

Polar Libraries Bulletin

POLAR LIBRARIES COLLOQUY



Fall 2025, Issue 92

PLC Occasional Seminar Series

In response to member requests, PLC is pleased to announce the PLC Occasional Seminar Series. This series of online presentations will give members an opportunity to hear about colleagues' activities between Colloquy meetings.

PLC Occasional Seminar Series #1

"Seemingly New Problems in a World with AI: Data Provenance and Trust"

Wednesday, November 19, 2025

12:30 to 1:30 pm Eastern Standard Time

Zoom meeting link is [here](#).

Speakers:

Laura Kissel, Polar Archives Curator
Byrd Polar & Climate Research Center and University Libraries

Jason Cervenec, Education and Engagement Director
Byrd Polar & Climate Research Center

Michael Flierl, Associate Professor & Student Learning Librarian
University Libraries

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Save the Date for the 2026 Polar Libraries Colloquy

The [University Libraries Polar Archival Program](#) and [Byrd Polar and Climate Research Center](#) invite you to The Ohio State University, located in Columbus, Ohio, for the 30th biennial Polar Libraries Colloquy. *Polar Regions: Past, Present, and Future* will be held from Sunday, June 7 to Saturday, June 13, 2026. Join us to connect with colleagues, learn about new work and projects in the area of polar information, and enjoy what Columbus, Ohio has to offer! Visit the [2026 Colloquy website](#) for further information.

From the Editors



Welcome to the Fall 2025 issue of the *Polar Libraries Bulletin*! The 30th Polar Libraries Colloquy is coming up fast and we know the organizing committee is hard at work. Follow the [event website](#) for all the latest news. We're also looking forward to the first

session of our new PLC Occasional Seminar Series which will take place on 19 November (see p. 1). Please note that our tribute to Martha Andrews, originally scheduled for this issue, will be postponed until the Spring issue.

Speaking of the next issue, we hope you'll be inspired to submit a contribution to the Spring 2026 issue. Articles and book reviews are always welcome. Plus, your fellow members want to hear about your institutions and how you do things at your libraries! We are looking for submissions related to "How to Be a Polar Librarian" and "About My Library." Is there something interesting/strange/rare in your collections that you want to highlight? Are you trying something new? What's an "average" day like at your library? How did you become a Polar Librarian? Feel free to contact us if you have any questions. We look forward to hearing from you!

~ Christie, Susanna, and Peter



Please send submissions for the *Bulletin* to all three co-editors:

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Send Us Your Webinar Ideas!

What topics would you like to see offered as webinars? Do you have expertise you would like to share? Send your ideas and suggestions to the [Bulletin](#) editors.

PLC on Social Media

Want to keep up with your PLC colleagues? Join us on Facebook or X/Twitter!
Facebook: [PolarLibrariesColloquy](https://www.facebook.com/PolarLibrariesColloquy)
X/Twitter: [@PolLibColloquy](https://twitter.com/PolLibColloquy)



The Polar Archives at The Ohio State University

The Byrd Polar and Climate Research Center Archival Program (BPRCAP or Polar Archives) is a collaborative effort between the Byrd Polar and Climate Research Center (formerly the Institute of Polar Studies) and The Ohio State University (OSU) Libraries. The Polar Archives was formally established in 1990, after the Ohio State University acquired several high-profile collections in the mid-1980s, most notably the personal papers, records, and artifacts of explorer Admiral Richard E. Byrd.

The archival program's main purpose is to collect, preserve, and provide access to historical documents related to polar exploration and scientific investigation, making these rare and unique materials available to OSU faculty and students, visiting scholars, and the public. The Polar Archives now holds more than 200 collections that document the history of polar exploration, including the Papers of Sir George Hubert Wilkins and collections from organizations such as the American Polar Society.

The Polar Archives is housed in the University Archives and Book Depository Building at 2700 Kenny Road. Our collections are accessible for public research and study, by appointment only, as our stacks are closed, 30 feet high and accessible only by forklift. Researchers utilize the collections onsite in our reading room, which is shared with the Ohio State University Archives and the Public Policy Archives.

PLC attendees will have the opportunity to tour the facility!

~ from the 2026 Colloquy Organizing Committee



JOIN US! Become a PLC Member

[Polar Libraries Colloquy](#) provides an international forum through which librarians and others concerned with the collection, preservation, and dissemination of information dealing with the Arctic and Antarctic regions discuss issues of mutual interest and promote initiatives leading to improved collections and services. The Colloquy meets biennially, alternating between Europe and North America.

PLC membership provides opportunities to foster greater international collaboration and is open to any interested person or institution. Individual membership will cost 30 GBP, and cover a single person. Institutional membership will cost 60 GBP, and allow three persons to be named as individual members. Additional persons may be added to an institutional membership at 20 GBP each. To join PLC, complete the [online membership form](#) and send payment as directed. For queries, contact Treasurer Andrew Gray: andrew.gray@ucl.ac.uk

DALAM Launches Digital Library

by Sharon Rankin and Sandy Campbell

DALAM (Decolonization of Arctic Library and Archives Metadata) Thematic Network is launching a new open access information resource—the DALAM Digital Library.

