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## Libraries on the Hill

### An Exploratory Study of Canadian Library Associations

### Advocacy Initiatives

## Les bibliothèques sur la Colline

### Une étude exploratoire des initiatives de défense des intérêts des associations de bibliothèques canadiennes

Merran Carr-Wiggin , Céline Gareau-Brennan , Hélène Carrier  et Michael B. McNally

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#### Résumé de l'article

Cette étude exploratoire examine les pratiques et les résultats de trois associations nationales représentant divers types de bibliothèques et d'organismes: l'Association des bibliothèques de recherche du Canada (ABRC), le Conseil des bibliothèques urbaines du Canada (CBUC) et la Fédération canadienne des associations de bibliothèques (FCAB). Les données proviennent de diverses sources y compris les sites Web des associations, les dossiers des consultations avec le gouvernement fédéral et les activités de lobbying. Une analyse thématique a été réalisée à l'aide d'un codage ouvert ainsi que d'une cartographie visuelle des thèmes et les résultats ont été analysés grâce au modèle de compréhension de culture organisationnelle de Schein. Les résultats fournissent des informations importantes sur les activités de lobbying publiquement disponibles de ces associations depuis 2016. En constituant la première étape quant à l'examen du travail de défense des intérêts des associations de bibliothèques canadiennes, cette étude fournit une base pour des recherches à venir cherchant à explorer l'impact du travail de défense des intérêts des associations de bibliothèques et à identifier des tendances et des stratégies réussies pour les initiatives de défense des intérêts à venir.

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## **Libraries on the Hill: An exploratory study of Canadian library associations advocacy initiatives**

## **Les bibliothèques sur la Colline: une étude exploratoire des initiatives de défense des intérêts des associations de bibliothèques canadiennes**

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### ***Abstract / Résumé***

This exploratory study analyzes the advocacy practices and outputs of three national associations representing libraries and organizations of various types: the Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) / Association des bibliothèques de recherche du Canada (ABRC), the Canadian Urban Libraries Council (CULC) / Conseil des bibliothèques urbaines du Canada (CBUC), and the Canadian Federation of Library Associations (CFLA) / Fédération canadienne des associations de bibliothèques (FCAB). Data was collected from a variety of sources, including the associations' websites, records of federal government consultations and lobbying activities. A thematic analysis was conducted using open coding and visual theme mapping, and the results analyzed using Schein's model for understanding organizational culture. The results provide important insights into publicly available advocacy work by these associations since 2016. By providing the first step of examining advocacy work by Canadian library associations, this study lays the groundwork for further investigation to

explore the impact of library association advocacy and to identify successful patterns and strategies for advocacy initiatives in the future.

Cette étude exploratoire examine les pratiques et les résultats de trois associations nationales représentant divers types de bibliothèques et d'organismes: l'Association des bibliothèques de recherche du Canada (ABRC), le Conseil des bibliothèques urbaines du Canada (CBUC) et la Fédération canadienne des associations de bibliothèques (FCAB). Les données proviennent de diverses sources y compris les sites Web des associations, les dossiers des consultations avec le gouvernement fédéral et les activités de lobbying. Une analyse thématique a été réalisée à l'aide d'un codage ouvert ainsi que d'une cartographie visuelle des thèmes et les résultats ont été analysés grâce au modèle de compréhension de culture organisationnelle de Schein. Les résultats fournissent des informations importantes sur les activités de lobbying publiquement disponibles de ces associations depuis 2016. En constituant la première étape quant à l'examen du travail de défense des intérêts des associations de bibliothèques canadiennes, cette étude fournit une base pour des recherches à venir cherchant à explorer l'impact du travail de défense des intérêts des associations de bibliothèques et à identifier des tendances et des stratégies réussies pour les initiatives de défense des intérêts à venir.

### ***Keywords / Mots-clés***

Canadian library associations, advocacy, organizational culture; associations de bibliothèques canadiennes, défense des intérêts, culture organisationnelle

### ***Introduction***

Many of us have heard the joke that if you put two librarians in a room together, they'll form an association. And indeed, there are a myriad of local, national and international associations to which library workers and institutions belong, and which reflect a wide variety of professional needs and interests. However, one stated purpose that many library associations have in common is advocacy. By way of advocacy initiatives library associations seek to enact change by influencing governments and other stakeholder organizations for the benefit of libraries, their clients, and the profession of librarianship. Associations have a crucial role in improving services and contributing to the profession, and successful advocacy is key to associations' impact. Our research team sought to understand the kinds of advocacy engaged in by associations, as well as gaps in advocacy themes and practices.

This exploratory study looks at what seeds of advocacy and change have been sown by Canadian library associations, with a view to growing effective strategies for the future. The study focused on three organizations at the national level, representing libraries and organizations of various types: the Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) / Association des bibliothèques de recherche du Canada (ABRC), the Canadian Urban Libraries Council (CULC) / Conseil des bibliothèques urbaines du Canada (CBUC), and the Canadian Federation of Library Associations (CFLA) / Fédération canadienne des associations de bibliothèques (FCAB). Data was collected from a

variety of sources between May 2022 and March 2023, including association documentation, records of federal government consultations, and lobbying activities; however, the paper focuses on advocacy undertakings and specifically excludes lobbying activity that would be governed by the *Lobbying Act* (1985). A thematic analysis was conducted using open coding and visual theme mapping, and the results analyzed using Schein's organizational behaviour lens, making use of documents and artifacts, as well as the stated or endorsed values of the associations.

The study provides several important insights into publicly available advocacy work by these associations since 2016. Patterns in the capacity for advocacy efforts are demonstrated by the level of output achieved over several years. Preferred forms and types of advocacy outputs include consultation briefs or public statements, dealing frequently with funding issues. Several themes in advocacy work were identified, including a concentration on copyright and user-centric issues. Advocacy outputs were also contrasted with associations' own statements about advocacy to determine how advocacy work aligns with each association's stated advocacy goals. This study lays the groundwork for further investigation to explore the impact of library association advocacy and to identify successful patterns and strategies for advocacy initiatives in the future, and makes two recommendations on the basis of its findings.

## ***Literature review***

### **Library Associations and Advocacy**

Advocacy has been defined in the library literature as a planned, sustained and often political effort designed to raise awareness, build relationships and influence, engage legislators, and champion a cause (Hicks, 2016; Burns, 2015). Various interpretations of advocacy lead to diverse advocacy practices (Burns, 2015), and the heterogeneous nature of the work corresponds with librarians' lack of understanding on the different types of advocacy (e.g. advocacy vs. marketing vs. lobbying) (Durney, 2023). Advocacy is seen as an important professional responsibility among librarians; however, less individuals actually undertake advocacy work (Durney, 2023).

Library associations' advocacy is often framed in terms of the public and users, and on behalf of specific, individual libraries or regions, and more rarely, to benefit the profession (Million & Bossaler, 2020). McLane (2011), writing from an American context, suggests issues of legislative advocacy include access to government information, copyright, censorship, and privacy. Global issues that affect libraries and library users, such as digital inclusion, connectivity, net neutrality, rural broadband, copyright, and open access, are named as advocacy priorities (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions - IFLA, 2021).

Library advocacy literature focuses on practical guidance and tools for librarians that can be used at the grassroots level (Million & Bossaler, 2020). School and public libraries dominate the literature because they operate with public funds and seek to engage with public decision-makers (Million & Bossaler, 2020). The literature includes recommendations for improving associations' performance on advocacy to meet the

needs of their members (Pionke et al., 2022). Pionke et al. (2022) evaluated the advocacy offerings of the Medical Library Association (MLA) and provided recommendations for achieving successful advocacy initiatives. The American Library Associations (ALA) has an extensive set of resources on advocacy and even has created the ALA Policy Corps that aims to enhance capacity for strategic advocacy (ALA, 2023). However, the ALA has also been criticized for oversimplifying advocacy, including its “advocake” approach that suggested advocacy was as easy as baking a cake (Jaeger et al., 2017).

As interest groups, library associations are engaged in the political process (Fowke, 2018), and library associations play a key role in directing lobbying of all types (Million & Bossaler, 2020). Globally, library associations have long seen advocacy as part of their role (Choh, 2008; Daniel, 2008). Henczel (2017), in her study of the impact of four national library associations, identified twelve perceived impacts. Participants were not directly asked about advocacy; however, the study found that associations had a perceived positive impact on the promotion of the profession through advocacy and lobbying (Henczel, 2017, p. 282). Coordination efforts among library interest groups can amplify associations’ voices and benefit libraries and their stakeholders (Million & Bossaler, 2020). Collaboration among professional organizations, including the sharing of advocacy materials, can be particularly effective in reducing redundant efforts and creating a unified voice for the field (Jaeger et al., 2013; Jaeger et al., 2017).

In the Canadian context, there are few empirical studies on the topic, and the field mostly relies on the contributions of thought leaders (Cleyle & van den Hoogen, 2020; Bourne-Tyson & Haigh, 2017). The disbanding of the Canadian Library Association (CLA) in 2016 led to the creation of the Canadian Federation of Library Associations (CFLA). CLA, the precursor to CFLA, had long seen advocacy as a core purpose of the association, although not without challenges in meeting the expectations of its members and addressing the concerns of library workers (Whitmell, 1999; DeYoung, 2020; Oliphant & McNally, 2014; CLA, n.d.). The lack of participation by Canadian library associations in recent telecommunications regulatory fora has also been noted (McNally, 2019). Although a burgeoning body of literature outside library and information studies (LIS) has started to develop around the complex area of advocacy evaluation, which highlights the complexity of such analyses (Albert et al., 2022; Barkhorn et al., 2013; Fagen et al., 2009; Glass, 2017; Teles & Schmitt, 2011), this study aims to provide the necessary first step of quantifying advocacy work by Canadian library associations.

## **Organizational Culture**

The concept of organizational culture is important to examine in our work because we have chosen to apply an organizational culture lens to our exploration of advocacy by library associations. Library advocacy figures heavily in the strategies of several library associations (CFLA, 2022a; CARL, n.d.; CULC, 2023). Given that “organizational culture and strategy are highly interrelated” (Higgins & McAllaster, 2002, p. 76), it is a reasonable and relevant application. The study of organizational culture originates in the academic sphere of business and management (Schein, 1990). Although much

application of organizational culture is applied in a business context, it has been applied more widely to numerous scholarly disciplines (Bonavia, 2006). Additionally, there has been increasing influence and intersections with social sciences fields such as sociology, anthropology, social psychology, and organizational behavior (Schein, 1990).

Edgar Schein's framework for analyzing culture breaks it down into three categories in which culture is manifested: artifacts, espoused beliefs and values, and basic underlying assumptions (Schein 1990; Schein & Schein, 2016). Although our research starts its study of library associations at the artifact level, it is important to understand the relationship amongst artifacts, espoused beliefs and values, and underlying assumptions. There is a range of items that can be included as artifacts from organizational documents to technology (Abdullahi & Noorhidawati, 2021; Bonavia, 2006; Wei & Miraglia, 2017; Weaver, 2015). Often, if decisions and actions made based on espoused beliefs and values are successful, these will become underlying assumptions (Schein 1990; Schein & Schein, 2016). However, it is possible for artifacts, espoused beliefs and values, and underlying assumptions to be in conflict with themselves or be contradictory (Schein, 1990; Schein & Schein, 2016).

Despite its ease of observability, analysis of artifacts is tricky due to its relationship with the organization's members. Simply observing an artifact alone may not divulge the way members of the organization interact with it, or the meaning that they imbue the artifact with (Schein, 1990). As well the meaning of an artifact is contextually dependent in that "culture can lead to shared interpretation of an artifact, and the interpretation of the same artifact may differ from one culture (and therefore one organization) to another" (Luria & Rafaeli, 2008, p. 520). This makes the study of these artifacts very subjective. That said, the study of artifacts is still significant and an awareness of artifacts and the alignment of these artifacts to strategy allows for better change management (Higgins & McAllaster, 2002).

## **Methodology**

This exploratory study documents and analyzes the practices and the output of three Canadian library associations related to advocacy, drawing on an organizational culture lens, focusing on publicly available outputs. The decision to use documents for this research was inspired by Schein's (1990) model for understanding organizational culture that identifies three levels of organizational culture: artifacts and behaviours; espoused values; and shared basic assumptions. Artifacts and behaviours are visible elements of an organizational culture. In this study these elements included reports by the associations and consultation activities. Espoused values were identified as values that the associations have stated or endorsed. The team mined the data for shared basic themes, or assumptions, that could be extrapolated from the discourse observed in the website content, reports, and consultations.

The team selected three national associations for the study, to represent a broad range of library sector engagement, and to include associations of a size that would enable robust advocacy initiatives. These were also selected since their advocacy activities are mostly at the national level, making a comparison more achievable and relevant.

Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) represents large research-intensive academic libraries, Canadian Urban Libraries Council (CULC) represents urban public libraries, and Canadian Federation of Library Associations (CFLA) is the national federation of library associations that includes provincial associations and other associations from the library and archives sectors. CARL and CULC, it should be noted, are also founding member associations of the CFLA.

To collect the data, multiple sources were examined between May 2022 and March 2023 to search for advocacy initiatives. For this purpose, advocacy was defined as initiatives that seek to enact change by influencing governments and other stakeholder organizations for the benefit of libraries, their clients, and the profession of librarianship. These sources included the associations' websites, the Government of Canada House of Commons Committee Meeting Transcripts, the Government of Canada Registry of Lobbyists (Office of the Commissioner of Lobbying of Canada, 2023), and the Government of Canada's consultation database (Government of Canada, 2022), a database that consolidates the consultations submitted by the departments and agencies in the Government of Canada (2024). The Government of Canada Registry of Lobbyists was searched to identify activities by the associations conducted via lobbyists from 2016 to 2022. However, data related to lobbyists is excluded as the Registry of Lobbyists presents only a partial representation of the lobbying work undertaken by associations. The Registry does not capture direct interactions between the associations and federal officials, which would be governed by the *Lobbying Act* (1985), and as such provides an incomplete representation of lobbying activity. The researchers report on data from the associations' websites, House of Commons committee meeting transcripts, and the consultation database to allow for a well-rounded analysis, and all data chosen is openly available to allow for replicability and transparency in this research.

