and rural areas.

In large part, Canada now depends on immigration for its population growth and emerging workforce. The population is aging, and only in Nunavut, a large territory in the northeastern Arctic, is it growing naturally through the birthrate. Between July 2005 and June 2006, 254,400 immigrants arrived in Canada, heading predominantly to urban centres like Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver. During the 1990s, 58 percent of the immigrants came from Asia, including the Middle East; 22 percent from the Caribbean, Central and South America, Africa and the USA; and 20 percent from Europe. The result is a very diverse ethnic and multilingual society.[4]

From a political perspective, Canada has practised some form of responsible government since 1791, but major steps to develop a democratic, representative form of government were taken in the 1840s in anticipation of a federation of individual colonies and jurisdictions. By 1867, when the original group of five polities in British North America joined Confederation, agreement on the responsibilities of the federal government and the provincial governments had been reached. This agreement was based on the presence of both French and British colonists, in a country with diverse Aboriginal communities. The term 'Aboriginal' includes First Nations Peoples (Indians of North America), Inuit and Métis peoples.

The following division of powers in key social areas has affected the development of libraries throughout Canada's history: education and culture (including religion and language) are the responsibilities of the provinces. While Canada has been a bilingual nation within a multicultural framework since the late 1960s, provinces have had the right to choose their official language, educational and cultural policies. In Québec, the provincial civil law system is based on the Code Napoleon and in the other provinces it is based on English common law. These distinctions have contributed to the development of different library systems and services in Québec and the rest of Canada, a tradition that will become evident in this article.

Increasingly, a third level of government, the municipal or regional government (for small towns and rural areas), has played an important role in the development of public and school libraries. While provincial law and regulations provide the legislative framework for these types of library, the development of public and school libraries is the responsibility of the local governments and of school districts/school boards and individual schools, whose tax base is founded in local property and school taxes.

A number of myths prevail about Canadian society; they are worth noting in this introduction. While Québec and Ontario are the two largest provinces in population (62 percent of Canadians live in these central jurisdictions), it is not true that all French Canadians (now referred to as francophones) live in Québec; there are French-language communities and populations across Canada and in the North; conversely, there are English-speaking residents and communities in Québec. Not all Aboriginal peoples live in the North; indeed, in absolute numbers, more of them now live in the south in provinces that stretch west from Ontario to British Columbia. As well, there are villages, towns and rural areas within the large urban municipalities.[5]

From an educational perspective, *Educational Indicators in Canada: Report of the Pan-Canadian Education Indicators Program 2007*[6] provides interesting information on a number of issues pertinent to the context in which Canadian libraries and library staff work. In certain cases, this information is compared with that provided by the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).[7]

While there has been an increase in the number of full-time students at university, Canada is now sixth among OECD countries of persons with a university degree. Student access to and use of computers and the Internet is well established in Canada relative to other OECD countries. In 2003, the average number of students per school computer in OECD countries was fifteen. Canada's average of six students per every school computer is among the most favourable. Eighty-nine per cent of 15-year-olds in Canada had a home Internet connection, ranking second after Sweden (90 percent).[8]

It is interesting to match the profile of the library community against that of the larger Canadian population. A number of quite recent studies provide data on the library profession. In the early 2000s, various sectors of the Canadian library

community cooperated to study their human resource issues. The extensive report, *The Future of Human Resources in Canadian Libraries*[9], provides figures that reveal that the library community does not yet reflect the changes in Canadian society noted above. Only 7 percent of the professional librarians are members of visible minorities and only 1 percent is Aboriginal, while 14 percent of the Canadian labour force belong to the first group and 3 percent to the latter category. Similar representation is also found in the paraprofessional groups of library workers. There will be a large number of retirements in the next 5 to 10 years but the seven American Library Association accredited library schools and the library technician programmes have many applicants.

Like much of the Canadian population, library staff members are educated beyond secondary school. Many professionals have two degrees at the graduate (masters') level and 50 percent of the paraprofessional staff members have an undergraduate degree. In one major respect, however, the library community does not reflect but exceeds the Canadian profile of 49.5 percent male and 50.5 female percent.[10] Four of five professional librarians are female; and nine of ten paraprofessionals are also female.[11]

Canadian Libraries: A Profile Based on a Number of Studies

In order to set the stage for the main issues that face the library community in Canada, it is important to provide background on the situation at the millennium. A number of studies from various agencies draw a general picture of Canadian libraries. In 1999, Statistics Canada published a report, entitled: *A Profile of Libraries in Canada,* by Isme Alam[12] of the Culture Statistics Program. Its main sources were the General Social Survey of 1992 and 1998 and the National Core Library Statistics Program (NCLSP) of 1994 and 1996. The data collected in the General Social Survey revealed a decline in the percentage of Canadians reading a book for leisure (61 percent in contrast to 66 percent in 1992). The proportion of the population reading magazines and newspapers also decreased in the period (from 80 percent to 71 percent and 92 percent to 82 percent), and fewer materials, including books, magazines, audio and videotapes, cassettes were borrowed from libraries for leisure (from 34 percent to

25 percent). Alam asks whether these trends indicate a general decline in reading or a transformation of the reading medium with the advent of the Internet.[13] Figures from the NCLSP of that period demonstrate that demands for information were rising and that the technologies were affecting the need of training of both library users and staff. Moreover, the General Social Survey reported that 30 percent were using the Internet for reasons other than paid work or studies and two of 10 Canadians were using the Internet for research. A public library study of 1997 reported that 66.6 percent of Canadians visited the public library in the previous year and that 20 percent visited at least 12 times in the year.[14] (Annual statistics for the large urban public libraries are collected each year by Mississauga Public Library and offer more current information.)

In 1997–1998, Statistics Canada calculated that the municipal government spent the lion's share of approximately CAD 1.2 billion (approximately USD 1.26 billion) or 63 percent of the total on libraries, both public and school. The provincial/territorial and federal shares in that year were 35 percent and 2 percent respectively and the federal sum included intergovernmental transfers of money to the provinces (for education, health and a number of shared responsibilities). The proportion of federal and provincial/territorial funding declined during the 1990s[15]; this essay will identify some of the challenges and issues that this change in the distribution of funding represents.

Two more recent studies published by the National Library of Canada and Statistics Canada address the profile of Canadian libraries: *National Core Library Statistics Program: Statistical Report, 1999: Cultural and Economic Impact of Libraries on Canada,* by Alvin Schrader and Michael Brundin[16] in 2002 and *Canadian School Libraries and Teacher-Librarians: Results from the 2003–04 Information and Communications Technologies in Schools Survey* in 2005, by David Coish.[17]

Schrader illustrated the highlights of his findings in dramatic and lay terms. For example, he stated: "The fact is, Canadians do use their libraries, and they do so to a surprising extent. More Canadians, for instance, went to libraries in 1999 than to movie theatres. Also, there are more libraries in Canada than Tim Hortons and McDonald's Restaurants combined – far more. Canada has 22,000 libraries, as compared with only 2,049 Tim Hortons and

1,200 McDonald's'…" Moreover, "no figure illustrates the social importance of libraries as clearly as the amount of money that is spent on them each year. In 1999, $3.5 billion was spent on library services across the nation, more than half of what the federal government spends on defence."[18]

The picture for school libraries and teacher-librarians is much less encouraging. In 2003–2004, 93.3 percent of Canadian schools had a library in their primary and secondary facilities. Nationally, each school, on average had a 0.25 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) teacher-librarian, a professional who both develops the collection and manages the library and instructs children in research strategies and information literacy, working with the teachers to coordinate library resources with curriculum requirements. The mean is composed of figures which vary greatly across the provinces and territories. A slightly higher percentage of schools (0.26 FTE) employ a library technician who normally has a two-year community college diploma, a narrower set of duties and earns less than university-trained teacher-librarians who have classroom experience. In some cases the library remains open using office staff and volunteers.