Through DALAM's meetings, training sessions and workshops, the network has come to understand that many organizations—libraries, archives and museums—are at the beginning of the process of decolonizing metadata. People who work directly with the metadata (subject headings, descriptive cataloguing, tags, etc.), as well as policy makers, are seeking guidance. Common questions include: "How do I know if my library's metadata needs to be decolonized?" "How do I identify inappropriate terminology?" "What are the steps that I need to take in the decolonization process?" "Who do I ask about what the appropriate terminology would be?"

The DALAM Digital Library is designed to be a resource where anyone can find information sources including videos of DALAM sessions, resources on the subject of decolonization of metadata, information about maps and dictionaries, thesauri and terminology works that have been created by or approved by Indigenous communities throughout the Arctic.

The **DALAM Digital Library** has four collections:

Educational Resources: videos of training sessions offered by DALAM, as well as sessions offered by

individual libraries and archives highlighting the work that they are doing in decolonizing metadata.

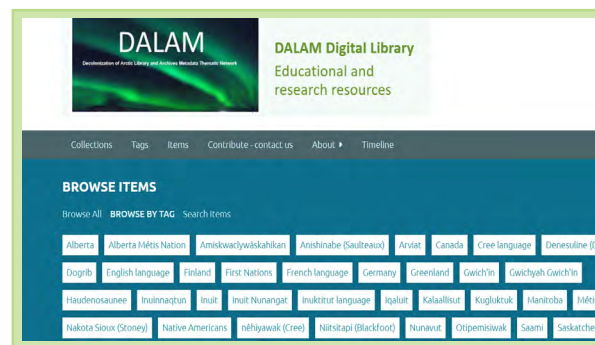
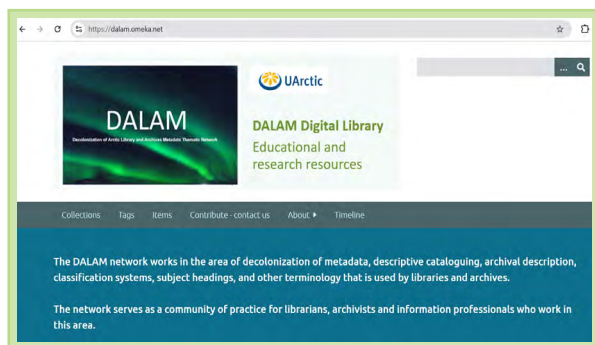
Research Resources: collection of linked publications that are related to various aspects of metadata decolonization.

Dictionaries, Thesauri and Subject Headings: linked list of dictionaries, thesauri and subject headings lists built through consultation with polar and Indigenous communities.

Maps and Place Names: linked list of Indigenous community maps and geographic names that reflect local knowledge and perspectives.

The DALAM Digital Library, currently under development at McGill University Libraries (Montreal, Canada), is an evolving resource. We welcome feedback and inquiries as we work to enhance and expand the platform. Contributions and suggestions for new materials are encouraged to help grow and enrich the Library's collections. To learn more about the DALAM Digital Library, we invite you to view a brief introductory video in [English](#) or [French](#).

We extend our sincere thanks to all those involved in the development of the DALAM Digital Library website and video productions. For further information about the DALAM Digital Library, or to submit content, please contact Sharon Rankin, sharon.rankin@mcgill.ca or Andrea Quaiattini, andrea.quaiattini@mcgill.ca.



Sámi Special Library in Finland

by **Tiina Mäntylä**
Sámi Special Library

Background

The Sámi special library in Finland is not actually a library, but a special assignment. This assignment is based on the Public Libraries Act, which allows the Ministry of Education and Culture to grant a municipality a special task to complement the statutory duties of municipal libraries. Thus, the Sámi-language special assignment operates within the Rovaniemi City Library, granted to the city in 1990. The idea behind the assignment is the need for a library that collects Sámi materials and supports public libraries in the Sámi region.

Approximately 10,000 Sámi people live in Finland, belonging to Europe's only indigenous people. About 60 percent of them live outside the Sámi homeland. The municipalities of the homeland are located in Northern Finland: Inari, Enontekiö, and Utsjoki. Additionally, the northern part of Sodankylä municipality, Vuotso, is considered part of the Sámi area.

According to the Library Act, municipal libraries must serve the different language groups of the municipality equally. The Sámi-language special assignment requires not only maintaining and developing Sámi collections, but also regional and national Sámi library work. Since Sápmi extends to Norway, Sweden, and Russia, cross-border cooperation is also essential.

Three Sámi languages are spoken in Finland: Northern Sámi, Inari Sámi, and Skolt Sámi. All of these languages are endangered. The situation of Skolt Sámi is the most critical, with only about 300 speakers.

Libraries focusing on Sámi materials also operate in the Sámi regions of Sweden, Norway, and Russia. These libraries have jointly produced a Sámi bibliography, which provides information on Sámi materials published across Sápmi.

Operating Environment

The Rovaniemi City Library is part of the Aalto Center, which also includes the City Hall and the Lappia Hall, home to the Rovaniemi City Theatre. The Sámi collection is located in the Lapponica Hall, which houses a broad collection of materials related to Lapland, the North, and the Arctic. The Lapponica Hall also serves as a venue for events and exhibitions.