The websites for the three associations were reviewed and examined to extricate content related to advocacy. Content relating to advocacy work, including website text, reports, and other documentation, was identified by reviewing the advocacy (CFLA, CULC), influence policy, responses to national issues, responses to federal budget (CARL), position papers (CFLA), press releases and other relevant sections of the organizations' website. This content was recorded and stored for future analysis. Data were collected from Government of Canada committee meeting transcripts to identify library association contributions to consultations during the period 2016-2022. The 2016 date was chosen to coincide with the creation of CFLA in 2016. The criteria for content used in the analysis was anything that related to the three associations under consideration.

The data were extracted and stored in spreadsheets for analysis on a secure Google Drive, which all researchers had access to. The team used open coding to identify themes in these cultural artifacts and label them as reports, consultations, values stated and championed by the associations, and the purpose and arguments used in the consultations (Berg, 2004). Open coding is the earliest stage in coding in the grounded theory approach to qualitative research advocated by Corbin and Strauss (2015). Researchers analyze texts and identify as many concepts as possible without

preconceived notions. The concepts are then refined and relationships within the data analyzed (Benaquisto, 2008). Open coding was chosen as it involves an inductive approach to examining data.

Subsequently, the researchers used the coded data to conduct thematic analysis influenced by the framework and steps developed by Braun and Clarke (2006). Thematic analysis is a methodology for identifying and describing themes and patterns in qualitative research (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The team used steps from Braun and Clarke's framework to analyze the data. These were:

1. Reading data from the website and the government sources to familiarize ourselves with the content;
2. Identifying and generating initial themes and codes, and collating the data to the codes;
3. Searching for themes, collating codes to themes, and grouping data relevant to each theme;
4. Iteratively reviewing the themes and codes to ensure they worked in relation to the data set, and generating a thematic map;
5. Continued analysis and refining of themes so that the overall story emerged. Creating clear definitions and naming for the themes (p. 87).

The sixth stage of the Braun and Clarke (2006) model is the analysis and reporting related to the scholarly output of the study, which follows in the results section below. Each team member coded themes in the materials they had reviewed and then the team undertook several iterative stages of refining the themes through consolidation and clarification of language used in order to analyze the themes further.

To analyze the Government of Canada's consultation database, the *Consulting with Canadians* website was accessed in June of 2022, and the consultation records were downloaded. At the time, the database contained 4,049 consultations including consultations from federal departments, as well as from arms lengths agencies, boards and commissions, and the House of Commons. However, upon inspection it was noted that the database was not exhaustive of all federal consultations.<sup>1</sup> Given the volume of consultations, the database was limited to consultations starting from January 1, 2016, onward and limited to 15 bodies likely to have consultations relevant to library or information issues.<sup>2</sup> The remaining 378 consultations were examined to find 25

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<sup>1</sup> For example, the consultation database did not include all consultations from Innovation, Science and Economic Development (ISED) Canada in relation to spectrum management. A complete analysis of all missing consultations was beyond the scope of this study.

<sup>2</sup> The 15 bodies were: Canadian Heritage, Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission, Crown-Indigenous Relations, Employment and Social



consultations dealing with LIS issues for further examination. While the identification of potentially relevant databases by a single member of the research team is not without shortcomings (specifically research bias in determining which consultations may be relevant for further scrutiny), as discussed in the results and analysis sections, the data related to the *Consulting with Canadians* database is included in the paper not because of findings from the data itself, but because of the implications for library associations.

## Results

In this section, the team presents the results of the exploratory study. The researchers coded advocacy artifacts by document types, by intended audiences, and by themes looking for patterns across the field, for each organization, and over time. Each advocacy artifact could have one or more audience and one or more themes.

The researchers identified a total of 125 advocacy artifacts during the seven-year period. A breakdown of library association advocacy artifacts by year is shown in Figure 1. CARL and CFLA generated an average of 10 advocacy artifacts annually while CULC generated an average of approximately five advocacy artifacts per year. The field produced approximately 20 advocacy artifacts annually. The team found 10 joint submissions or endorsements in total that accounted for 8% of the outputs. The team also noted fluctuations in the annual advocacy outputs during the period from a peak in 2018 (review of the *Copyright Act*) to less activity during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

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Development Canada (ESDC), Global Affairs, House of Commons, Indigenous Services, Innovation Science and Economic Development (ISED), Library and Archives Canada (LAC), National Research Council, Privy Council Office, Standards Council of Canada, Statistics Canada (StatCan), and the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS).