Budgets for magazines and books and other materials in school libraries were small. The median expenditure for the former was CAD 2,000 (half the values were above this amount, half below) and the mean expenditure for electronic materials (CDs and online subscriptions) was CAD 513.00 (some schools in all provinces spend from zero to CAD 100.00).

Funding for school libraries came predominately from two sources: the school (65.7 percent) and the board or district level (60.5 percent) rather than from the province or territory. Moreover, 29 percent of respondents mentioned receiving funds from sources such as book fairs, parent-teachers associations and donations.[19]

In the schools with teacher-librarians, their influence is felt throughout the school and therefore in the students' education. However, the report was unable to map a direct link between the existence of a school library program delivered by a teacher-librarian and the provincial results in the Programme of International School Assessment (PISA).[20] More work deserves to be done in this field, especially as the Council of Ministers of Education of Canada has identified literacy as one of its areas of action. Its plan includes:

- the creation by each jurisdiction of formal policy frameworks on literacy for both school age and adult learners
- the creation of networks for Kindergarten to Grade 12 and adult literacy to allow provinces and territories to share ideas about promising literacy practices
- the development of a strategy for research and data gathering in the area of literacy.[21]

In February 2008, the Premier of Ontario, the Honourable Dalton McGuinty, announced funding for hiring library staff, as research in the province convinced the policy makers of the importance of strong reading and learning skills developed through school library programmes.[22]

Finally, a 2005 national survey prepared for Canadian Heritage on *Reading and Buying Books for Pleasure* offers insights that respond to the questions raised by Alam and valuable to libraries and policy makers.

> This national telephone survey was carried out between January 5 and January 31, 2005, and was based on a random sample of 1,963 Canadians 16 years of age and older, including an oversample of respondents from minority official-language communities.
>
> The primary purpose of the survey was to provide a detailed statistical picture of the habits of Canadians with respect to buying and reading books for pleasure, as well as to update the findings of *Reading in Canada 1991*, undertaken by Ekos on behalf of Canadian Heritage.[23]

The report's summary is as follows:

Contrary to certain alarmist claims that there is a trend towards a lower reading rate in our society or that the Internet has had harmful effects on reading habits, this national survey has shown that reading for pleasure remains a solidly established and widespread habit with little or no change over the last 15 years.

Canadians who took part in this survey generally show a marked taste for reading all genres, especially literary materials such as novels (mystery, science fiction, etc.). Eighty-seven per cent of those polled read, and one half (54 percent) read virtually every day. Canadians appear to be distinctly different from their American

counterparts, almost half of whom read an average of less than one book per year and whose reading rate has substantially decreased over the past 20 years, particularly among those in the 18–24 age group.

Contrary to a widely held fear or belief, there is nothing to indicate that the incredible popularity of the Internet, video games, chatting over the Internet and downloaded music has impinged on the rate of, and time devoted to, reading.

In addition, there seems to be no significant generation gap or factor that would indicate that young people (aged 16 to 24) in Canada are avoiding reading for pleasure.

In fact, reading rates by age group, as well as quantity of books read and favourite book genres read would appear to be characteristics related to peoples' age rather than their belonging to a particular generation. Nothing in young people's behaviour or attitudes would indicate that they will read fewer books as they grow older or that they will read mainly literary materials or science fiction as opposed to other kinds of books.

The findings illustrate that the aging of the population is a factor that encourages reading rather than threatening it:

• Indeed, older people (55 years old and older) read a higher than average number of books.
• More broadly speaking, we know that the baby boom generation that is gradually approaching retirement age is more educated than previous generations, is more eager to continue learning, and enjoys a longer life expectancy.
• Like other prior studies, this survey highlights the substantial influence of certain demographic and social factors on attitudes to reading books, for example, gender, education level, geographical location and language.[24]

Methodologies for Preparing this Essay

The authors have used a number of methodologies to identify major trends and issues within the Canadian library community and to present these opportunities and challenges in response to the theme 'Libraries on the Agenda'.

The emphasis will be on Canadian libraries in the 21st century. The authors have spoken to a number

of professionals and examined the websites and publications of library associations and cognate institutions in every province and territory; they have also reviewed these sources of information at the national, regional and international levels, where Canadian involvement is evident.

Recognizing the strong tendencies of Canadians to be members of international professional associations and to look outward for sources of inspiration, as well as to share plans, policies, and developments, the authors have endeavoured to understand the current issues facing libraries within the context of Canadian society, and to assess the role of libraries and library staff in Canada's economic, social and cultural development.

The Major Trends Affecting All Libraries

In this section, the authors identify those trends which affect all libraries. Without question, the technological evolution, many would say revolution, continues to affect every library, whatever its type, size and location. The only constant is change in this sphere and there appears to be no let up in the need to adapt to and adopt the new technologies to library and information services, to invest in them, train staff and users and to accommodate to the opportunities and challenges they bring. The era of social networking has arrived and Canadian libraries are trying to be part of the scene.

The theme of Canada Library Month in October 2007 and the partnership of 21 organizations illustrate the direction in which libraries are moving: 'Libraries: the World at Your Fingertips.'[25] The dominant trend is to have more and more collections and services in electronic form and to push more and more to the desktop where users may access information, communicate, work and play in their own time and space. As a counterbalance, the authors have also noted a strong trend, especially but not exclusively in university and public libraries, to draw people into the space of the library. Consideration of these push-pull issues will be found in the sections on different types of library.

Reflecting on some of the challenges caused by the rapid growth, power and proliferation of the technologies and, as a consequence, the number and variety of providers of information services,

a series of essays in book form, introduced and edited by Susan Cleyle and Louise McGillis, is worthy of reading and review: *Last One Out Turn Off the Lights: Is This the Future of American and Canadian Libraries?*[26] The main topics are libraries and the web, library as place, getting services to the desktop, certification of librarians, and the future of library associations. A number of Canadians have contributed articles – some of them arguing for different interpretations and alternative solutions to the same questions raised above.

With exponential growth in the ability to create electronic materials in many media and to digitize print materials from disparate collections, it is not surprising that the issues of standards for creation, preservation and enduring accessibility are at the forefront, along with those related to copyright, intellectual property, taxation and access.

Given the increase in availability of electronic materials, many libraries join consortia to increase the buying power for materials valuable to their users. These memberships are based on a number of criteria: type of library, jurisdiction, region and source of funding. There has been deliberate and increased effort in some provinces to provide access to both digital and varied print collections (including multimedia, CDs, DVDs, etc.) for every citizen, regardless of location or affiliation.

For example, in Saskatchewan, the Provincial Library is entrusted, through *The Public Libraries Act, 1996*, to coordinate the province-wide public library system. It fulfils this role by developing province-wide library policies, maintaining an electronic library information network, co-ordinating resource sharing activities, and providing cost-effective centralized services. The Provincial Library also administers *The Libraries Co-operation Act*, which establishes the Multitype Library Board. The purpose of the Board is to facilitate co-operation among all types of libraries in the province, including public, academic, school and special libraries working together to enhance library services for all Saskatchewan people.[27]

A quite different model exists in Alberta, the province west of Saskatchewan, known for its oil resources. The Alberta Library is a membership organization whose vision is 'barrier-free access for all Albertans to information, ideas, and culture' and whose mission is to 'provide leadership in

optimizing resources and services among member libraries in a dynamic model of collaboration'.[28]

The British Columbia Electronic Library Network (BC ELN) offers a third model of collaboration. Funded by the Government of British Columbia, housed at Simon Fraser University and designed to provide superior and equitable information access for all learners and researchers by extending the expertise and resources of the BC post-secondary libraries, BC ELN maintains three union catalogues which provide access not only to their member libraries but also to public library collections. The Steering Committee, responsible for the governance of the network, also has ex officio positions from the Public Library Branch of the Ministry of Education and the British Columbia Library Association.[29]

In other parts of the country, there is evidence of closer collaboration among different types of library than previously existed, but the structures to facilitate the delivery of collections, services and expertise to all citizens seem less formal and permanent across sectors than those in Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia.