The municipal libraries in the Sámi region are the most important partners of the special library. They have their own Sámi collections, which are complemented by the special library's holdings. Regular meetings are held to discuss all matters related to Sámi library work. Events are also organized in collaboration; the most recent was the Girjegeaidnu Sámi literature seminar, carried out in cooperation between the Sompio Library and the special library.



Sámi Special Library staff at Sommarøy, Karoliina Harvala (left) and Tiina Mäntylä. Photo courtesy of Mari Ekman.



Lapponica Hall at Rovaniemi City Library. Photo courtesy of Tiina Mäntylä.

Sámi Special Library in Finland *continued*

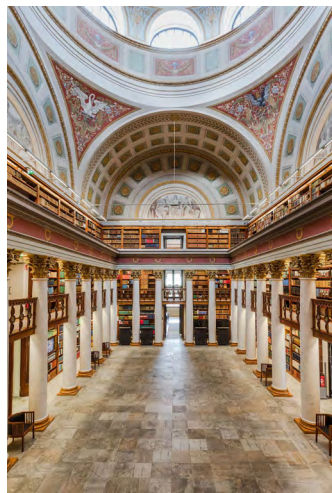
Nationally, the special library aims to be visible and accessible. Since the majority of Sámi people in Finland live outside the homeland, services and information about them are shared not only with Sámi individuals but also with libraries.

The special assignment also requires international cooperation. In practice, meetings with Sámi libraries in Norway and Sweden take place at literature seminars, where Sámi literature and authors are presented and current issues are discussed. Sámi literature is published across Sápmi, mostly in Norway, so although acquiring materials in Finland has become easier over the years, literature is still ordered across borders.

Activities

Although the special library is a designated task, it operates almost like a regular library. The Sámi collection has developed from the beginning as part of the traditional Lapland section of the Rovaniemi City Library, and since the Ministry of Education and Culture granted the special assignment, funding has come entirely from the state.

The special library employs a librarian, a library assistant, and a part-time staff member who handles orders and catalogs materials into the library system. With an annual budget, the library acquires materials for the Sámi collection, organizes various events both locally and online, and develops and maintains various online services. Sámi-themed



Cupola Hall, National Library of Finland.
Photo credit: [Wikimedia Commons](#).



Rovaniemi City Library, home of the Sámi Special Library.
Photo credit: City of Rovaniemi / Mikko-Pekka Karlin

information services are at the core of its offerings, and the Laponica online information service has long operated as a collaboration among memory organizations in Lapland.

An essential part of the special library's work is maintaining connections and participating in organizations, networks, and projects related to Sámi languages, literature, and library work.

In the annual action plan, the library defines its operational priorities. In 2025, the focus is on engaging with actors in the Skolt and Inari Sámi languages and networking especially with language nests, kindergartens, and schools. For these languages, traditional models or practices of library cooperation are not sufficient, and the library cannot be just a place to borrow books. A project is being planned to create a network for developing Sámi literacy work.

Future Outlook

Over the decades, the operations of the Sámi Special Library have evolved in line with the same global trends that have affected other libraries. Providing services online is particularly important for the Sámi library, as its activities are mostly non-local.

Finland's national e-library began operating in 2024, and the libraries of Lapland joined at the beginning of 2025. The e-library is a collaborative effort among municipalities, and from the outset, the goal has been to include Sámi-language materials in the



Nominations Open for 2026 William Mills Prize

by **Julia Finn**

William Mills Prize Coordinator

Nominations are now being accepted for the 2026 William Mills Prize for Non-fiction Polar Books.

The Mills Prize was established in memory of William Mills, a polar librarian and author, and a core member of Polar Libraries Colloquy during its formative years. The prize was first awarded in 2006. Information on the winners of the Mills Prize in previous years is available on the [Polar Libraries Colloquy web site](#).

The book prize honours the best Arctic or Antarctic nonfiction books published throughout the world. The prize consists of \$500 US, certificates for the author and publisher, and the right to use the William Mills Prize logo when advertising the winning book.

Winning titles are announced on pollib-L, on the Colloquy web site, in the Polar Libraries Bulletin and other appropriate social media, websites and publications.

The winner of the 2026 Mills Prize will be announced in June 2026.

Qualifications for Nomination

- The book must be nonfiction, about the Arctic or Antarctic.
- The book may be any type of substantive work of nonfiction, or reference resource. Textbooks, anthologies, translations and new editions will not be considered unless they are truly outstanding contributions to polar literature.
- Books authored, edited or published by members of the current Polar Libraries Colloquy Steering Committee are not eligible for nomination.
- Individuals who are not affiliated with the Polar Libraries Colloquy are welcome to submit nominations.
- The book must have been published for the first time within the two calendar years before the Colloquy at which the award will be given. The timeframe for the 2026 award is January 2024 to December 2025.
- The official language of the Colloquy is English. For this reason, books must be published in an English language version to be eligible.

