

# Diversity in Children's Graphic Works What about Cataloging?

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# Representation Matters

from the Cooperative Children's Book Center

<https://ccbc.education.wisc.edu/literature-resources/ccbc-diversity-statistics/books-by-and-or-about-poc-2018/>

## CHILDREN'S BOOKS BY AND/OR ABOUT BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND PEOPLE OF COLOR RECEIVED BY THE CCBC-U.S. PUBLISHERS ONLY 2018-

Last Updated: April 16, 2021

| Year | Books Received at CCBC (US Pubs) | Black/African |       | Indigenous |       | Asian |       | Latinx |       | Pacific Islanders |       | Arab |       |
|------|----------------------------------|---------------|-------|------------|-------|-------|-------|--------|-------|-------------------|-------|------|-------|
|      |                                  | By            | About | By         | About | By    | About | By     | About | By                | About | By   | About |
| 2020 | 3,115*                           | 248           | 392   | 25         | 40    | 374   | 299   | 212    | 191   | 1                 | 5     | 17   | 22    |
| 2019 | 3,717                            | 224           | 451   | 29         | 43    | 381   | 328   | 228    | 235   | 5                 | 5     | 17   | 32    |
| 2018 | 3,335                            | 204           | 388   | 26         | 34    | 350   | 309   | 194    | 243   | 2                 | 6     | 15   | 24    |

\*Due to the pandemic, some publishers didn't send out review copies, so we didn't get the number of books we typically do. As always, we recommend calculating percentages to see trends.

# Or, another way to look at diversity in children's books (graphic by Sarah Park Dahlen,

<https://readingspark.wordpress.com/2019/06/19/picture-this-diversity-in-childrens-books-2018-infographic/>)

## DIVERSITY IN CHILDREN'S BOOKS 2018

Percentage of books depicting characters from diverse backgrounds based on the 2018 publishing statistics compiled by the Cooperative Children's Book Center, School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison: [ccbc.education.wisc.edu/books/pcstats.asp](http://ccbc.education.wisc.edu/books/pcstats.asp)



Illustration by David Huyck, in consultation with Sarah Park Dahlen  
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The CCBC inventory includes 3,134 books published in 2018. This graphic would not have been possible without the statistics compiled by the CCBC, and the review and feedback we received from Edith Campbell, Molly Beth Griffin, K. T. Haring, Debbie Reese, Ebony Elizabeth Thomas, and Madeline Tyler. Many thanks.

# Comics and graphics: brief definitions.

First, determine what you have in hand—

- **Comic books:** Issued over time, no end in sight, originally on newsprint. *Catalog as a serial. Compilations of several issues maybe be cataloged as a monograph or (if you're bored and want a challenge) as a special issue.*
- **Manga or manga-like sets:** have an overarching storyline with an actual end. *Catalog as a monographic set.*
- **“Graphic novels” (Graphic fiction or nonfiction):** Single volumes which may have sequels, but a single story in each. *Catalog as a monograph.*

# MARC ups

- Fixed fields:
  - 008 “Contents” 6 (Comic/graphic novels)
  - 008 “Literary form” 1 (Fiction) or 0 (Nonfiction)

## Title(s):

- 245 Series title as main title. \$n number, \$p Part title /
- 246 Alternate title (entire work)
- 246 Alternate title (Part title)
- 490/800 or 830 Series title ; \$v volume number.

# Continued...

- 520 Summary note:

## FIELD DEFINITION AND SCOPE

Unformatted information that describes the scope and general contents of the materials.

This could be a summary, abstract, annotation, review, or only a phrase describing the material.

The level of detail appropriate in a summary may vary depending on the audience for a particular product. When a distinction between levels of detail is required, a brief summary is given in subfield \$a and a fuller annotation is given in subfield \$b.

The text is sometimes displayed and/or printed with an introductory term that is generated as a display constant based on the first indicator value.