While initiatives around consortia for specific types of library will be addressed in the sections on different types of library, it is important to note that Canadian professionals opted to establish Consortia Canada[30], in addition to being members of the International Coalition of Library Consortia[31]. Currently there are seventeen members representing all types of library, except school libraries.

The digitization of Canadian collections and collections held in Canadian memory institutions began in some volume in the 1990s. For a number of years, Industry Canada used government funding to manage a programme aimed at the employment of young people, community economic development and capacity-building in the technologies to kickstart and support projects in every part of the country. Canada's Digital Collections, whose collections are now archived and available at Library and Archives Canada in its electronic collection, was evaluated in 2003.[32]

Many individual institutions have also taken advantage of federal, provincial funding and funding campaigns and donations to increase their digital content.

Canada's Cooperative Digital Programmes: a sample.

Many digital projects are also collaborative. Examples are:

Alberta Library[114], Lois Hole Campus Alberta Digital Library. http://www.thealbertalibrary.ab.ca/viewPosting.asp?postingID=46

AlouetteCanada[115], Open Digitization Initiative. A project sponsored by the Canadian Association of Research Libraries and funded by Canadian Heritage to develop a metadata toolkit. http://www.alouettecanada.ca/home-e.php

Canadiana.org. Early Canadiana Online,[116] known earlier as the Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproduction. http://www.canadiana.org/eco.php?doc=cihm

The former National Library initiated research into the state of digitization and formed the Canadian Initiative on Digital Libraries (CIDL)[117], which focuses principally on, the many issues related to digitization. http://amicus.collectionscanada.gc.ca/aaweb-bin/aamain/itemdisp?sessionKey=999999999_142&l=0&d=2&v=0&lvl=1&itm=30347694

Professor Ali Shiri analyses the Knowledge Systems used in more than 30 Canadian digital collections in a paper delivered at the Canadian Association of Information Science in 2002. He gives a list of projects at the end of the paper and notes the characteristics of their accessibility, allowing him to draw some recommendations for further development.[33]

The continued funding of library collections and services from public taxes and, in the case of universities, from students' fees, has resulted in a business approach to library planning and management. In searching key websites across the country, many examples of online questionnaires, user surveys, focus groups and consultation with users in various forms were found at the national, regional, provincial and institutional levels. The feedback from these interactions furnishes the bases of strategic plans and the regular reporting of progress made towards meeting goals and specific actions. Accountability is an integral component of contributing to the 'public good' and being seen to be an effective partner.

Partnerships and coalitions also contribute to recognition, promotion and attention from the media or the political leadership. Near the end of the 1990s, the Book and Periodical Council of Canada published a brochure entitled: *Dividends: The Value of Public Libraries in Canada*[34]. Its purpose was to provide a tool for a range of persons, from library staff, boards and town councils to publishers and retailers and government officials, to argue the economic and social benefits of public libraries. The beneficiaries were identified not only as library users, all those involved in the 'book chain' and those who supply libraries,

but also the cultural industries, and those who enjoy Canadian culture, identity, democracy and a literate environment – in other words, citizens from every walk of life.

The benefits of libraries may be recognized (out of 24 public and private service providers, users' satisfaction with public libraries is consistently high, just behind services provided by firefighters and ambulances[35]), but they generally have to fight regularly for their budgets and resist being taken for granted. Since the publishing of *Dividends,* other appeals have been made. For example, in 2004, Wendy Newman, a former president of the Canadian Library Association and a member of several federal task forces to develop the necessary infrastructures to ensure universal access to high-speed networks, was commissioned by the Provincial and Territorial Directors' Council to assess the impact of public libraries. *Public Libraries in the Priorities of Canada: Acting on the Assets and Opportunities*[36] is the result. In the report, Newman carefully reviewed the major policy and programme areas being addressed by governments at different levels and, using evidence, including statistical data and examples, provided ample arsenal to demonstrate the innovation, credibility, accountability and success of public libraries.

The Canadian library community has worked intersectorally through its associations to speak strongly and with one voice to every level of government, choosing the appropriate level and strategy, depending on the subject.

Since 2000, strong representation has been made to the federal government on a variety of issues:

the necessity of access to broadband and high-speed networks in every part of Canada; the importance of digitizing and preserving Canadian materials and collections; the need for a digital copyright act which recognizes and balances the rights of creators and users; the impact and importance of the special postal rate for books on interlibrary loan and document delivery and the need for its continuation and expansion to non-book materials; and the contribution of libraries to the learning and skills agendas and to the science and technology agenda of a knowledge-based society.[37]

Indeed, all sectors of the community have honed their approaches and tools for advocacy and their associations make advocacy an active and regular part of their activities and their communications. The Canadian Library Association has retained a professional government relations firm to assist in finding the best strategy and tactics for each issue. The campaign literature and tools may be found on a number of association websites, including that of the Canadian Library Association.[38]

The ever-changing climate of technological development, economic and social shifts and emphases and user responses has also brought about greater cooperation in training and continuing professional development. Many of the provincial associations have banded together to provide staff training packages and opportunities. The Partnership,[39] Canada's national network of provincial and territorial library associations provides programs and services to the members of eleven associations. For example, there are almost 90 audio and web conferences, online courses and audio courses; face-to-face workshops; opportunities to hear great speakers and experts and discounts on publications, many of which are authored by Americans. The topics for the courses are varied and go beyond the functions and services of the library to the new skills and experience needed in the community one is serving and supporting.[40] The Partnership has also initiated a new online publication: *Partnership: The Canadian Journal of Library and Information Practice and Research*[41] which gathers information, evidence and experience from across the country.

In Canada, much has been written about our ethnic diversity and the importance of social, economic and cultural inclusion. There has also been consistent work on access and inclusion for persons with disabilities. In this context, there have been a number of leading libraries. The Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) Library has worked nationally and internationally to use the technologies to increase access. It adopted the DAISY standard and has converted its materials to that much more accessible and flexible format.[42] The National Library (now Library and Archives Canada)[43] has also played a lead role over the years through grant programmes, advisory committees and task forces, and the implementation of a number of recommendations. Most recently, Library and Archives Canada has been asked to develop and cost a strategy for implementing nationwide partnerships, activities and services to meet the long-term library and information access needs of Canadians with print disabilities. This will be completed between 2007 and 2010.[44] Users with disabilities have wanted to access their materials on site and available in the same way as persons without disabilities are served. Increasingly, public, college and university libraries are to serve their disabled users at the desktop or in the library with materials, advice and assistance when needed. Each province has a somewhat different approach to supporting disabled young people in primary and secondary school.[45]

Writing in the fall of 2007, Jutta Treviranus, director and founder of the Adaptive Technology Resource Centre at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Information Studies, reminded us that while commodities of value in the knowledge economy are innovation and creative ideas, true innovation occurs at the margins of any domain and new inventions never come from designing for the norm. She urges citizens not to accept the product design for the average person, in whatever sector, but to reach for inclusive design for e-learning and also create an inclusive design curriculum. This, she recognizes, can only happen through collaboration at the international level by all the major stakeholders.[46]

Consultations have been held among the Aboriginal library community, at the initiative of Library and Archives Canada.[47] There is a master's programme at the School of Library, Archival and Information Studies at UBC and some funding has been garnered for initiatives in this area of library service in different provinces, educational institutions and municipalities. [48]

In the years between 1970 and the 1990s, the former National Library of Canada had an acquisitions and loan system for books and materials in the major languages of Canada's ethnic communities. These materials were sent on long-term loan to public libraries across the country, based on a linguistic profile. However, it became clear in the 1990s that Canada's multlingual and multicultural reality could not be well served from Ottawa. Many institutions and cities had already assumed responsibiilities for their multilingual populations; and inclusion at all levels of society – economic, social, linguistic and cultural – is the reality and the challenge of modern Canada. Further comments on inclusion are noted in the section on public libraries.