Nomination Process

Nominations must include:

1. Author(s) / Corporate author(s);
2. Title;
3. Publisher;
4. Date of publication (for the 2026 award, must be between January 2024 and December 2025);
5. ISBN number for each format the work was published in (i.e. hardcover, ebook, etc.); and
6. Statement of the reasons why the nominator thinks the book should be considered for the prize and the value of the title to polar literature.

Nominations should be sent via email to Julia Finn, William Mills Prize Coordinator, at millsprize@gmail.com.

The deadline to submit a nomination is **March 16, 2026**.

Indigenous Knowledges in Discussion at LIBER2025

by **Susanna Parikka**, Library Director
Lapland University Consortium Library

The LIBER annual conference was held this year in Lausanne, Switzerland, 2-4 July. LIBER (Ligue des Bibliothèques Européennes de Recherche – Association of European Research Libraries), is the largest research library organization in Europe and its mission is to enable world class research. LIBER is still going strong with over 50 years of history and 420 European research libraries from 40 countries as members.

The theme of the annual conference was: *Engage, collaborate, innovate: libraries working to address global challenges*. Artificial intelligence was well represented in the program, as well as citizen science, data management, and upskilling.

As DALAM Lead, I was invited to participate in a Round Table Discussion which was part of the conference program. Our discussion subject was *Indigenous Knowledges and Ways of Knowing*. The aim of the Round Table Discussion was to share experiences and explore different perspectives on knowledge and information and the impact they have on the way libraries work.

There were three panelists and a moderator:

- Lisa O'Hara, Vice-Provost and University Librarian from University of Manitoba, Canada
- Jane Angel, CEO, Council of Australasian University Libraries (CAUL), Australia
- Susanna Parikka, Library Director, Lapland University Consortium, Finland
- Martine Pronk, Moderator, Executive Director, LIBER Europe, The Netherlands.

We four had an online meeting before the conference where we agreed on the structure of the discussion. We chose these questions for discussion: how Indigenous knowledges and ways of knowing impact infrastructures, the use of language and descriptions of knowledge artifacts, preservation and by whom, and how notions of ownership and control over use may impact the discussion on copyright and open access.

Differences and similarities

In Northern Europe there is only one Indigenous People, the Sámi, totaling around 100 000 people in the area of four countries (Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia). They speak nine Sámi languages, and one of the languages, Northern Sámi, is understood by nearly all. In Canada there are over 1,8 million people who claim Indigenous ancestry and in Australia and New Zealand, around 1,7 million people. Canada has over 70 Indigenous languages, Australia has over 250, and New Zealand has one. There are also many dialects.

We agreed on UNESCO's definitions of Indigenous knowledge—"the understandings, skills and philosophies developed by societies with long histories of interaction with their natural surroundings", and also that traditional knowledge "tends to be collectively owned and takes the form of stories, songs, folklore, proverbs, cultural values, beliefs, rituals, community laws, local language, and agricultural practices". The world view of Indigenous Peoples is holistic—the land, the nature, the people, the culture, the language—everything is interconnected.

Libraries and the practical work

There are several practical steps forward in all three regions. An excellent example of introducing cultural protocols for enhanced cultural safety comes from the University of Sydney, Australia. Their sector leading protocols were designed to address wide-ranging issues including access to culturally sacred and secret materials, racism and inaccuracies in



Panelists concentrating on question from audience.
Photo courtesy of Tamara Pianos.

Indigenous Knowledges in Discussion at LIBER2025 *continued*

historical materials, and representation of First Nations voices and perspectives. The protocols provide a set of principles and guidelines to improve library practices in areas, including acknowledgment of cultural custodianship, access to cultural materials, collection development, and the interpretation of inaccurate and outdated material. Also, Guidelines for First Nations Collections Description were launched in late 2024 in Australia.

In Canada, there is a classification system that is used mainly in collections of Indigenous materials. It is used, for example, in the National Center for Truth and Reconciliation library collection, and it emphasizes the relationships between and among people, animals and the land. The National Indigenous Knowledge and Language Alliance is also working on a project to build a respectful terminology platform.

Sámi people have their own pan-Nordic language authority body, Sámi Giellagáldu. Regarding library infrastructures, there is a longtime co-operation in the library field in Sápmi. A good example is the joint Nordic Sámi bibliography run originally by the National Library of Norway. Nowadays, the Finnish National Library offers the national Finna interface also in the North Sámi language. The national Finnish thesaurus has been translated to the North Sámi language.

In Northern Sweden, there was a project initiated by the Swedish Sámi Parliament Library. There were workshops with the Sámi community to create a classification structure that reflected the Sámi way of thinking about the world. The project was carried out with public libraries that have Sámi collections and Sámi populations. Also, the library spaces were changed with elements from Sámi environment.

One good example is also DALAM, one of the thematic networks of the University of the Arctic. DALAM works in the area of decolonization of metadata, descriptive cataloguing, archival description, classification systems, subject headings, and other terminology that is used by libraries and archives. The network serves as a community of practice for librarians, archivists and information professionals who work in this area with Arctic collections.

Some thoughts

Preservation and copyright questions can be tricky with Indigenous materials. Traditional knowledge labels are one answer to the preservation. For example, winter tales are told only during the winter if there is a label for that.

Repatriation and rematriation are common subjects in all three areas of the world. In Manitoba, Canada, they are working on repatriating and rematriating their archival collections through a university-wide Respectful Repatriation and Rematriation Council.

How to incorporate different knowledge systems into our western ways of housing and organizing knowledge? A respectful attitude to diverse ways of knowing and participatory activities including all actors are the keys to advancement. One example is the Ethical Guidelines for Sámi Research, which were completed after nine years in 2024 in Finland.

The discussion was interactive and the audience was active. There were also several persons who stayed afterwards to talk with us.

The conclusion from the panel was that very interesting projects are happening in all three areas. We are all in various phases of this work, but the targets are the same: nothing about us without us.

Links

- [LIBER Quarterly: The Journal of the Association of European Research Libraries](#)
- [LIBER2025, Lausanne, Switzerland](#)
- [Conference Program \(PDF\)](#)



View from Olympic Museum in Lausanne.
Photo courtesy of Susanna Parikka.



Decolonization of Arctic Library and Archives Metadata (DALAM)

Thematic Network Update: May to September 2025

by **Sandy Campbell**

Secretary, DALAM

PLC Liaison to University of the Arctic

Since our last report, DALAM has met 3 times - (May, June, September) taking winter break in July and August.

Membership

DALAM has a total of 40 members, from twelve countries (Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greenland, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Sweden, United States, United Kingdom).

Communications and Outreach

In May, DALAM members met in a Hackathon/ Tagathon session to work on the DALAM Digital Library. June's meeting was dedicated to follow-up discussions about decisions from the May meeting, as well as planning for the Digital Library launch.

Follow-up discussions focused on three documents:

1. [Decisions made during the Hackathon/ Tagathon](#)
2. [Subjects and Tags Directions](#)
3. [DALAM Data Dictionary for the Omeka Site](#)

Over the summer the Digital Library working group met and worked with others on implementing the Hackathon decisions and developing the videos for the launch of the Digital Library. (See article about the Digital Library Launch on p. 4.)

French and English versions of videos introducing the DALAM Digital Library were developed and are available through DALAM's YouTube channel and in the Educational Resources collection of the Digital Library.



Rankin, Sharon; Papple, Sarah; Natanblut, Joel; "Introducing the DALAM Digital Library," (English) *DALAM Digital Library*, accessed October 3, 2025, <https://dalam.omeka.net/items/show/75>

Rankin, Sharon; Papple, Sarah; Natanblut, Joel; "Présentation de la Bibliothèque Numérique DALAM (French)," *DALAM Digital Library*, accessed October 3, 2025, <https://dalam.omeka.net/items/show/77>

These videos introduce the DALAM Digital Library. The Digital Library is designed as a resource for librarians, archivists, museum curators and other information professionals who work with metadata related to Arctic subjects and are addressing the challenges involved in decolonizing metadata. The video describes the four parts of the digital library: Educational Resources, Research Resources, Dictionaries, Thesauri and Subject Headings, and Maps and Place Names.

While the creation of the videos involved the work of several talented people, special recognition is due to Joel Natanblut, videographer, and producer of the introductory videos. Joel holds a Master of Music in Sound Recording from McGill University and has over 17 years of service at McGill University Libraries. He currently serves as IT Customer Support Consultant and IT Steward, bringing a deep commitment to high-quality video and audio production. To learn more or to connect with Joel, please visit <https://www.joelav.com/>.



DALAM Update *continued*

Education and Training

DALAM's September meeting was dedicated to an educational presentation.

Presenter: Lisa Mullins, Archivist at the Canadian Circumpolar Council (Canada). Ottawa, Canada.

Title: Subject Headings to Tags: Taxonomy and Access at the ICC Canada Archives

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sj32O3WhUIE>

Abstract: This presentation was an overview of the ICC Canada Archives' creation of a subject heading taxonomy for their archives, art and artefacts and library collections. The taxonomy differs from common subject headings in two major aspects: firstly, the taxonomy is designed from an Inuit perspective—every other People or population have to be specified. For example, a record or book tagged with 'Health and Wellness' is related and/or about Inuit health and wellness. Secondly, the subject headings are used as tags instead of the common library use as subjects. The database <https://iccc-archives.andornot.net/> is searchable in English, Inuktitut (syllabics, South Baffin), and Qaliujaaqpait (common orthography script). The taxonomy will be made available publicly once it has been tested and implemented.

Lisa's presentation has been linked in the DALAM Digital Library Educational Resources Section. <https://dalam.omeka.net/items/show/74>

Presentations

Parikka, Susanna. Panelist. "Indigenous Knowledges and the Ways of Knowing." Round Table Discussion. LIBER 2025 (Ligue des Bibliothèques Européennes de Recherche – Association of European Research Libraries) Conference, Lausanne, Switzerland, 24.7.2025.

Parikka, Susanna. In-house presentation of DALAM Digital Library video. (On-line) Lapland University Library. 22.9.2025.

Parikka, Susanna. DALAM Digital Library Video Presentation. (On-line) Finnish University Libraries' Network. Directors Meeting. 29.9.2025.

Publications

Allison-Cassin, Stacy, Camille Callison, and Robin Desmeules. "The First Nations, Métis, Inuit Indigenous Ontology and Challenges in the Development of an Indigenous Community Vocabulary in the Canadian Context." *The Canadian Journal of Information and Library Science* 48.2 (2025): 1-13. <https://ojs.lib.uwo.ca/index.php/cjils/article/download/19585/17919>

Looking Forward

1. DALAM is coordinating with Polar Libraries Colloquy's new Occasional Seminar Series, to be offered over the coming year. The first Seminar will be November 19, 2025. (See p. 1.)

Presenters: Laura Kissel, Jason Cervenec and Michael Flierl.

Title: "Seemingly New Problems in a World with AI: Data Provenance and Trust"

2. DALAM is also working on the format for the biennial in-person meeting at PLC 2026.



Arctic Tern.
Image by [Monica Max West](#) from Pixabay

North Sámi Language in Finna.fi

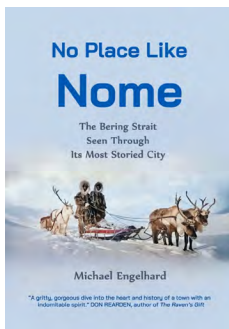
by *Nico Partanen*, Project Manager
National Library of Finland

The National Library of Finland has now concluded a project developing various services in the North Sámi language. One essential result is the North Sámi version of the [Finna.fi](#) search service, which is now maintained alongside the Finnish, Swedish, and English versions. This service provides an important pathway to digital materials related to culture, science, and learning (including those pertaining to the cultural heritage and languages of the Sámi) as well as library services in the North Sámi language. During its first year, the service attracted 44,000 visits. Additionally, four different libraries and archives are currently using the Finna platform to offer their own search services in North Sámi.

The National Library of Finland now seeks to continue its work with Sámi languages, for example, through the digitization of Inari and Skolt Sámi materials, provided that external funding can be secured. Collaboration with Sámi organizations will thus continue, both nationally and internationally.

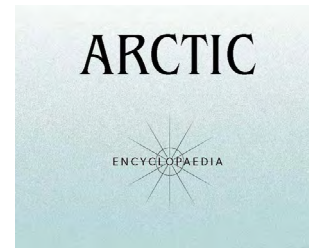
New Publications

Engelhard, Michael. 2025. *No Place Like Nome: The Bering Strait Seen Through its Most Storied City*. N.p.: Corax Books.



“Somewhere between myths and hard facts you find Nome, poised also between yesterday and tomorrow. Drawing on his background in anthropology and an equal passion for history, Michael Engelhard surveys the seam that links two neighboring continents through the lens of one pivotal city. The region’s legacy of millennia shines on pages enriched by this writer’s recollections—from mammoths to Cold War monuments, from a spa turned orphanage to cyclist miners and shaman hoards. Meet the explorers and adventurers, reindeer herders and hustlers, the dancers, drummers, dreamers, warriors, walrus-tusk carvers, and whalers, clergy, foragers, and photographers who shaped a place of conflicting visions as thoroughly as it shaped them.”

—Adapted from the publisher’s announcement



Frederiksen, Mads Qvist and Irina Zhilina, eds.
2025. *Arctic Encyclopaedia 2025*. Tromsø: Arctic Economic Council.

“With contributions from more than 200 individuals across 36 countries, this book reframes how the Arctic is perceived. It offers not a single narrative but a multitude of perspectives—each author invited to define one word that connects them to the region. Entries range from poetry and photography to essays and illustrations, capturing the cultural, economic, and emotional breadth of the Arctic.”

The [online edition](#) will be freely accessible to the public, aiming to be a resource for educators, students, policymakers, and curious minds alike. The Arctic Encyclopaedia is published by the Arctic Economic Council, a pan-Arctic business organization dedicated to promoting sustainable economic development in the High North.

—Adapted from the publisher’s announcement



Once We had the Arctic: Journeys and Stories from the North

Interview with the Author

by **Susanna Parikka**

Lapland University Consortium Library

After reading the book *Once We had the Arctic*, I had the need to hear more about the author's thoughts. So I asked Markku Heikkilä some questions to which he answered. [See p. 14 for Susanna's review of the book.]

Susanna: How did you get the idea for your book?

Markku: Originally, this was a photo collection. I was preparing for an Arctic presentation and I wanted to argue that the Arctic is so much more than the traditional images of polar bears and icebergs. I had travelled all around the Arctic for 25 years, first as journalist and then in my role at the Arctic Centre, and I had taken without any grand plan photos from places and events I had found interesting.

I made a photo show and showed it once also to my colleagues at the Arctic Centre. One of them said that it would be nice to hear stories behind the photos. I realized that I indeed have the stories. I printed out 200 photos, placed them in a hat, took them one by one and started writing about what I saw and I also wanted to create wider context to the image. First the result was a sort of mosaic, then I arranged it to a narrative, and that became this book.

Susanna: What are your feelings about the changes in the Arctic you have seen during your 25 years of travels?

Markku: Only after writing the book ready I realized that it became a document of an era that is no more, the best years of the Arctic. One half of the book takes place in Russia, which also is one half of the Arctic. It was a routine to cross the borders, but now nobody can do it anymore like that. Also, the mental landscape in the Arctic has changed profoundly, now geopolitics and military security are dominant themes. During my 25 years of travels, I witnessed how the Arctic cooperation evolved and how the Arctic was seen and felt as a common space with common challenges, often related to climate change, environment and indigenous rights. That period of Arctic exceptionalism is gone.

My feelings now include a mixture of melancholy and sadness, and I think one can sense that from the pages in the book.

Susanna: How do you see the future of the Arctic?

Markku: The Arctic as such will always be there: a unique region on the top of the world, with many common features in environment, cultures and lifestyles. However, in the coming years it will obviously be very difficult to see it as a common region. It is now divided into Russian part and Western part and there is a growing tension between them. On top of that, some powerful voices have started to deny the very visible reality of climate change.

The future of Arctic cooperation has different realities. The word "Arctic" refers more and more often only to the Western part of it, where contacts and networks remain intact and active. On a larger scale, geopolitics have been playing a dominant role for quite some time, shadowing the more human scale activities.

In spite of all this, I do hope, and it is worth having this as a goal, that the current troubles are a temporary period only and the Arctic will be seen as a common space with common needs and solutions. Power politics bring no good to the region.



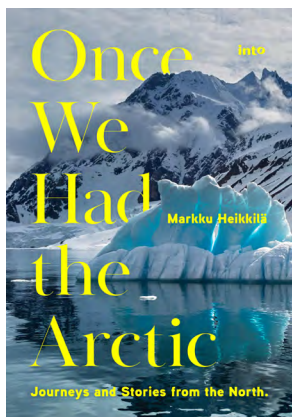
Author Markku Heikkilä.
Photo credit: University of Lapland.



Book Reviews

Heikkilä, Markku. 2025. *Once We Had the Arctic: Journeys and Stories from the North*. Translated by Mark Waller. Helsinki: Into Publishing.

Reviewed by **Susanna Parikka**



Once We had the Arctic forms a personal window to an era that is gone for now. The book looks at Arctic co-operation from one man's perspective based on 25 years of experience. It is interesting because during the time period covered many of us also worked with various Arctic topics and can recognize some of the

elements in the stories. On the other hand, there is a lot of new knowledge also.

It is a unique book that combines memories and stories of journeys in the North, from all eight Arctic countries. At the same time it is also part of a long tradition—journeys have always been made and stories of them told all around the North. From this special bunch of stories, experiences, and anecdotes grows a versatile wholeness with pertinent observations about people and life in the Arctic.

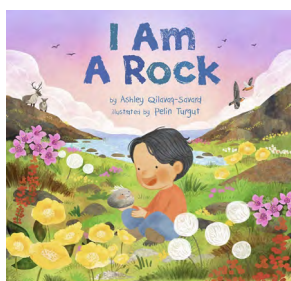
The stories are grouped by geographical areas. Small maps in the beginning make it easier for the reader to follow. The book includes some photos from various Arctic regions, but there could have been more of them.

The text is smooth and easy to follow, thanks also to the good translation. The original in Finnish, *Arktisen maailman jäljillä*, came out in 2023.

This book is warmly recommended for all kinds of libraries.

Oilavaq-Savard, Ashley. 2023. *I am a rock*. Illustrated by Pelin Turgut. Iqaluit, NU: Inhabit Media.

Reviewed by **Sandy Campbell**



In this picture-book bedtime story, a little boy, Pauloosie, asks his mother what it would be like if his pet rock, Miki Rock, were alive. In the rest of the story, Pauloosie's mother describes all the things that a pet rock would see,

hear, feel and experience.

The story accomplishes three things. First, imagining the animals, plants, snow, sunshine and aurora borealis is a calming activity and would help a child to settle for sleep. Second, imagining the world from someone else's point of view, even that of a rock, is a way of building empathy in children. Third, the book is a basic introduction to the Arctic environment for children who do not live in the North.

The text is simple but poetic and evocative. "I can listen to every sound right here on the ground. Every bird, every wolf, every herd passing by. Even the little lemmings, I hear them too. From chirps to howls to beating hooves and squeaks, I can hear them all." Inuktitut words are translated in the glossary at the end of the book.

I am a Rock is richly illustrated. Pelin Turgut alternates between using a dark palette for pictures of Pauloosie in bed and brighter colours for outdoor scenes. The outdoor pages are each made up of several blended images, giving children the opportunity to look for different things on each page. A snow scene with the anthropomorphized Miki Rock at the top half of the page blends into a picture of the rock in a summer tundra scene at the bottom. An image of red phalaropes in flight blends into a close-up of lemmings as well as an image of a distant caribou herd, with Miki Rock in the foreground.

Overall, this is a pleasant and attractive book and is highly recommended for libraries that serve small children, as well as bedside tables everywhere. 5 stars out of 5.

Book Reviews *continued*

Mearns, Cephora and Jeremy Debicki. 2025. *It's Time to Lend a Hand*. Illustrated by Nuria Muro Gio. Iqaluit, NU: Inhabit Media.