--from "520 - Summary, Etc. (R)" <https://www.loc.gov/marc/bibliographic/bd520.html>

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**When writing a summary note, include information on the main character—age, race, ability levels, as indicated in the work. Try to use the terminology used in the work. Try not to include spoilers in a summary note, but do give enough information about the story (for fictional works, especially) to draw readers in. Bonus points for matching the voice of the summary note to the work being described. Avoid evaluating the work in the summary note: leave out “New York Times bestseller” or other superlatives, either positive or negative. Cataloging is not neutral, however the summary note represents what the creator intended and does not include an evaluation of whether the creation is worthy or odious.**

# Continued...

- 650 Subject headings:
  - Include subject headings for the characteristics of the main character(s), such as
    - 650 \_0 \$a Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder
    - 650 \_0 \$a Gay teens
    - 650 \_0 \$a Mexican Americans

## Subdivisions:

- For juvenile materials, do not nest genre headings for –Juvenile fiction (or literature) and –Comic books, strips, etc. Instead enter two separate headings, one with each subdivision.

650 \_0 \$a Vietnam War, 1961-1975 **\$v Comic books, strips, etc.**

650 \_0 \$a Vietnam War, 1961-1975 **\$v Juvenile fiction.**

# 6XX subdivisions

- Subdivisions:
  - For juvenile materials, do not nest genre headings for –Juvenile fiction (or literature) and –Comic books, strips, etc. Instead enter two separate headings, one with each subdivision.

650 \_0 \$a Vietnam War, 1961-1975 \$v **Comic books, strips, etc.**

650 \_0 \$a Vietnam War, 1961-1975 \$v **Juvenile fiction.**



# Genre headings

- 655 Genre headings:
  - 655 \_7 \$aGraphic novels. \$2 lcgft
  - 655 \_0 \$aPicture books for children.
  - 655 \_7 \$aScience comic books. \$2lcgft
  - 655 \_7\$aComics (Graphic works) \$2lcgft

\*\*lcgft: Library of Congress Genre/Form Terms\*\*

See <https://id.loc.gov/authorities/genreForms.html>

# Now, about diversity.

Librarians and teachers have used certain terms to indicate works about underrepresented human groups, without actually naming the persons or groups.

**\*\*This makes finding books about specific groups difficult.\*\***

- multicultural
- #ownvoices
- diversity

**Use the words for race, gender, sexuality, disability—and use specific terms when possible. In the world of keyword searches, if a term is not explicitly included in catalog records, it is effectively erased from search results. And so are the people it describes.**

# #ownvoices

- from Corinne Duyvis, Diversity in Kidlit  
<https://disabilityinkidlit.com/content/> (in hiatus since 2018)
- is a hashtag indicating that a specific work is created by a person from the group described in the work.
- Representation of the culture or group in the work may be considered to have some level of accuracy.
- A term describing a specific work—not the creator of the work. An author may write about many subjects, not all with #ownvoices content.

# Could we create #ownvoices lists automatically?

If demographic information about the creator matches subject headings or keywords in the summary note, then could that be used to create dynamic lists of #ownvoices materials in library collections?

# Authority record for Eric Gansworth

- =LDR 00712cz a2200181n 45 0
- =001 oca04680589\
- =003 OCoLC
- =005 20210419014053.0
- =008 980312n|\azannaabn\|a\aaa\|
- =010 \\\\$an 98023577
- =040 \\\\$aDLC\$beng\$erda\$cDLC\$dDLC\$dOCoLC\$dIIMpPL\$dIAhCCS
- =046 \\\\$f1965-02-28\$2edtf
- =053 \0\$aPS3557.A5196
- **=100 1\\\$aGansworth, Eric,\$d1965-**
- =400 1\\\$wnne\$aGansworth, Eric L.
- =670 \\\\$aIndian summers, 1998:\$bCIP t.p. (Eric L. Gansworth)
- =670 \\\\$aNickel eclipse, c2000:\$bCIP t.p. (Eric Gansworth) data view (b. Feb. 28, 1965)
- =670 \\\\$aWikipedia, viewed Nov. 25, 2020\$(Eric Gansworth is a **Haudenosaunee novelist**, poet and visual artist)\$u[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eric\\_Gansworth](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eric_Gansworth)

# If I ever get out of here / by Eric Gansworth

=100 1 \0\$aGansworth, Eric,\$d1965-

=245 10\$aIf I ever get out of here :\$ba novel with paintings /\$cby Eric Gansworth.

=250 \0\$a1st ed.

=260 \0\$aNew York :\$bArthur A. Levine Books,\$c2013.

=300 \0\$a359 pages :\$billustrations ;\$c22 cm

[...]

=520 \0\$aSeventh-grader Lewis "Shoe" Blake from the **Tuscarora Reservation** has a new friend, George Haddonfield from the local Air Force base, but in 1975 upstate New York there is a lot of tension and hatred between **Native Americans** and Whites--and Lewis is not sure that he can rely on friendship.

=505 0\$aIf I ever get out of here -- Moon and stars -- Tragical history tour -- Playlist and discography.

=650 \0\$aTuscarora Indians\$vJuvenile fiction.

=650 \0\$aFamilies of military personnel\$vJuvenile fiction.

=650 \0\$aIdentity (Psychology)\$vJuvenile fiction.

=650 \0\$aFriendship\$vJuvenile fiction.

=651 \0\$aTuscarora Nation Reservation (N.Y.)\$vJuvenile fiction.

=651 \0\$aNew York (State)\$xEthnic relations\$vJuvenile fiction.

=651 \0\$aNew York (State)\$xHistory\$y20th century\$vJuvenile fiction.

=655 \0\$aYoung adult fiction.

**\*\*Nowhere do the terms **Haudenosaunee** or **Iroquois** occur in this bibliographic record and neither term matches **Tuscarora** in this record, though each is included in the Iroquois Six Nations Confederacy.**

**Including the term #ownvoices in the summary note would indicate that this book is by an author who shares the cultural identity of the main character, but only if searchers and readers understand what it means.**

**Representation matters, but is easily obscured by cataloging practice.**

## Aside: from *The Canadian Encyclopedia*

(<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/iroquois>)

“The Haudenosaunee, or “people of the [longhouse](#),” commonly referred to as Iroquois or Six Nations, are members of a confederacy of Aboriginal nations known as the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. Originally a confederacy of five nations inhabiting the northern part of New York state, the Haudenosaunee consisted of the [Seneca](#), [Cayuga](#), [Oneida](#), [Onondaga](#) and [Mohawk](#). When the Tuscarora joined the confederacy early in the 18th century, it became known as the Six Nations.”

# Authorities, an aside...

## 368 - Other Attributes of Person or Corporate Body (R)

- **FIELD DEFINITION AND SCOPE**
- Any attribute that serves to characterize a person or corporate body or that may be needed for differentiation from other persons or corporate bodies and for which separate content designation is not already defined.
- *For a person:* Can include designations of the title of a person or other attributes.
- *For a corporate body:* Can include designations indicating the type of corporate body or jurisdiction, or other attributes.

**Idea: Including headings that describe the affiliations and group identities of individuals in authority records could make creating #ownvoices linkages possible by matching terms in bibliographic records with descriptors in the authority records of the creators.**

**However, including certain types of information about persons in authority records may endanger those persons and cataloger judgement must err on the side of protecting the individual. Do not out people without their explicit consent.**



## So, representing diversity in catalog records:

- If copy cataloging, look for the most complete record that describes the item in hand.
- Include characteristics of the main character (and possibly, important secondary characters) such as age, ability, cultural group(s), gender identity, etc., in the 520 summary note.
- If the work is by a creator who is a member of the group described, include the hashtag #ownvoices in the 520 summary note.

# Continued...

- Include 650 subjects describing the main character's identities as represented in the work.

For example,

Gay teens—Fiction.

Iroquois children—Juvenile fiction.

Autistic children—Comic books, strips, etc.

- Include 655 genre headings that describe the type of work in hand.

Young adult fiction.

Graphic novels.

Comics (Graphic works)

Afrofuturist comics.

Passover fiction.

Transgender fiction.

# Conclusion

Diversity is a moving target. Groups can be viewed as underrepresented at one moment may be kicked off the bus and be considered mainstream, then vilified again. I believe that our national conversation is just getting started. We librarians have the time and responsibility to consider how libraries fit into the changing paradigm. How will libraries address power discrepancies in our own services and culture, how do we make ourselves into what we believe we are—repositories of information for all persons? Cataloging, like all library practice, is not and cannot be neutral.

# Sturgeon General's Disclaimer:

- These opinions are mine, all mine. No one else will claim them.
- If you have questions or comments, please respond in the Q&A or email me.

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