Finally, Canadian librarians have shown a continuing interest and involvement with various forms of literacy – from basic adult literacy, to the learning of Canada's official languages, to the use of native languages, and the development and application of computer, information and media skills. They have worked at local, regional and national levels and in specialized Canadian not-for-profit organizations like CODE (formerly the Canadian Organization for Development through Education), Media Awareness Network, Movement for Canadian Literacy and AlphaPlus.[49]

To mention only two very recent initiatives, a new website for those working in libraries and literacy is available at: http://www.librariesand literacy.ca/[50]

In January 2008, students and librarians of Queen's University, University of British Columbia, Memorial University of Newfoundland and Laurentian University organized the first national Live-in for Literacy, a fundraiser to combat illiteracy in developing countries. Two students at each university lived in the main library on each campus for 10 consecutive days. They collected over CAD 20,000 in donations from students, faculty and the community; these funds will be used to build five school libraries in Nepal – a country with one of the worst literacy rates in Asia. All construction is done through the internationally renowned charity Room to Read.[51] The event was organized by a student group called DREAM with the support and enthusiasm of library administrators of Stauffer Library, Koerner Library, Queen Elizabeth II Library and Desmerais Library, as well as Queen's Integrated Learning Centre. This year's event was such a success, DREAM has set a goal of expanding the

event to include a total of 10 university libraries across Canada by next year. Further details about the event and how students and librarians can become involved may be found at www. liveinforliteracy.com.[52]

In summary, the challenges which face Canadian libraries and librarians are those addressed by other networked nations living in a pluralistic society. The Canadian library community is trying to make, keep and expand its niche and identity among the competitive service providers in a globalized information economy. Evidence and research based on the users and impact, partnership and cooperation are some of the strongest strategies, combined with current communications techniques and advocacy.

What the Canadian profession has done is to work more closely together, across types of library, region, and issue. Canadian librarians are working collaboratively. Members of every type of library have also recognized the importance of consultation and evidence-based approaches to planning and making the case for investment; they are prepared to account for their use of resources and to increase their capacity to measure impacts and outcomes – quality, not only quantity. They are good partners.[53] Canadian librarians have become more involved in research and have shown leadership and innovation, the result of an increased emphasis, not only on library education at the masters' level in Canada's seven graduate schools of library and information studies, but also on the availability of doctoral programs, of sabbatical leave, and of learning experiences, such as the Northern Exposure to Leadership Institute[54], initiated by Ernie Ingles at the University of Alberta, and collaborative projects and partnerships, here in Canada and elsewhere.

Examples of these general trends and the responses of the community will be illustrated in the sections on different types of library, beginning with the two national libraries of Canada: Library and Archives Canada and Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec.

National Libraries: Library and Archives Canada

While Canada has a long history of democratic institutions, its entry into the world of national libraries came late. Although a number of people

had lobbied at different times for a national library, it was not until the 1950s that it came into being, primarily for two purposes: to gather, preserve and make accessible, both intellectually and physically, works by Canadians, about Canada and published in this country; and to support and encourage the sharing of materials by libraries through the establishment of a union catalogue of the most important collections and an interlibrary loan system and service. The first national librarian, Kaye Lamb, was appointed as the Dominion Archivist in 1949 and given a mandate to establish a national library. When the national library was established in 1953, the two offices were combined until 1967, the centennial anniversary of Canada's confederation. Only three national librarians held the position from 1967–2005 and of those three, one was a professional librarian, Marianne Scott, 1984–1999; the other two, Guy Sylvestre (1967–1983) and Roch Carrier (1999–2004), had backgrounds in literature, cultural administration and public service.

While the Department of Canadian Heritage commissioned wide consultation at the turn of this century to enquire into the strengths, weaknesses and future of the then National Archives of Canada and National Library of Canada, the report of Dr. John English did not recommend the merging of the two institutions, which had been housed together but administered separately on Wellington Street in Ottawa, not far from the Parliament Hill, since the late 1960s. The messages he had received did not allow him to draw that conclusion.[55] The decision to combine the two institutions in 2005 through a new act for Library and Archives Canada was made within government. Its first and continuing director is Ian E. Wilson, Librarian and Archivist of Canada.[56]

One of the major concerns for at least the last two decades of the 20th century has been the preservation, protection and security of the archival and published collections – the documentary heritage, held at the national level. Opened in 1997 and located in Gatineau, Québec, the Library and Archives Canada Preservation Centre houses all of Library and Archives Canada's preservation laboratories. Also included in this building are records storage vaults which accommodate a significant portion of Canada's documentary heritage. This unique purpose-built facility is a key component of the institution's long-term accommodation strategy.[57]

Now most of the staff of Library and Archives Canada is housed in an office building very close to the Preservation Centre and the centennial building on Wellington is used for public functions such as user services, exhibitions, and public events. Through the Library and Archives Canada website, the collections are being pushed to the desktop, and some enduring national programmes, such as the databases developed for the three-volume bilingual *History of the Book in Canada* Project and the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, also bilingual, among others, are being maintained centrally. Specialized collections and services of both former institutions now centre on online resources around such topics such as: Aboriginal resources and services; genealogy; the Library and Archives Canada forum on democracy; military personnel records; multicultural resources and services; and a Canadian theses portal.[58]

While there have been a number of references to Library and Archives Canada (LAC) in earlier sections of this article, its leadership is also demonstrated on a number of important, complex subjects. For example, Canada has been systematic in its search for a national digital information strategy.

In 2005, Library and Archives Canada (LAC) initiated a dialogue reflecting the range of interests in the digital field, with the goal of framing a Canadian Digital Information Strategy (CDIS). Through a series of meetings, LAC consulted with over 200 stakeholder organizations from a variety of sectors: publishing and media producers, creators, rights bodies, academics, provincial and federal officials, and memory institutions. The consultations culminated in a National Summit in 2006 where a broad consensus on the elements of a national strategy emerged, leading to the development of the Canadian Digital Information Strategy.[59]

A report of the Summit was published, and in November 2007 a draft strategy was published for comment. The Canadian library community has responded positively to this initiative, both its process and content, and while there are many stakeholders, projects and programmes that work in this field, LAC has taken the long view and has engaged the various actors.[60]

In the context of 'Libraries on the Agenda', the authors have observed the dual factors of increased

electronic presence and emphasis on library space and the practical and symbolic use of the facility for varied purposes: social, educational, cultural and individual. It is undeniable that changes have been made to the role, scope and impact of Library and Archives Canada, but it is too early to be able to assess these changes on Canadian libraries and archives and on their staffs and users.

The Story of the 'Grande Bibliothèque'

With the development of Québec nationalism in the early 1960s – the 'quiet revolution' as this period is called – the Québec Government took several decisions to accommodate the new social era. Among them was the foundation of a national library (La Bibliothèque nationale du Québec (BNQ)) in 1967, established with all the responsibilities normally attributed to national libraries, including legal deposit. The institution was founded on the Bibliothèque Saint-Sulpice, a general and public library opened in the 1920s, with very rich collections.

