CONCORIDA LIBRARY RESEARCH FORUM

a library matter of genocide

The Library of Congress and the Historiography of the Native American Holocaust

A presentation by Michael Dudley

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Forthcoming:
"The nationalist not only does not disapprove of atrocities committed by his own side, he has a remarkable capacity to not even hear about them."

-- George Orwell, Notes on Nationalism
Outline

• Research problem: Biased Library of Congress Subject Headings and classification
• Research questions
• Contexts
• Theoretical frameworks
• Methods and limitations
• Description of Sample
• Analysis: Descriptive and Thematic
• Verdict: Indigenous genocides as a marginalized topic in LCSH
• From theory to practice
Biased LC subject Heading and Classification

- Columbus, Christopher – Influence.
- Indians, Treatment of.
- Indians -- First contact with Europeans.
- America -- Discovery and exploration -- Spanish.
Research Questions

• To what extent do the Library of Congress Subject Headings and classifications *and their assignment* accurately represent authorial intent for books concerning the genocides of Indigenous North Americans?

• To what extent do these headings and classification numbers represent a barrier to discovery?

• To what extent do these headings and classification numbers contribute to the marginalization of Indigenous genocides within the field of genocide studies?
Contexts

• The marginalization of Indigenous genocides in Genocide Studies
• Treatment of other historical genocides by LC
• LC cataloguing guidelines
• Truth and Reconciliation Commission
Theoretical Framework
(Foucault/Jackson; Foucault/Radford; Hjorland)

- Subjugated knowledge
- Discursive formations
- Pragmatism
Methods

- WorldCat searches: “Indians of North America” or “Indians” and **title** variations of *Genocide, Holocaust, Extermination*.
- Determined authorial intent through examination, book reviews, publishers’ information
- Sample of 34 titles
- Recorded and compared subject heading treatment and classification
- Occurrences and records
- Noted euphemisms and variation between U. S. and Canadian topics
- Emphasizes feasibility of using LCSH in WorldCat to limit search to genocide in the United States and Canada
Limitations

• Monographs principally concerned with genocide in North America;
• Concepts related to genocide needed to appear in the book’s title;
• Representative sample, not percentage of all available titles;
• Did not seek source of the original cataloguing;
• Did not read or physically accessed every book in the sample;
• No claim made as to the quality, scholarship or accuracy of the books in question.
Sample Titles

• A little matter of genocide: holocaust and denial in the Americas, 1492 to the present
• Accounting for genocide: Canada's bureaucratic assault on aboriginal people
• American Holocaust: Columbus and the Conquest of the New World
• Colonial genocide in indigenous North America
• Conquest: sexual violence and American Indian genocide
• Eating fire, tasting blood: Breaking the great silence of the American Indian Holocaust
• Exterminate them: written accounts of the murder, rape, and slavery of Native Americans during the California gold rush, 1848-1868
• Genocide and the Indians of California, 1769-1873
• Genocide and vendetta: the Round Valley wars of Northern California
• Genocide in Canada
• **Genocide** in North America: the violation of the land and human rights of native peoples
• **Genocide** in northwestern California: when our worlds cried
• **Genocide** in the Land of the free: the Indians of North America, 1776-1890
• **Genocide** machine in Canada: the Pacification of the north
• Gold, greed and **genocide**: unmasking the myth of the '49ers
• Hidden from history: the Canadian **Holocaust**: the untold story of the genocide of Aboriginal peoples by church and state in Canada
• Hidden no longer: **genocide** in Canada, past and present
• **Holocaust** of Native America: an introduction
• Indians are us?: culture and **genocide** in Native North America
• Kill the Indian, save the man: the genocidal impact of American Indian residential schools
• Missionary conquest: the Gospel and Native American cultural genocide
• Murder state: California's native American genocide, 1846-1873
• Native America and the question of Genocide
• North American Genocide
• Sand Creek and the Rhetoric of Extermination
• Struggle for the land: Native North American resistance to genocide, ecocide, and colonization
• The American West and the Nazi East: A comparative and interpretive Perspective
• The infested blanket: Canada's constitution: genocide of Indian nations
• The Missions of California: a legacy of genocide
• The smallpox genocide of the Odawa tribe at L'Arbre Croche, 1763: the history of a Native American people
• The state of Native America: genocide, colonization, and resistance
• Struggle for the land: Native North American resistance to genocide, ecocide, and colonization
• The true story of Canada's "war" of extermination on the Pacific, plus the Tsilhqot'in and other First Nations resistance
• This benevolent experiment: Indigenous boarding schools, genocide, and redress in the Canada and the United States
Analysis
Figure 1. Records Containing LCSH Heading “Genocide” (14 or 41%)
Figure 2: Instances of Key LCSH Terms in Sample, Expressed as % (n=34)
Figure 3. LCSH for "Genocide -- [Geography]" (n=14)
Figure 4. Geographies Actually Represented in Sample Books (n=34; 22=U.S.)

United States: 65%
Canada: 20%
North America: 15%

“Genocide-United States” x2; “Genocide-Canada” x1
Figure 5: Euphemisms in Records Excluding Heading for Genocide (Records n=20)
Figure 6. Headings associated with LC Heading Genocide (Records n=14)
Summary

• Genocide absent in 59% of records
• Often portrayed as an aspect of history, social conditions or “government relations”
• Mostly geographically vague (“North America”) or overly-specific
Colonial Narratives, Double Standards and Erasures

Deamplifying and derealizing language (Lifton)
Colonial Narratives

- Columbus, Christopher -- Influence.
- Indians, Treatment of.
- Indians -- First contact with Europeans.
- America -- Discovery and exploration -- Spanish.