**Figure 1**

*Number of Library Association Advocacy Artifacts per Year*

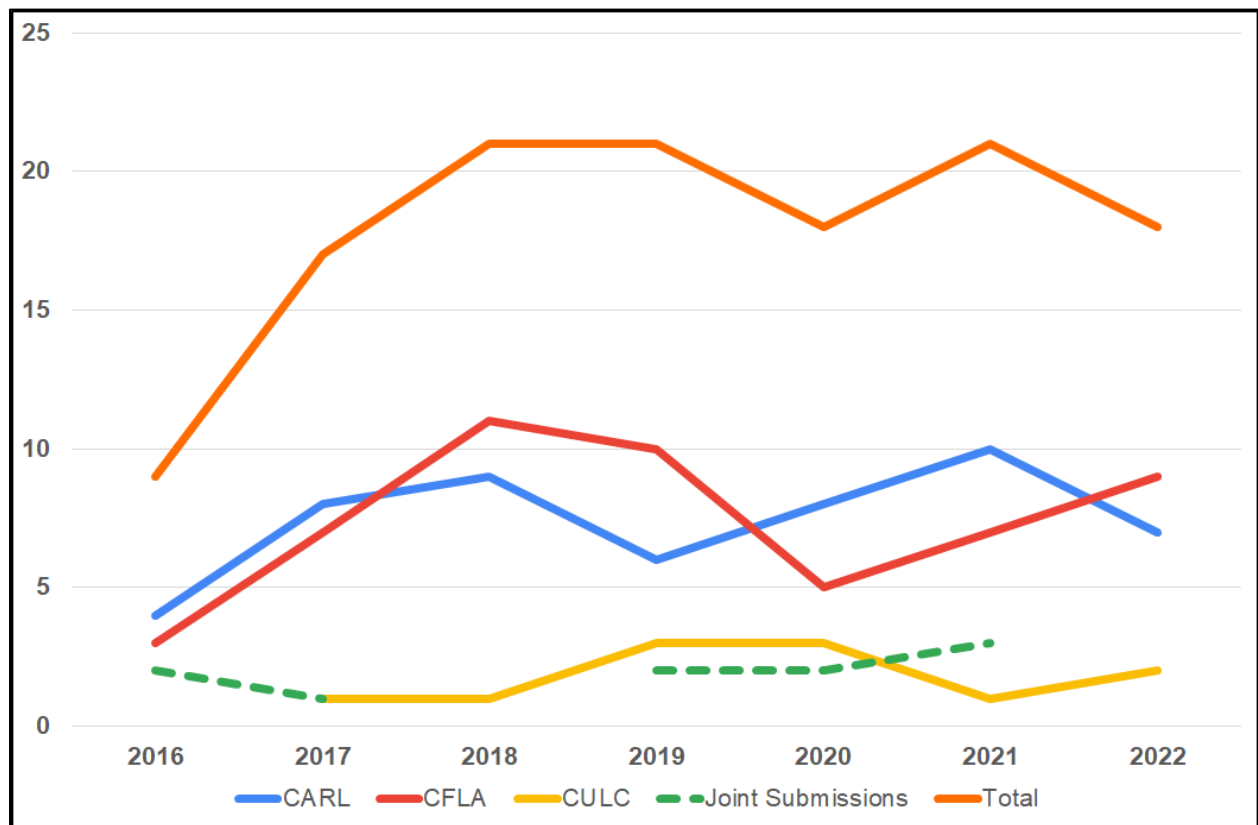


Table 1 provides the percentage share of total documents by type. Eight document types were identified. The three more frequent document types were: consultation briefs in response to the government's formal consultations process (for ex. Federal budget, Copyright legislative review), which represented 28.8% of total document types, public statements and press releases (27.2%), and positions statements (18.4%).

**Table 1***Percentage (%) Share of Total Documents by Type*

<b><u>Types of documents</u></b>	<b><u>CARL</u></b>	<b><u>CFLA-FCAB</u></b>	<b><u>CULC</u></b>	<b><u>Joint Submissions</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>
<b>Consultation Brief</b>	13.6	9.6	2.4	3.2	28.8
<b>Public Statement/ Press Release</b>	6.4	15.2	5.6	—	27.2
<b>Position Statement</b>	8.8	9.6	—	—	18.4
<b>Open Letter</b>	6.4	3.2	0.8	1.6	12
<b>Committee Meeting Evidence</b>	5.6	1.6	—	3.2	10.4
<b>Report</b>	—	1.6	—	—	1.6
<b>Affidavit</b>	0.8	—	—	—	0.8
<b>Survey</b>	—	0.8	—	—	0.8
<b>Total</b>	41.6	41.6	8.8	8	100

*Note.* Joint Submissions as follows: 6 CARL and CFLA-FCAB, 3 CARL, CFLA-FCAB and CULC, and 1 CARL and CFLA-FCAB with endorsement from CULC and Canadian Association of Law Libraries (CALL)

Advocacy artifacts often open with a purpose or introductory statement that gives insight to the intended audience. A list of 27 different audiences was developed. Figure 2 shows an overview of audiences for advocacy artifacts. Non-governmental audiences, such as the general public or the library community, received the greatest numbers of artifacts (37%), followed by the executive branch of the federal government, such as Members of Parliament and House of Commons Committees (27%), and by the legislative branch of the federal government, such as Federal Departments (26%). A smaller number of artifacts were addressed to the judicial (1%) and quasi-judicial arm's length regulatory agencies (6%), such as the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) and the Copyright Board of Canada, and even to provincial governments (3%).

**Figure 2**

*Different Audiences in percentage (%) for Advocacy Artifacts*

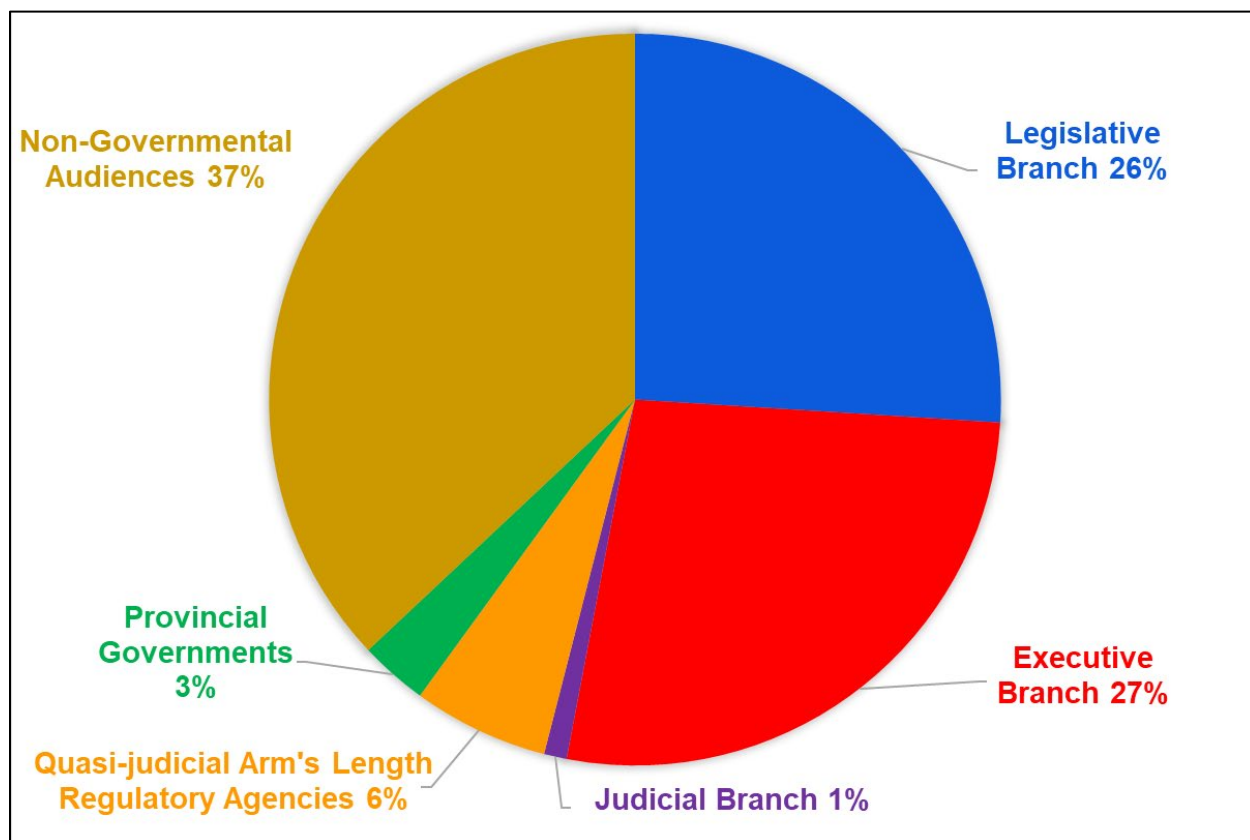


Table 2 presents the percentage share of total artifact audiences ranked from most to least common. For readability, the table shows advocacy audiences representing at least 2.5% or more of the percentage share of total artifact audiences. Working at the national level, the three library associations actively respond to annual federal pre-budget consultations; the researchers consequently found that the House of Commons Finance Committee (FINA) ranks amongst the top advocacy audience. Canadian Heritage, the federal department that comprises Library and Archives Canada (LAC) in its portfolio, and Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED), the department that oversees copyright legislation, also rank amongst the top advocacy audiences. Given their respective mandates, CFLA and CULC have comparatively more advocacy artifacts aimed at the general public or the library community while CARL produces a greater number of advocacy artifacts aimed at the post-secondary sector or the copyright community.

**Table 2***Percentage (%) Share of Total Artifact Audiences (ranked from most to least common)*

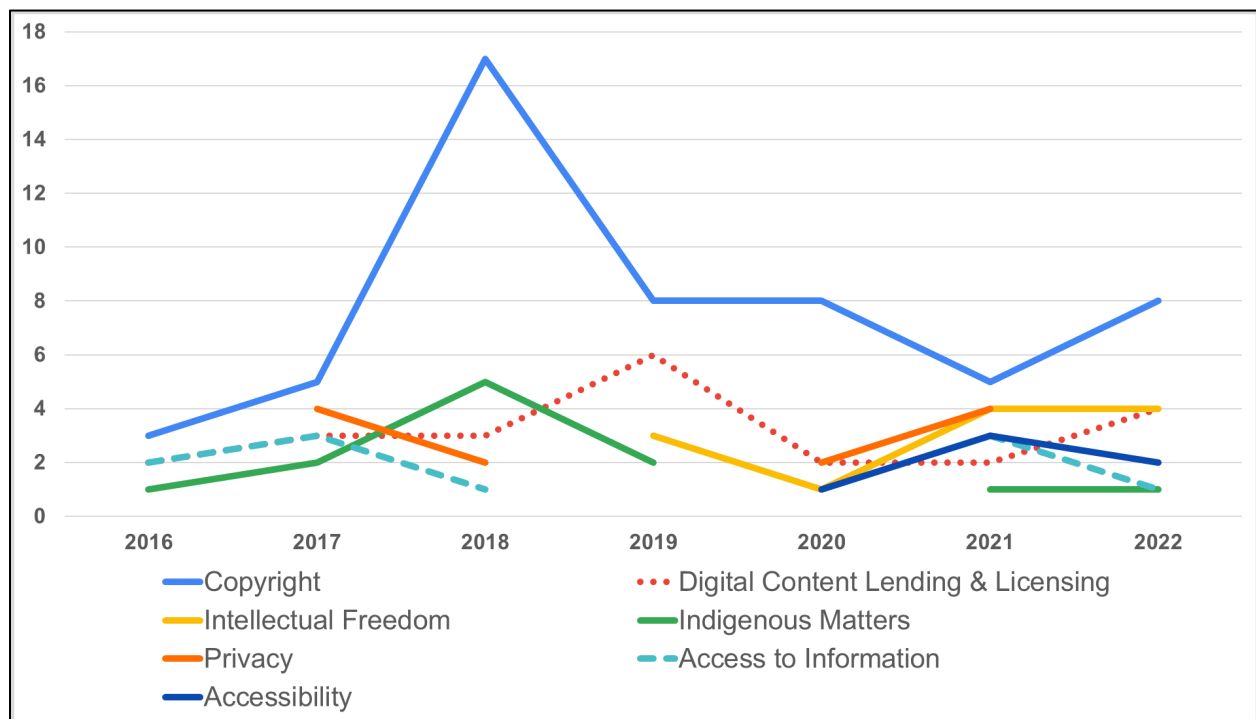
<b><u>Audiences</u></b>	<b><u>CARL</u></b>	<b><u>CFLA</u></b>	<b><u>CULC</u></b>	<b><u>Joint Submissions</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>
General Public	8.8	11.3	4.4	—	<b>24.4</b>
House of Commons – Finance (FINA)	2.5	3.8	1.3	—	<b>7.5</b>
Canadian Heritage	3.1	2.5	—	1.3	<b>6.9</b>
Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED)	0.6	2.5	0.6	3.1	<b>6.9</b>
Members of Parliament	2.5	3.8	0.6	—	<b>6.9</b>
House of Commons – Industry and Technology (INDU)	3.8	2.5	—	—	<b>6.3</b>
Post-secondary Community	5.0	—	—	—	<b>5.0</b>
Library Community	—	4.4	—	—	<b>4.4</b>
Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS)	2.5	—	—	1.3	<b>3.8</b>
Copyright Community	3.1	—	—	—	<b>3.1</b>
Copyright Board of Canada	1.9	0.6	—	—	<b>2.5</b>
Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC)	0.6	1.9	—	—	<b>2.5</b>
House of Commons – Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics (ETHI)	1.3	0.6	—	0.6	<b>2.5</b>
Publishers	—	0.6	1.9	—	<b>2.5</b>
Technology Industry	0.6	1.3	0.6	—	<b>2.5</b>
All other audiences	5.6	3.1	1.3	2.5	<b>12.5</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>41.9</b>	<b>38.8</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>8.8</b>	<b>100</b>

*Note.* Joint Submissions as follows: 6 CARL and CFLA-FCAB, 3 CARL, CFLA-FCAB and CULC, and 1 CARL and CFLA-FCAB with endorsement from CULC and Canadian Association of Law Libraries (CALL)

After an iterative process, a list of 23 advocacy themes was developed. Figure 3 shows a general view of the top advocacy themes with at least 10 artifacts in total over time. Copyright is the most frequent and sustained theme in the field accounting for 27.8 % of all advocacy artifacts (peaking during the 2018 legislative review), followed by digital content lending and licensing at 11.3 %. The team noted that some of the themes they had identified recurred frequently during the period, such as intellectual freedom, and other themes were addressed more sporadically, such as indigenous matters, privacy, and access to information. Table 3 presents the percentage share of total artifacts by themes, by association and jointly, ranked from highest to lowest of total percentage share. Copyright was the primary focus of joint submissions (9 out of 15 total themes) and ISED was the primary audience (5 of 14 total audiences).

**Figure 3**

*Top Advocacy Themes in numbers (of at least 10 artifacts total) over time*



**Table 3**

*Percentage Share of Total Artifact Themes (ranked from highest to lowest of total percentage share)*

<b><u>Artifact Themes</u></b>	<b><u>CARL</u></b>	<b><u>CFLA</u></b>	<b><u>CULC</u></b>	<b><u>Joint Submissions</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>
<b>Copyright</b>	12.4	9.8	1.0	4.6	<b>27.8</b>
<b>Digital Content Lending and Licensing</b>	1.5	5.7	3.6	0.5	<b>11.3</b>
<b>Intellectual Freedom</b>	0.5	5.7	0.5	–	<b>6.7</b>
<b>Indigenous Matters</b>	0.5	5.7	–	–	<b>6.2</b>
<b>Privacy</b>	4.6	0.5	0.5	0.5	<b>6.2</b>
<b>Access to Information</b>	2.1	2.6	–	0.5	<b>5.2</b>
<b>Accessibility</b>	1.0	2.6	1.0	0.5	<b>5.2</b>
<b>Telecommunication Policy</b>	2.1	2.6	–	–	<b>4.6</b>
<b>Library Funding</b>	2.1	0.5	1.5	–	<b>4.1</b>
<b>Sustainability</b>	–	3.6	–	–	<b>3.6</b>
<b>All other themes</b>	11.3	6.2	0.5	1.0	<b>19.1</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>38.1</b>	<b>45.4</b>	<b>8.8</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>100</b>

*Note.* Joint Submissions as follows: 6 CARL and CFLA-FCAB, 3 CARL, CFLA-FCAB and CULC, and 1 CARL and CFLA-FCAB with endorsement from CUL and Canadian Association of Law Libraries (CALL)

Intending to complement the analysis of publicly available advocacy artifacts, the analysis of the federal government's own consultation database was not without its limitations. Of the 25 consultations identified, 17 were inscrutable because of insufficient government records. In many cases the government failed to maintain access to submissions by parties to the consultation and did not produce a resulting summary document from the consultation that could meaningfully identify participants. In some cases where summary documents were provided, language was too vague to ascertain who participated. In other cases, URLs from government websites were no longer available. ISED was the best department at documenting participation; however, even in some cases, such as its 2016 PIPEDA (Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act) consultation, there was insufficient evidence to assess participation.

The research team was also aware of certain cases where library association participation was known, such as Global Affairs 2017 consultation on a new North American Free Trade Agreement, but no evidence from the government could be used to identify such participation (i.e. no summary report and no record on submissions).

Despite these limitations, the analysis revealed that in most cases where evidence existed, it was clear that library associations were participating in relevant consultations. In only four consultations out of the 25, was it evident that national library associations failed to participate (the 2018 review of the Canadian communications framework; a 2017 consultation on big data; the 2017 consultation on a new intellectual property strategy; and the National Digital and Data consultations in 2018, though it should be noted that these were held as a series of in person meetings as opposed to a fully open consultation where any interested parties could submit). Table 4, below, provides a summary of the analysis of the Consulting with Canadians database.

**Table 4**

*Result of Analysis from the Consulting with Canadians Database*

<b><u>Consultation Title</u></b>	<b><u>Consultation Start Date</u></b>	<b><u>Dept. / Agency</u></b>	<b><u>Analysis Summary</u></b>
<b>Canadian content in a digital world</b>	2016-04-23	Heritage	Unable to analyze - dead links
<b>The Government's proposed approach to address harmful content online</b>	2021-07-29	Heritage	Unable to analyze - insufficient evidence
<b>Mandate Commitments on the Right to Disconnect and Gig Workers</b>	2021-03-18	ESDC	Unable to analyze - insufficient evidence
<b>Consulting Canadians on the renegotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)</b>	2017-05-19	Global Affairs	Unable to analyze - insufficient evidence
<b>National Digital and Data Consultations</b>	2018-06-19	ISED	Of 28 stakeholder consultations, local public library systems involved in two; no national association participation



<b><u>Consultation Title</u></b>	<b><u>Consultation Start Date</u></b>	<b><u>Dept. / Agency</u></b>	<b><u>Analysis Summary</u></b>
<b>Competition Bureau invites feedback on its draft revised Intellectual Property (IP) Enforcement Guidelines</b>	2018-11-01	ISED	Unable to analyze - insufficient evidence
<b>Review of the Canadian Communications Legislative Framework</b>	2018-09-24	ISED	No evidence of participation
<b>Big data and Innovation: Implications for competition policy in Canada</b>	2017-09-18	ISED	No evidence of participation
<b>A Consultation on Options for Reform to the Copyright Board of Canada</b>	2017-08-09	ISED	CARL and CFLA participated
<b>Canada's New Intellectual Property Strategy</b>	2017-06-19	ISED	No evidence of participation
<b>Consultation on Data Breach Regulations under the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act</b>	2016-03-04	ISED	Unable to analyze - dead links
<b>Regulations Establishing Time Limits in Relation to Matters Before the Copyright Board</b>	2019-04-27	ISED	Unable to analyze - insufficient evidence
<b>Consultation on a Modern Copyright Framework for Online Intermediaries</b>	2021-04-14	ISED	British Columbia Library Association (BCLA); Joint CFLA-CARL-CULC; IFLA

<b><u>Consultation Title</u></b>	<b><u>Consultation Start Date</u></b>	<b><u>Dept. / Agency</u></b>	<b><u>Analysis Summary</u></b>
<b>A consultation on how to implement an extended general term of copyright protection in Canada</b>	2021-02-11	ISED	Bibliothèque et Archives Nationales du Québec (BANQ); Corporation des Bibliothécaires Professionnels du Québec (CBPQ); Joint Council of Post Secondary Library Directors, British Columbia (CPSLD) - British Columbia Open Education Librarians (BCOEL); IFLA; University of Toronto (UofT) Office of the Chief Librarian; Western [University] Libraries; BCLA; Joint CFLA-CARL
<b>Consultation on a Modern Copyright Framework for Artificial Intelligence and the Internet of Things</b>	2021-07-16	ISED	Joint CFLA-CARL submission
<b>Enriching LAC's library collections</b>	2018-11-15	LAC	Unable to analyze - insufficient evidence
<b>LAC Service Fees Review</b>	2020-04-01	LAC	Unable to analyze - insufficient evidence
<b>Joint Consultations with the Ottawa Public Library (OPL)</b>	2020-04-01	LAC	Unable to analyze - insufficient evidence
<b>Library and Archives Canada's Vision 2030: consulting external audiences</b>	2020-11-05	LAC	Unable to analyze - insufficient evidence

<b><u>Consultation Title</u></b>	<b><u>Consultation Start Date</u></b>	<b><u>Dept. / Agency</u></b>	<b><u>Analysis Summary</u></b>
<b>Gender and sexual diversity statistical metadata standards</b>	2021-02-02	StatCan	Unable to analyze - insufficient evidence
<b>Statistics Canada's publishing initiatives</b>	2021-06-07	StatCan	Unable to analyze - insufficient evidence
<b>Access to Information Act Reform</b>	2016-04-01	TBS	CARL submission
<b>Updated policy and directive on access to information</b>	2018-05-10	TBS	Unable to analyze - website down
<b>Revitalizing access to information</b>	2016-05-01	TBS	Unable to analyze - website down
<b>Reviewing access to information</b>	2022-01-11	TBS	Unable to analyze - insufficient evidence

## ***Analysis***

The results of the exploratory study provide several important insights into publicly available advocacy work by Canadian library associations. In terms of yearly output, Figure 1 illustrates what appears to be a capacity threshold for both the field and the individual associations. The year 2016 represents a low for both CARL, CFLA and CULC with four, three and zero artifacts respectively. While CFLA's output reflects the nascency of the organization, it is unclear why the other two organizations had notably lower outputs. Excluding 2016, CARL demonstrates the greatest consistency in artifacts ranging between a low of six in 2019 and a high of 10 in 2021. CFLA's output is more variable ranging from a high of 11 in 2018 (the year of the statutory review of the *Copyright Act*) to a low of five in 2020. CULC has consistently produced one to three pieces of advocacy work. While the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 corresponds to a decrease in outputs by CFLA, overall the pandemic's impact on advocacy was limited. More broadly the organizations both individually and in the aggregate evince an advocacy capacity based on the previous seven years (2017-2022). While advocacy literature notes that advocacy capacity is based on several factors (coalition building, grassroots support, policy analysis, campaign implementation, media and communications, and fundraising) (Strong & Kim, 2012), the analysis of outputs provides another factor for assessing advocacy capacity.

The types of advocacy outputs demonstrate a clear pattern of preferred forms of outputs. A majority (56%) of advocacy takes the form of consultation briefs or public statements with the former being slightly more common than the latter (36 to 34 respectively). Of the briefs, one third (12) were specifically pre-budget consultation briefs submitted to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance (FINA). The preponderance of budgetary briefs dealing with funding issues reflects Durney's (2023) findings that 96% of survey respondents saw this as a professional responsibility.

The audiences for advocacy outcomes align with Hicks' (2016) and Burns' (2015) suggestion that engaging legislators is a core advocacy action with just over one quarter of outputs being directly aimed at legislators. It also underscores how the public is a significant audience for advocacy outputs. A particularly common audience, and thus strength of advocacy is submissions to the FINA. The pre-budget consultation submissions of CARL and CFLA appear as regular outputs and provide an important linkage between advocacy priorities and requests for federal funding. While only a small share (6%) of advocacy targets quasi-judicial arm's length regulatory agencies such as the Copyright Board and the CRTC, these remain important contributions as this work often deals with more complex regulatory issues. Participation in regulatory forums is important, less regulators be captured by corporate or other less public oriented participants (Stigler, 1971; Bo, 2006). Although greater participation at the CRTC is of particular note given McNally's (2019) criticism of library associations engaging with the regulator, it should also be noted that these interventions dealt with copyright and broadcasting issues, not telecommunication policy.

Thematically, the advocacy work of Canadian library associations aligns with user-oriented issues (Million & Bossaler, 2020) and legislative advocacy issues (McLane, 2011). Copyright, digital content lending and licensing, privacy, access to government information, accessibility, and other prominent advocacy issues all represent patron-oriented advocacy on federal legislative matters. The dominance of copyright as an advocacy issue is a pronounced finding. However, the preponderance of copyright related artifacts is also partially explained by the statutory review of the *Copyright Act* that took place in 2018. Notably, advocacy centered on advancement of the profession was minimal with only two artifacts - a 2022 CFLA webpage noting October as Canadian library month (CFLA, 2022b), and a 2019 page and a half document from CARL underscoring the role the university librarian plays in post-secondary environments (CARL, 2019), which reflects that association advocacy may end up putting users' issues before library workers' issues. Also less prominent is advocacy work around non content centric issues, such as the libraries as public spaces and encouragement of literacy. While reading oriented advocacy has been critiqued as overemphasizing a single role libraries play (Jaeger et al., 2017), the complete lack of any work in this regard is notable. Advocacy in relation to information literacy, and specifically libraries' role in countering misinformation was limited to just a single artifact, a 2021 CARL submission to Canadian Heritage about harmful content online (CARL, 2021). This gap is notable given the heightened emphasis on the issue since 2016.

Library values-based advocacy is not without its limitations. The CFLA's 2021 statement on *Irreversible Damage* resulted in a critical Open Letter signed by scores of Canadian professionals, which began with the authors clearly noting the division within the field by stating "we are not united" ("Open Letter to the CFLA Board on Intellectual Freedom", 2021, p. 1). The CFLA's approach was also criticized by the Manitoba Library Association (MLA) (2021) as not sufficiently consultative. The divisiveness caused by the CFLA statement on *Irreversible Damage* reflects Oliphant & McNally's (2014) argument that the field struggles with issues that pit library management against workers. In commenting on the CLA, the CFLA's predecessor, they noted "CLA's professional ethic of upholding intellectual freedom in libraries can be a contentious issue for some stakeholders", and "Many are frustrated by CLA's refusal to act on behalf of library workers" (Oliphant & McNally, 2014, p. 59). As evinced by the cases of the CLA and *Irreversible Damage*, strict defense of and advocacy for intellectual freedom can be an alienating approach within the field.

Consideration of advocacy efforts in light of Schein's work provides several further revelations. Generally, advocacy outputs reflect espoused beliefs and values. This relationship is most notable with respect to copyright, for which there were a total of 54 advocacy artifacts dealing with the subject. The CFLA's *Code of Ethics*, which is identical to the IFLA Code, speaks of advocacy generally in the preamble, but explicitly compels advocacy in relation to copyright both in relation to user exceptions and term limits (CFLA, 2018; IFLA, 2012). This is a *prima facie* example of alignment between output and values. In contrast, despite the often underscored collaborative nature of the field, advocacy collaboration amongst national associations made up just a fraction of the overall artifacts (just 10 of 125 artifacts). While collaboration among library organizations has clear benefits (Jaeger et al., 2013; Jaeger et al., 2017), it is limited in the Canadian context. It might be argued however that CFLA, with a board composed of representatives from library and archival associations from all regions of Canada, was created to reinforce collaboration amongst the various library associations. Despite suggestions that engaging in advocacy with groups outside of the field such as teachers' unions or school associations is beneficial (Million & Bossaler, 2020), advocacy with non-LIS organizations was not evinced.

Alignment and divergence from exposed values is further evinced by examining other association documents in light of each group's advocacy work. CFLA's Advocacy Policy (2022a) notes that the organization "comments on local, provincial and territorial matters in collaboration with members associations" (p. 1). However, collaboration with member organizations was not strongly demonstrated in the advocacy outputs of the organization, and federal, not local or regional matters dominated advocacy work. CFLA had only one artifact targeting a provincial government, a 2017 webpage appealing for the Government of Saskatchewan to reverse public library funding cuts (CFLA, 2017), and two artifacts dealing with intellectual freedom and individual library systems (CFLA, 2019a; CFLA, 2019b). As noted earlier, promotion of the profession is a notably underdeveloped advocacy theme. The CFLA's *Code of Ethics* (2018) underscores that promotion of the profession should be done through provision of high quality service but is silent about specifically advocating for the profession. However, CFLA's *Advocacy Policy* (2022a) underscores that one of its main advocacy aims is to raise the visibility of

libraries, yet there was just a single artifact in this regard, a 2022 webpage noting Canadian Library Month (CFLA, 2022b).

In contrast, CARL's stated approach to advocacy demonstrates closer alignment with its undertaken activities. CARL's three strategic goals are:

- Represent the interests of Canadian research libraries in the information policy arena, especially at the federal level, with particular focus in the areas of copyright, privacy, and research infrastructure that leads to broad access and sound management of Canada's information assets.
- Strengthen and mobilize national initiatives across the library and research sectors to advance common policy objectives including but not limited to preservation and access to Canada's documentary heritage; and sustainable and more open access to scholarly information resources; and open government.
- Engage with multiple organizations to foster national and international collaborations (CARL, n.d.).

With regard to the first goal, CARL has demonstrated a significant amount of advocacy work in relation to copyright (24 artifacts) as well as substantive undertakings on privacy (nine artifacts) and research infrastructure (six research data management themed artifacts, and three digital content lending and licensing artifacts). CARL's second goal is also well reflected in its work. Four artifacts deal specifically with the *Access to Information Act*; concerns regarding preservation are reflected in two advocacy outputs related to the Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board (CCPREB); and CARL contributed four artifacts related to open government, and five in relation to open education. As with CFLA, collaboration with other advocacy organizations was more limited in scope.

CULC's advocacy page (2023) less clearly articulates its approach to advocacy in contrast with CARL and CFLA. As with other organizations, it stresses advocacy collaboration with both traditional and non-traditional partners. While evidence of the latter is missing, when considering the overall small volume of CULC outputs, it does a better job of collaborating. Joint submissions make up just 16% of both CARL and CFLA's total artifacts (10 out of a total of 62 artifacts when joint submissions are included); however, CULC collaborated on more than one quarter of its total advocacy artifacts (four joint submissions among 15 total artifacts).

Returning to Schein, there is a fair degree of alignment between espoused beliefs and artifacts, suggesting that many of the stated commitments to advocacy are underlying assumptions (Schein 1990; Schein & Schein, 2016). The most salient area of misalignment is collaboration, which does suggest that CARL, CFLA and CULC may want to consider more collaborative advocacy work in the future. The effectiveness of collaborative versus individual advocacy by Canadian library associations is unknown, but there is limited evidence from other domains that collaborative approaches may be

more effective (Bartunek et al., 1996). Analysis of advocacy by Canadian organizations provides the basis for both recommendations and avenues for further study.

## ***Recommendations and Future Work***

In examining advocacy by Canadian library organizations, one might be tempted to suggest more advocacy (both in quantity and in terms of the range of issues) is a justified recommendation. In considering recommendations, we acknowledge that the resources and capacities of the three organizations is limited, and as such the two recommendations that follow are aimed at enhancing future capacity for advocacy efforts and ensuring advocacy outwork is best documented.

Our first recommendation is the strategic inclusion of library advocacy in LIS curriculums. This echoes Durney's (2023) call for more collaboration amongst LIS schools, practitioners, researchers, and associations, preparing LIS students for the field of librarianship while also strengthening librarians' capacity for advocacy. Million and Bossaler (2020) are also proponents of teaching LIS students about advocacy. Their work makes the case that LIS education for advocacy is important and would allow librarians to spot circumstances in which advocacy is required. They do note that "advocacy education may require tailoring to fit local needs" (Million & Bossaler, 2020, p.41) and so different curriculums throughout Canada may need to be considered both within the larger frame of the country and also within their local jurisdictions.

Another suggestion is that associations make sustainable plans to record their own advocacy work. Through this work, we have observed that the government's record keeping is not comprehensive nor easily accessible, and disappearing Government of Canada webpages is a phenomenon well documented by others (Wakaruk & Li, 2019). By taking responsibility for record keeping, associations would be empowered to use this more complete set of documents to inform decisions. These recommendations are not without their challenges. Through this study, the literature, and the researchers' personal knowledge of the library association sphere, there are real capacity issues when it comes to the time, effort, and financial resources needed to effectively advocate. Much of this work is driven by consultation, and so necessitates being done in a way that is responsive and nuanced to the specific needs of the particular case.

The exploratory studies also provide avenues for future work. Future research could systematically evaluate the advocacy efforts of CARL, CFLA and CULC. However, the researchers acknowledge that such evaluation is complicated by several factors such as the context dependence, the involvement of multiple advocates and extended timeframes over which advocacy occurs (Albert et al., 2022; Barkhorn et al., 2013; Fagen et al., 2009; Glass, 2017; Teles & Schmitt, 2011). The result of the complex and multiple factors influencing policy development is a significant challenge assessing causality (Albert et al., 2022). Qualitative work involving key actors, and specifically interviews with the individuals at CFLA, CARL and CULC who produce advocacy outputs, is another important line of future research. This type of work would allow for the capturing of a more exhaustive portrayal of the advocacy landscape in Canada. Linking this back to Schein's (1990) framework for analyzing culture breaks, such

exploration would add to this research of artifacts to include espoused beliefs and values, and basic underlying assumptions. Another prospective path lies in exploring different types of publicly available documents, specifically the media response to library advocacy. This research could enrich the current research data allowing for more depth of understanding of the impact that library advocacy has had in the last few years.

## ***Limitations***

This work is not without several limitations. Data has been collected from publicly available websites, and it is possible that certain artifacts may not have been posted to the internet or may have been removed without the authors' knowledge. The study also does not involve any data collection from individuals working for CFLA, CARL and CULC, and as such does not capture any information on the motivations for advocacy work or detailed information on constraints and barriers. The use of the Government of Canada's material is not without impediment, given the disappearing nature of federal websites. Furthermore, Canada's consultation database specifically notes data before January 2018 may be incomplete (Government of Canada, 2024). The selection of 25 potentially relevant consultations from the database for further examination was based on researcher familiarity with information policy. As noted earlier this exploratory study does not provide an evaluation of the efficacy of advocacy by Canadian organizations. Finally, the research team has demonstrable links to the organizations involved. Carrier has served as vice-chair of the CFLA, and McNally has engaged in advocacy work directly with CARL (CARL et al., 2023). While the authors feel the research has been conducted with limited bias, noting these connections is important for transparency. Despite these noted limitations, the resulting quantification and analysis of advocacy efforts by CFLA, CARL and CULC does provide an important insight into work by these organizations.

## ***Conclusion***

The study of advocacy work by library organizations is an important part of both understanding the work of such groups and improving both the quality of advocacy endeavors and enabling greater capacity for advocacy. This study provides an exploratory analysis of the advocacy outputs for the three major Canadian library associations. The study finds that copyright related advocacy has been the most common theme for association advocacy, and that CFLA and CARL are the two most frequent contributors to national advocacy work. The study also provides the basis for both limited recommendations and directions for further research.



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