In the mid-1990s, both the BNQ and the Montreal public library faced significant space problems. The national library staff and collections were spread out in several Montreal buildings. The

Montreal central library, while situated in an attractive old and renovated building, had only a fifth of the required space to accomplish its mission. A study recommended the building of a new institution to take responsibility for making available the BNQ's second copy of the legal deposit and, at the same time, playing the role of a central library for the municipal network. A committee was formed by the Minister of Culture and following its report in 1996[61], the Minister decided to accept its main recommendation: to found a new institution named the 'Grande Bibliothèque' that would get the necessary funding for the building and for the operations of a large library in downtown Montreal.

To undertake this important project, Madame Lise Bissonnette, a famous Québec journalist and writer, was recruited as Director. Her first tasks were to recruit her team and to organize an architecture competition. The project was managed well and the budget was respected. The building opened in 2005.

A few years after the decision to go ahead with the new library, the Grande Bibliothèque was merged with the BNQ. The decision was questioned by the library community as it is not common to amalgamate a public library, whose mission is to

Figure 2. La Grande Bibiothèque: exterior view. Photo: Bernard Fougères.

Figure 3. La Grande Bibiothèque: interior view. Photo: Bernard Fougères.

disseminate its collections as widely as possible, with a national library whose main responsibility had become preservation. The problem was partly resolved by planning a special enclosed area for the national collection with appropriate conservation conditions in the new building. This very elegant part of the new library, decorated mostly in wood, is named 'Les chambres de bois', after the famous Québec writer Anne Hébert's novel.

The very modern, attractive building is located right in the middle of the City, at the crossroads of the two main subway lines, thus facilitating its use by Montrealers. But with its double mission, the institution is now serving not only the City of Montreal but also all the Province of Québec. Moreover, included in its mission, the new library now has to coordinate the development of the public library network in Québec.

The association with the Montreal City Library has been maintained, as the new library is acting as the central library for the municipal network of branch libraries. This is why the City of Montreal agreed to fund a part of the yearly operations of the new library, which also houses the central library

collection from the City of Montreal. During this period, the old central library was closed.

A further amalgamation was completed just before the opening of the new library. The Government of Québec merged the new National Library with the Québec National Archives. This was not a precedent in Canada, because the National Library of Canada had already merged with the National Archives the year before the Québec decision.

Today, the new Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BAnQ) is an institution encompassing more than 700 employees, including approximately 100 librarians and archivists. The main building – still called the 'Grande Bibliothèque' – is open 74 hours a week. The staff welcomed almost 3 million visitors last year.[62] This is a great accomplishment, especially since many predicted the failure of this project at a time when the Internet was supposedly causing a significant reduction in library use.

College, University and Research Libraries in Canada

Two national associations, the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC)[63] and the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC)[64] represent the more than 230 post-secondary institutions of learning in Canada. These bilingual associations represent their memberships (over 140 colleges and institutes in ACCC and 92 public and private not-for-profit universities and university-degree granting colleges for AUCC) and lobby on their behalf to government, business and industry, in Canada and internationally. They facilitate the development of public policy in higher education and encourage cooperation not only among their members but also with the communities of which they are part.

As federal funding is transferred to the provinces and territories for education, it is important that the college and university libraries are able to demonstrate their contribution to teaching, learning and research to the administration, faculty, students and staff of their institutions. Increasingly, libraries are also part of the capital campaign of the university and involved in making the case for financial support. Programmes of advocacy, promotion and communications are

worked out at a number of levels from the local institution, to the provincial and regional levels, and at the pan-Canadian level. Canadians are finally making inroads into the need to support the indirect costs of research which libraries, laboratories and computer networks represent.

University Affairs, the official magazine of AUCC, featured the new academic librarians in the December 2007 issue[65]. The article profiles a number of directors of university libraries and a special librarian to illustrate the changes in the use of space and technologies, the growing dominance of digital collections and access to them from the desktop, the importance of having a presence in the teaching and learning aspects of university life through information literacy instruction, support for the curriculum and courses, and a 'learning commons' conducive to group work and also to individual study. Many libraries now include a comfortable zone for socializing, including getting something to eat and drink.

In the article, four different services and concepts were described and illustrated, from east to west, through an interview and photos with each director and a medical science librarian. In a profession dominated by women and where women are conspicuous in management positions, the journalist, Tim Johnson, chose to interview four men (Jeff Trzeciak of McMaster University, Mark Leggott of the University of Prince Edward Island, Michael Ridley of Guelph University and Dean Giusstini of the University of British Columbia) plus Tim Mark, Executive Director of the Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL). Leadership and innovation in taking advantage of the technological revolution were

Figure 4. McGill University Marvin Duchow Music Library.

Figure 5. University of British Columbia Irving K. Barber Learning Centre.
Photo: Jill Pittendrigh.

stressed. The article made it clear that changing the technologies, use of space, services and work patterns of some library staff has been difficult in some cases. However, Dr. Gloria Leckie, a professor at the University of Western Ontario's Faculty of Information and Media Studies, reminded the readers that the present graduate students have grown up with the Internet and are ready to embrace the challenges of 21st century academic library. The library schools are emphasizing not only the technology issues and skills, but also the human or people skills necessary to rise to the challenge and contribute to the library's recognition as the centre of the learning institution.[66]

Many universities have adopted the 'Learning Commons'– "a place where accessible academic support is available for students in one physical location. The Commons provides academic services as a cohesive whole so that students have access to effective, efficient and integrated assistance. The Commons also creates a space for collaborative work between students and between students, their Teaching Assistants (TAs) and their faculty."[67] The space and services are normally provided in the library, where staff is

available to respond to questions. Increasingly, library staff is also providing virtual reference and referral services, sometimes within the institution and sometimes through collaborative reference service. The university and college libraries are increasingly open for long hours, so students can work individually and in groups in their own time.

To address the rising costs of electronic journals and the need to support learning, teaching and especially research, the Canada Foundation for Innovation has provided financing for Canadian libraries as a consortium through Canadian Research Knowledge Network (CRKN).[68] The universities also contribute so that the partnership can undertake large-scale content acquisition and licensing initiatives in order to build knowledge infrastructure and research capacity in Canada's universities. The innovation has levelled the playing field across universities and disciplines, starting first with the journals in the sciences and technologies. In 2007, thanks to a CAD 19.1 million investment from the Canada Foundation for Innovation, with matching funds from 67 of CRKN's university members and 9 provinces, CRKN will be overseeing a nearly CAD 50 million acquisition of digital content in the social sciences and humanities from international sources. [69]

Working at the regional and national levels, the library community has also provided access to materials through portals such as Scholars Portal,[70] and the Theses Canada Portal,[71] to facilitate and expand the access to a variety of materials. The motivation is to support Canadian research, innovation and development and the progress is based on cooperation.

The university library community and the research community have also been engaged in addressing the issues, such as data archives, institutional repositories, and the use of Open Access software. On the subject of Open Archives (OA), the granting councils and research institutions like the International Development Research Centre (IDRC)[72] have approved OA in principle and some of them, The Canadian Institutes of Health Research[73] and IDRC, for example, have created an open archive to ensure that publicly-funded research is available free or at reasonable rates to all over the long period. An article in *University Affairs* in March 2006, 'The Bottom Line on Open Access' by John Lorinc, features Dr. Martin

Osborne and reviews the issues from a number of perspectives, including that of the library.[74]

These new services have not replaced older services such as interlibrary loan (ILL) and document delivery or library orientation and information literacy instruction. Indeed, the staple services are also being improved through the cooperative arrangements of the four regional university library councils (Atlantic region, Québec, Ontario, Prairies and the Pacific) and the Canadian Association of Research Libraries.[75] A recent resource sharing agreement announces the following: service standards for ILL and document delivery for faculty, students, and administration include the following: loan of books between participating libraries at no charge; four day turn-around time between the receipt of the request and the sending of the item; three week loan period for materials that need to be returned to the sending library; standard charges for photocopies and copies of materials that do not need to be returned.[76]

Online courses and distance learning have had a long history in a country like Canada. However, they too have been revolutionized by the information and communications technologies (ICTs). A few of Canada's post-secondary institutions are virtual – Athabasca University, for example – but others support a number of different configurations of distance and online courses and the library is expected to play its part in providing its collections and services to the students and faculty.[77]

Digitization projects are also very popular in Canada. The largest players are the research libraries and special collections areas of special libraries, archives, museums and research centres. The materials often have a strong connection to Canada, but there are collections in Canada not related to its history or culture. In late December 2005, CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) Arts printed an article in the *Globe & Mail* to announce the race to digitize books and other documentary sources under a project called Alouette.[78] Leading the group is Carole Moore, University Librarian of the University of Toronto, who began converting print to electronic form as part of the library service some years ago. The 27 research libraries are also members of a number of projects both in Canada and internationally, some of which were cited earlier in this article.

With a number of different programmes of digitization in Canada, the challenges are to meet standards for scanning, preservation, and access that stand the test of time and coordinate efforts efficiently and effectively. Library and Archives Canada, as mentioned above, has taken a lead in developing a national strategy through broad consultation and in-depth discussion of all the issues.

Public Libraries

The demography of Canada and the recent amalgamations of towns and cities close to each other into large municipal megacities have resulted in the fact that about 25 urban libraries serve about 80 percent of Canadians. This group is associated through the Canadian Urban Library Council (CULC)[79] with a membership of over 40 library systems serving populations of over 100,000. An article in the *Globe & Mail* on January 10, 2007 caught the spirit of this group of libraries across Canada in its title and its illustrations of varied services offered in public library systems: 'Libraries Turn Page to Thrive in the Digital Age'.[80] A recent paper by Jan Harder, the chair of the Ottawa Public Library Board and deputy mayor of the city, identifies how the public library supports the increasing diversity of Canadian cities and the consequent need for services of inclusion and outreach in many languages, so that citizens not only can interact but also become involved with one another.[81] Much attention is given to the role of the public library to welcome and support newcomers in their adaptation, language learning, communication with home, search for a job, care of the family, study and learning and introduction to the various services available. Emphasis is also placed on those who have not used the public library in the past; persons with disabilities, for instance. Ottawa Public Library has prepared a manual *Getting to Know the Library*,[82] while Montreal Public Library has built a special branch dedicated to immigrants (Parc Extension) with appropriate collections and services.[83]

While the advocacy of the Ottawa Public Library, the largest bilingual English-French public library system in North America, has been strong and multifaceted, with many partners, the budget exercise for 2008 did recommend cuts to the library budget. The Friends of Ottawa Public Library has taken up the cause to preserve the services of all 33 library branches and two bookmobiles.

Figure 6. Ottawa Public Library, Greenboro Branch. Interior.

Figure 7. Ottawa Public Library, Vernon Branch.

Figure 8. Vancouver Public Library.

Toronto Public Library (TPL) is the largest public library system in Canada, with 99 branches and 11 million items to borrow or use in the library. TPL is also the world's busiest urban public library system. Every year, more than 17 million people visit the 99 branches and borrow more than 30 million items. On the home page of About TPL, the visitor is invited to watch a video on how to use the library in nine languages.[84]

On the websites of the larger public libraries, the trends to push more and more to the desktop and to organize materials by target group (e.g. children, teens, seniors) and for subject searches (e.g. genealogy and local history) are evident. Acting as guide, adviser, instructor and respondent to questions, the staff members encourage interaction both physically and virtually. Those who know what they are looking for order online and can now often pick up and return the materials at the most convenient branch. These people spend less time at the library, but many who have never used the public library use the facilities, technologies and collections and services of the library and its partners on a regular basis. It is not uncommon to find a line-up at some of the computers, although public libraries are trying to mirror the commercial world with

Figure 9. Lecture in the Toronto Reference Library.

Figure 10. A rural public library, Les Coteaux. Exterior.

Figure 11. A rural public library, Les Coteaux. Interior.

Figure 12. Community Librarian, Amanda Ishulutak, at the Qimiruvik Library in Pangnirtung Nunavut.

Figure 13. View from the Qimiruvik Library in Pangnirtung with the towering cliffs of the Pangnirtung Fjord.

Figure 14. The study area in the Amitturmiut Library in Igloolik, Nunavut; Community Librarian Nancy Kadlutsiak seated at right middle.

more self-service equipment. Staff do, however, continue to play a strong role in contributing to the satisfaction that library users report.

From east to west, urban public libraries have responded to their communities and current challenges in their own way. Several of them have foundations and friends' groups in order to diversify and expand their income-generating activities. All of them have print, multimedia and digital collections, services and programmes for every age and sector– from baby to senior – from every country and with every imaginable (or unimaginable) interest or need. Literacy and learning are central to the services being offered. It is worth visiting their individual websites to see the variety of collections and services and the approach they are taking. For example, Richmond Public Library in British Columbia[85] has won awards from both Canadian and American sources; as has Halifax Public Library in Nova Scotia.[86]

Innovation can come in many forms and from different areas of the country. Peterborough Public Library has become known and rewarded for *TEKdesk*, a live phone service and web-based help-desk providing technical support to all libraries in Ontario 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Among the facilities that benefit from the service are smaller remote, rural and First Nation [*sic*] branches that do not possess a high level of in-house technological expertise.[87]

Mississauga Public Library gathers statistics on the activity of these libraries and libraries in smaller cities and regional systems on an annual basis. In 2006, Regina Public Library led with a per capita expenditure of CAD 70.31. The lowest ranking library in this category was a regional library in New Brunswick with per capita spending at CAD 11.82. The average expenditure was CAD 37.60. Those interested in annual statistics will find the data for libraries and branches on the Mississauga Public Library very informative.[88]

Figure 15. The public library of Sainte-Clotilde-de-Châteauguay: exterior.

Figure 16. The public library of Sainte-Clotilde-de-Châteauguay: interior.

Serving rural and remote parts of Canada has its particular challenges. In Québec, the public library system is divided in two: libraries serving more than 5,000 inhabitants, and rural libraries. In the second case, a different structure was incorporated at the beginning of the 1960s with the foundation of the 'Bibliothèques centrales de prêt' which later became Centres régionaux de services aux bibliothèques publiques (CRSBP)[89]. Inspired by the rural libraries' network in France, they are serving villages by lending collections which circulate among the affiliate libraries. There are eleven CRSBP, one in each geographical region of Québec. Although they receive money from the Government of Québec, they function on a commercial basis. They sell their services, which are very efficient and reliant on the new technologies, to municipalities. For this reason, even small libraries in Québec are automated and offer access to Internet.

Ann Curry, now Director of the School of Library and Information Studies at the University of Alberta, and a survey team have studied regional libraries and provided information on their services and governance structures.[90] One of the challenges is to serve the varied and current needs of a diverse society. Populations are scattered. There may, for example, be a link between the results from the 2005 reading survey, cited above, and the availability of library services with adequate collections for all members of the community. For example, francophones outside Quebec read fewer books and magazines than other groups. One of the causes may be the absence of current local materials in French which have been announced on the television or radio. While these materials may be ordered online from bookstores and regional libraries, there is a cost associated with purchase and new materials are often difficult to find in the library because of their popularity.[91]

With the assistance of the Government of Canada, through Industry Canada, the Community Access Program (CAP) provides Canadians with affordable public access to the Internet and the skills they need to use it effectively. It operates through the combined efforts of the federal, provincial and territorial governments, community groups, social agencies, libraries, schools, volunteer groups and the business community.

Under CAP, public locations such as schools, libraries and community centres act as 'on-ramps'

or 'entry points' to the Internet for people who might not have computers or Internet access in their homes or workplaces. CAP also provides affordable access to skills training, job searching and government online services. The program supports the goals of Advantage Canada, the Government of Canada's plan to help all Canadians improve their quality of life, reach their full potential, and create strong communities.'[92] The federal government has also sponsored programmes designed specifically by and for the Aboriginal community. Examples include First Nations SchoolNet and the Aboriginal Digital Collections Programme.[93]

As noted earlier under general trends, federal financial support has been declining. With the change of government in 2004, some of the federal government programmes, including those mentioned above and those related to literacy support, have been modified or cancelled. Public libraries in every province and territory have had to improvise, advocate, make partnerships and also fight for their budgets.

The spirit of innovation, energy and partnership being poured into public library service in across Canada is illustrated, for example, in a news report of the Atlantic Provinces Library Association's *APLA Bulletin:*

> Six youth are working throughout the region a Fall/Winter Youth Initiative funded through Industry Canada and the NS Office of Economic Development. The youth have been very busy with one-on-one computer tutorials, special workshops and children's programs.

> In honour of Family Literacy Day, our 4th annual Library Sleepover took place at the Wolfville Memorial Library. Over 30 children and parents vied for their special sleeping spots among the book stacks. (Event sponsored in part by Honda). Special activities such as this could be why Wolfville Memorial Library is one of 80 libraries from hundreds of nominations, featured in the book "Heart of the Community: Libraries We Love" – a US publication, by Berkshire Publishing Group in Massachusetts.

> We have been notified by Canada Council of a successful funding application for a 2007 Nova Scotia author series April – October.

Both Michelin and Frito-Lay have also committed to the financial support of this series.[94]

These are just a few examples of what is happening in public libraries across Canada. Many of the partners mentioned are from the private sector.

School Libraries

The arrival of the Internet and Canada's concerted efforts to build a robust Information Highway in the 1990s have adversely affected school library programmes. Funding programmes mentioned earlier, such as SchoolNet, delivered through Industry Canada, and provincial funding programmes, as well as funds from foundations such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation[95], resulted in the wiring of schools and the provision of mobile laboratories with Internet access in every part of Canada. However, in many cases, the computers were not installed in the library and the library staff was not involved in the integration of the ICTs into the curriculum and learning methodologies.

The decline in the number and qualifications of school library staff noted earlier has had detrimental effects on the Canadian children's publishing industry. Parents, publishers, educators and organizations like the Book and Periodical Council have joined forces with library associations to invest in the research needed to strengthen the lobby effort and to highlight the positive results on test results that school library programmes designed and delivered by qualified staff can achieve.

The Crisis in Canada's School Libraries: The Case for Reform and Re-Investment[96] by Ken Haycock lays out the issues and the ironies of the Canadian situation in a report sponsored by Canadian Heritage and the Association of Canadian Publishers. Without the regular market of school libraries, Canadian children's publishers are finding it difficult to survive without markets in the USA or French-speaking Europe. With the Canadian dollar rising in comparison to the US dollar, the situation has become critical. This deterioration of the market comes at a time when the quality of both English and French language publishing for children is internationally celebrated and recognized.

In Québec, funds have recently been put into the mass purchase and distribution of current titles across the province. However, without well-trained staff to plan and operate a library programme in liaison with the teachers, the books are not necessarily used and read.[97]

Moreover, the potential impact on cultural identity (as well as the influence on student learning and reading) in an ever-changing and increasingly diverse culture is lost if the school library programme is non-existent, part-time or delivered by staff without the knowledge of Canadian materials and their links to identity and learning. The public libraries have taken up the slack in a number of provinces and regions of Canada. Homework assistance, tutoring, collections, databases and websites are provided by them. In some cases, the library acts as both a school and public library. However, it does seem ironic that the Council of Ministers of Education of Canada has chosen literacy as one of its priorities[98] and yet, as noted above, the general status of school libraries is lamentable. There are exceptions.

The Toronto Star reported in May 2005 on the CAD 1 million investment in Parkdale Collegiate Institute's 5000 square feet library. In addition to the print collection, the broadband and video conferencing facilities link the secondary school to York University, the University of Alberta, the Banff Centre for Fine Arts and Seneca College, for example. The principal reports that the library is the hub which ties everything together.[99]

The crisis in school libraries was, for some time, seen as a problem only for those librarians interested in primary and secondary education. In the past decade, it has been recognized as a problem for society. In Québec a coalition was formed with librarians, authors, publishers, etc. to support school libraries which have been in a very bad condition in recent years.[100] The school library associations have worked together and tools such as the School Library Information Portal (SLiP,)[101] have been developed to assist in collecting policies, research and best practice and sharing information to put the issues onto the table in a persuasive way. However, the coalitions and cooperative efforts of many Canadians have not yet reversed the general trend of neglect for an important cohort of young people and their teachers and administrators. It is very encouraging that Ontario has recently recognized this shortcoming.

Special Libraries

Special libraries cross all sectors of society: the public, private and not-for-profit. They are so defined by their target users and the mandate and subject matter of their headquarters that many of them are probably less bound by the Canadian context in which they work, unless that is itself integral to the role of the parent institution.

In studying the library sector from a pan-Canadian perspective and by province and region, it would appear that there are fewer government libraries across Canada than there were before the economic downturn and technological upturn of the 1990s. Canada as a whole, and each province and territory, has, of course, a number of government libraries; the legislative library to serve the elected members; legal libraries to serve the courts; and all have provincial and territorial libraries to coordinate the work of public libraries in their jurisdictions, but their laws and mandates differ, as we noted earlier in this article.

At the federal level, the Canada Institute for Scientific and Technical Information (CISTI)[102] has strong collections and services and international connections in support of the National Research Council of Canada. It has taken a coordinating role in increasing the cooperation among federal science libraries, but its new emphasis is on supporting the competitive advantage of its major clients. Many of the older federal government departments such as Agriculture, Natural Resources, and the Supreme Court have played national and international roles, but the scope and status of library activity does now depend on the leadership of the department.

The Library of Parliament[103] serves the House of Commons and the Senate of Canada. Its unique building has recently been refurbished and upgraded. While the Library of Parliament held strong general collections until the National Library became established in the 1960s, it has since become focused on the work of the Members of Parliament and Senators, with a Research Branch to support the committee work and study of both houses.

Many of the universities have strong special libraries – law, health sciences, natural and physical sciences, art – that are also connected to the institutions such as hospitals, research institutes and museums associated with their campuses.

It is difficult to assess the status of the libraries in the private and not-for-profit sectors. Many of them have grown beyond the functions of a library to a service responsible also for records management and/or knowledge management.

The special librarians of Canada have long been strong supporters of the Special Library Association (SLA) and its Canadian chapters or their more specialized associations related to law, medicine, agriculture, art, etc. and their Canadian bilingual sister associations. Many special librarians have also become consultants and work nationally and internationally on contemporary issues.

Within the Canadian Library Association, membership in the Canadian Association Special Libraries and Information Services (CASLIS) Division has been falling, as its role in advocating at the national level for policy conducive to universal access to information and freedom of expression becomes stronger and its opportunities for professional development and training shift. Special librarians tend to support continuing professional development and workplace training and put their investments into associations which provide direct personal benefits and opportunities.

Library and Information Science Education

Library schools in Canada rely on a long tradition. As early as 1904, the first library school was founded at McGill University in Montreal. Melvil Dewey even taught at the first session. His presence is not surprising because the library community in English Montreal was close to Dewey's philosophy, exemplified in the development of his own school at Columbia University in New York, a few years earlier. Library education in Canada, therefore, followed the same paths as those in the United States for many years and the Canadian curricula reflect this influence. This history is somewhat different for the French-speaking community. The first library school in a French-speaking university was founded only in 1937 within a more European influence.

Figure 17. The Library of Parliament. Photo: Mone Cheng.

However, in the 1960s, all the Canadian library schools in Canada, including that of the Université de Montreal, took their distance from the Americans by establishing a masters' degree of 2 years, while most American schools had one year or 18-month programmes. All the Canadian schools, however, are accredited by the American Library Association (ALA).[104]

At least one Canadian is always on the American Library Association (ALA) Accreditation Committee and Canadian educators and professionals are used for the assessment of the North American masters' programmes.

In 1971, the University of Toronto introduced the first PhD program in library science in Canada. Today the seven schools in Canada (see Box 2) all offer doctoral programmes. And a new bilingual programme will soon open at the University of Ottawa. Over the years the Canadian schools have developed appropriate curricula to follow new trends in educating information specialists. Some are now offering degrees or specializations in archival studies, (University of British Columbia and Université de Montréal), while another school is offering a degree in museum studies (University of Toronto). Still others are offering combined programmes such as Dalhousie University's management and library and information science degree, or Toronto's law and information studies combined program. Many have also introduced undergraduate degrees in recent years, especially

in the field of new technology and digital information. The University of British Columbia is also offering within its masters' degree a concentration in Aboriginal librarianship.

The Canadian schools are very active on the international scene and their faculties participate regularly in the activities of the Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE). A new award from ALISE recognizes the contribution of Norman Horrocks, founding director of the Dalhousie library school.[105] Many, like the Université de Montreal, work with other institutions in different parts of the world. The Montreal school is working with many French-speaking schools in Africa.

In Canada, library technicians programmes offered at the community college level are very popular. There are eighteen programmes in all the Canadian provinces.[106] These are generally two-year programmes, except in Québec, where three-year programmes are the standard.

Reference was made earlier to The Partnership for training and professional development. The associations, provincial agencies, library schools and consortia offer programmes and, increasingly, e-learning is possible. The Northern Exposure to Library Institute selects candidates from every type of library and part of the country. Its unique combination of reflection and experience, in a remote and beautiful corner of the country and

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Schools of Library and Information Studies in Canada

Halifax, Nova Scotia, Dalhousie University School of Information Management, Faculty of Management. http://sim.management.dal.ca/

Montréal, Québec, Université de Montréal: Ecole de bibliothéconomie et des sciences de l'information, Faculté des arts et des sciences. http://www.ebsi.umontreal.ca/

Montreal, Quebec. McGill University: School of Information Studies, Faculty of Education. http://www.mcgill.ca/sis/

Toronto, Ontario. University of Toronto, Faculty of Information Studies. http://www.fis.utoronto.ca

London, Ontario. University of Western Ontario. Faculty of Information and Media Studies. http://www.fims.uwo.ca/

Edmonton, Alberta. University of Alberta. School of Library and Information Studies, Faculty of Education. http://www.slis.ualberta.ca/

Vancouver, British Columbia. School of Library, Archival, and Information Studies, Faculty of Arts. http://www.slais.ubc.ca/

The University of Ottawa is establishing a School of Information Studies within the Faculty of Arts in 2008 and appointed Kenneth-Roy Bonin to begin the planning in 2007.[118]

its inspiration with traditional Aboriginal customs, have influenced many of Canada's talented practitioners with 5 to 8 years of work behind them.[107]

Leadership

Everyone mentioned in this article has demonstrated initiative and innovation; there are also many unsung heroes in the Canadian library community. As this article has noted, there is leadership being practised in every sector of the library community, although some of the battles may not yet have been won in every part of Canada and in every type of library. Vigilance is necessary. The grounds on which the 'public good' is defined shift in the globalized and national environments.

In the broader context of Canadian development and research, Dr. Patricia Fleming of the University of Toronto's Faculty of Information Studies, for example, negotiated, with a francophone colleague at McGill, Dr. Yvan Lamonde, the receipt of a major grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for the three-volume *History of the Book in Canada* project.[108] Its completion and publication in budget, on time and in two languages involved professors, researchers, and post-doctoral students and librarians from a number of disciplines and many institutions; and scholars and researchers will also benefit from the databases that Library and Archives Canada will host and others will maintain.

Another example comes from Alberta. Dr. Heidi Julien has not only done research with associates into the changes in public and university Canadian libraries in the digital age and been published in a number of international library journals, she has also dedicated effort to the *Canadian Journal for Information and Library Science,* as its editor.[109]

Wendy Newman has served on several federal task forces and as president of the Media Awareness Network, an award-winning Canadian non-profit organization that has pioneered the development of media literacy programs since 1996, using staff and board members with backgrounds in education, journalism, mass communications, and cultural policy. She is also the first public librarian to serve as Librarian-in-Residence in a faculty of library and information studies.[110]

Lise Bissonnette has risen to the challenges in Québec with intelligence and strategy. Her dynamism and strong personality allows the Québec population to profit from one of the best and the most innovative library and archives services in Canada.[111]

Ken Haycock also has marked the development of library and information science education. After directing the school in British Columbia, he went to the United States where he succeeded as one of the leaders in this area. His work on school library programmes has already been mentioned.

Many Canadians continue to play an active role on the international scene, especially in helping libraries in developing countries to make their way. Philippe Sauvageau, for example, while being very active on the library scene in Québec, travelled all over French-speaking Africa for many years to implement the 'Centres de lecture et d'animation culturelle', an innovative system matching libraries and cultural centres in rural areas throughout La Francophonie.[112]

Canadian library leaders have also made important contributions to IFLA over the length of its existence, putting their high level of expertise at the service of various sections, core activities and on the Governing Board. We can definitely say that overall, Canadian librarians – not only libraries – are also on the agenda!

Conclusion

The only constant is change; and, in a brief article, it is difficult to illustrate the vastness, diversity and local particularity of libraries in Canada. But it is clear that the Canadian library community is on the agenda of governments and policy makers. Our library leaders understand the necessity of strong advocacy, accountability, user-based services and representation in the discussions and decisions of every sector of society.

For this reason, the authors can say with modesty that our recent review of Canadian libraries for this article ranks them as among the best in the world. Of course, Canada is a very large country, and diversity is a strong asset and reality of this nation. There are areas which still need attention and improvement. But overall the Canadian society can be proud of its library system, as Canadians can also take pride in living in a country which is

repeatedly considered by the United Nations to be one of the best places in the world to live. [113]

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   Manitoba
   Manitoba Library Association: www.mla.mb.ca
   New Brunswick
   Association of Professional Librarians of New Brunswick/Association des bibliothécaires professionnel(le)s du Nouveau-Brunswick: http://www.abpnb-aplnb.ca/
   New Brunswick Public Library Service / Services des bibliothèques publiques du Nouveau-Brunswick : www.gnb.ca/publiclibraries; www.gnb.ca/bibliothequespubliques
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PEI Provincial Library Service/Service des bibliothèques publiques de l'I.-P.-E.: www.library.pe.ca
Quebec
Association des bibliothèques publiques du Québec: www.bpq.org
Saskatchewan
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Yukon Territory
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National
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