E 112 - Christopher Columbus in American history
• United States -- Territorial expansion -- History -- 19th century.
• Germany -- Territorial expansion -- History -- 20th century.
• Manifest Destiny.
• Lebensraum.

Double Standards

E 179.5 -- American frontier and expansionism
Double Standards

- United States -- Territorial expansion -- History -- 19th century.
- Germany -- Territorial expansion -- History -- 20th century.
- Manifest Destiny.
- Lebensraum.
- Indians, Treatment of -- United States.
- Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945) -- Europe, Eastern.
- Massacres -- West (U.S.) -- History -- 19th century.
- Genocide -- Europe, Eastern -- History -- 20th century.
- Indians of North America -- Wars.
- World War, 1939-1945 -- Atrocities -- Europe, Eastern.
Double Standards

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- Genocide -- Europe, Eastern -- History -- 20th century.
- Indians of North America -- Wars.
- World War, 1939-1945 -- Atrocities -- Europe, Eastern.
- HISTORY -- United States -- Civil War Period (1850-1877)
- HISTORY -- Europe -- Germany.
- HISTORY -- Native American.
- Atrocities.
- Genocide.
- Indians, Treatment of.
- Massacres.
- Territorial expansion.

E 179.5 -- American frontier and expansionism
• Environmental policy -- Canada, Northern.
• Canada, Northern -- Economic policy.
• Economic policy.
• Environmental policy.
• Canada, Northern.

Erasures

HC 117 -- Economic development
Search results for 'su: genocide united states' limited to Libraries Worldwide

Results 1-10 of about 1,116 (.34 seconds)

1. "A problem from hell: America and the age of genocide"
   by Samantha Power
   - Print book  View all formats and languages
   - Language: English
   - Database: WorldCat
   - Libraries that own this item: University of Winnipeg Library

2. "Native America and the question of genocide"
   by Alex Alvarez
   - Print book  View all formats and languages
   - Language: English
   - Database: WorldCat
   - Libraries that own this item: University of Winnipeg Library
1. Biological Absorption and Genocide: A Comparison of Indigenous Assimilation Policies in the United States and Australia
   by Katherine Ellinghaus
   Article
   Language: English
   Publisher: Project Muse
   Database: ArticleFirst
   Libraries that own this item: Other Canadian Libraries

2. Biological Absorption and Genocide: A Comparison of Indigenous Assimilation Policies in the United States and Australia
   by Katherine Ellinghaus
   Computer file
   Publisher: University of Toronto Press 2009-06-08
   Database: WorldCat
   Libraries that own this item: WorldCat Libraries

Results 1-2 of about 2 (.17 seconds)
The Road to Health is Paved with 'Good Intentions': A Cautionary Three Part Tale for Global Health in the Spirit of Reproductive Justice
by Whynacht, Ardash J.
Language: English
Publisher: 2010-12-20T19:14:35Z 2010-12-20T19:14:35Z 2010-12-20 2010-11-30
Database: WorldCat
Libraries that own this item: Other Canadian Libraries
Classifying Native North American Genocides

- E 59 – Pre-Columbian American, special topics.
- E 76 – Indians of North America
- E 77 – Comprehensive works
- E 78 – By state, province or region (7)
- E 83 – “Indian Wars” (2)
- E 91 – General works (2)
- E 92 – General works, Canada (2)
- E 93 – General works, United States (4)
- E 96 – Education (2)
- E 97 – Education, United States, general works
Classifying Native North American Genocides

- E 98 – Other topics, A-Z (4)
- E 99 – By Tribe
- E112 – “Discovery of America” – Christopher Columbus
- E 179.5 – United States History “General special”
- F 868 – California, regions
- HC 117 – Economic history, Canada
- HQ 767.7 – Sterilization as birth control
- KE 7709 – Native peoples, Treaties
Cataloguing and Classification of Marginalized topics
(Olson and Schlegl 1999).

- Treated as an exception to the presumed norm,
- physically ghettoized away from the materials with which they should be associated;
- depicted with an inappropriate structure that misrepresents the field;
- assigned biased terminology, often with pejorative overtones; or
- omitted altogether
From theory to practice
The topic of genocide in the Americas is considered a controversial one: within the field of genocide studies there is considerable debate as to whether or not what was inflicted on the continent's Indigenous peoples qualified as "genocide." The government of Canada does not recognize the use of this term in this context. As such, researching Native American genocide poses some difficulties, as standard subject headings related to genocide rarely apply. A small percentage of titles have been assigned the subject headings "Genocide - Canada" or "Genocide - United States." More often, however these are the commonly used headings:

Indians of North America --

- Treatment of
- Violence against
- Crimes against
- Assimilation
- Government relations
- Relocation
- Education
- Wars

See also:

- United States – Ethnic Relations
- United States – Race relations
- Columbus, Christopher -- Influence
- Forced migration - United States
- Massacres – United States
- California -- Gold Discoveries -- social aspects
Conclusions

• Biased terminology and classification are barriers to researching Indigenous genocides
• Limitations of keyword searching
• Historiographic implications of cataloguing
• Pragmatic cataloguing would recognize claims of Indigenous genocides.
“Who control[s] language and its values controls history and its interpretation.”

-- Daniel Moody
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Blog: The Decolonized Librarian
https://decolonizedlibrarian.wordpress.com/
Sources


http://www.preventgenocide.org/lemkin/freeworld1945.htm


Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. *Calls to Action.*
http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf
