

CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL ACADEMIC LIBRARIANS

CAPAL Supports Academic Librarians and the Profession

On the web: <http://capalibrarians.org/>

August 13, 2014

Dr. Guy Berthiaume
Librarian and Archivist of Canada
Library and Archives Canada 550 Place de le Cité
Gatineau, Quebec
J8T 0A7

Dear Dr. Berthiaume,

Re: LAC's Proposal to move hosting of AMICUS to OCLC (Online Computer Library Centre, Inc.) in the United States

Before we address the main reason for writing this letter, we would first like to extend our congratulations to you on your appointment as Librarian and Archivist of Canada. We, the *Canadian Association of Professional Academic Librarians / L'Association canadienne des bibliothécaires académiques professionnels (CAPAL/ACBAP)* look forward to working with you on matters of mutual professional interest.

The main reason for this letter is to express our serious concerns with respect to Library and Archives Canada's (LAC) plan to move hosting of AMICUS, Canada's union catalogue of library holdings, to the Online Computer Library Centre, Inc. (OCLC) in the United States. While we acknowledge the creation of a national union catalogue is a complex job that requires the dedication of information professionals, Canada's archivists and librarians have considerable expertise to produce catalogues such as AMICUS. Further, while we know that reduced budgets have affected LAC's ability to advance online access to our national bibliography, we want to say that we oppose the outsourcing of Canada's largest, most comprehensive collection of bibliographic information to another country. One serious implication of the proposal is to have the metadata that describes Canadian academic theses (and other digital objects) managed by an American agency.¹

As you are well aware, the mandate of Library and Archives Canada is:

- To preserve the documentary heritage of Canada for the benefit of present and future generations;
- To be a source of enduring knowledge accessible to all, contributing to the cultural, social and economic advancement of Canada as a free and democratic society;

¹ "LAC Library ACAN Tender Notice," Public Works and Government Services Canada, <https://buyandsell.gc.ca/procurement-data/tender-notice/PW-XL-107-27385> Accessed August 6, 2014.

- To facilitate in Canada co-operation among communities involved in the acquisition, preservation and diffusion of knowledge;
- To serve as the continuing memory of the Government of Canada and its institutions.²

We, the Steering Committee of CAPAL/ACBAP fear that LAC's mandate will be deeply compromised as access to our Canadian research outputs and government documents are outsourced to private companies. As professional academic librarians, we affirm that AMICUS is Canada's national bibliography and its control and stewardship should remain with LAC. Please reconsider your decision to outsource Canada's bibliographic records and hence a part of our national identity and cultural heritage to the United States.

The Canadian Association of Professional Academic Librarians (CAPAL/ACBAP) is a national non-governmental membership organization representing academic librarians and the profession of academic librarianship in Canada. Our mission is to promote, advance and support the profession of academic librarianship for the advancement of research, teaching and learning at accredited post-secondary institutions and to further the professional interests of our members.

Sincerely,
CAPAL/ACBAP Steering Committee

Juliya Borie. University of Toronto
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Katya Pereyaslavskaya. University of Toronto
Eva Revitt. MacEwan University
Harriet Sonne de Torrens. University of Toronto
Stephen Spong. York University
Mark Weiler. London, Ontario

² "Library and Archives of Canada Act," Justice Laws Website, <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/PDF/L-7.7.pdf>
Accessed August 6, 2014.