Reviewed by **Sandy Campbell** and **Mary Clara O'Brien**

This picture book is about an older sister, Siasi, helping out her family and community with tasks. These include helping her little sister to catch the bus, walking the dog and helping her father catch fish. Inuit communities traditionally share their catch and Siasi is shown helping out by taking fish to an older neighbor.

The text is written at an introductory level. There are a few Inuktitut words which are explained at the beginning of the book, including *pijitsirniq*, which means "helping our communities and families". The pronunciation guide tells readers that "The J sounds like the letter Y. The Q sounds like you are trying to get something out of your throat." Mearns and Debicki have included questions at the end of

the book which teachers could use for discussions with students.

Most of the book is made up of Nuria Muro Gio's illustrations with the text overprinted. Gio's digital illustrations are soft looking and all made with lineless shapes. They do a good job of representing the Arctic village summer landscape, but also include contemporary details, such as posters on a bedroom wall that suggest Taylor Swift.

This book reinforces the importance of working together and helping out both in the family and in the community and would be a fun read for small children.

Recommended for public libraries and school libraries. 5 stars out of 5.



Harper, Maika. 2025. *The First Peoples*. Illustrated by Kaja Kajfež. Iqaluit, NU: Inhabit Media.

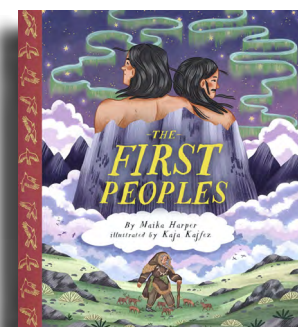
Reviewed by **Sandy Campbell** and **Mary Clara O'Brien**

In this picture book, mixed Inuk author, Maika Harper, re-tells the ancient story of how Inuit people came to be. The traditional story begins with the giant people, the destruction of the world and then the re-birth of all creatures from the earth. There are not many words in this book and most are simple. The most difficult words are "emptiness" and "relatives". The text contains one Inuktitut word *nuna* (land), which is explained in the glossary at the end.

Kaja Kajfež's illustrations are beautifully drawn and perfectly match the story being told. For example, when the world collapses, many of the animals and

birds are shown upside down to indicate that they are falling. When the world is dark and empty, the images are dark. When the earth regenerates and men are shown being born fully grown from the earth, the illustrations are brighter, with greens, blues and gold. Night images show the northern lights. The illustrations are two-page spans with words printed on the background areas of the pictures.

Both young children and older readers will enjoy this story, told mostly in pictures. *The First Peoples* is recommended for elementary school libraries and public libraries. 5 stars out of 5.



Book Reviews *continued*

Fournier, Jamesie. 2024. *Lemming's First Christmas*. Illustrated by Tim Mack. Iqaluit, NU: Inhabit Media.

Reviewed by **Sandy Campbell**



Christmas trees are a strong and important symbol associated not only with modern secular Christmas, but also with the winter solstice. In much of pagan northern Europe, homes were decorated with living

plants at mid-winter to ward off evil and as a recognition of the promise of spring and new life that would come after the solstice. Over time, people have found ways of adapting the Christmas tree tradition to bring the spirit of the season into their homes. A friend of mine used to decorate a large plush moose, who sat in the corner of her living room, with baubles and bells dangling from his antlers. In an introductory note to *Lemming's First Christmas*, Inuit author, Jamesie Fournier, tells us that in "the Arctic winter, during the Christmas season, it is almost always dark with very little daylight. And since the Arctic is above the treeline—there are no trees!" But Christmas trees are such an important part of the season that people go to great lengths to get them. Researchers have even been known to have Christmas trees parachuted into remote Arctic camps.¹ This story is about Lemming's search for a tree.

The Inuit are highly resourceful people and masters of "making do with what you have", which is how this story unfolds. Lemming, or Avinngaq, has heard that "Santa Claus put presents under your tree", but he doesn't know what a tree is. Only Qimmiq, the sled dog, knows what a tree is. The other animals do their best search for a tree, bringing back seaweed, a flower, berries, and Arctic willow, but no tree is found until Avinngaq finds a piece of driftwood.

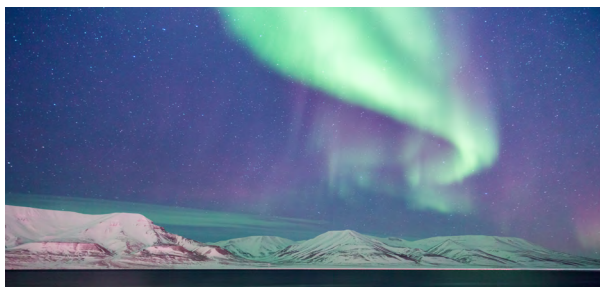
The animals decorate the driftwood with all the plants they have found and "the next day there were presents under the tree". The story showcases adaptability and creativity as strengths.

Tim Mack's illustrations are in dark shades of blue and purple, appropriate to the 24-hour darkness, but he uses splashes of pink to liven the images. The animals are simple cartoon-like characters, drawn as happy and smiling. The sparse language would be readable for an upper elementary child. Inuktitut terms for the animals are explained in a glossary at the back of the book.

Overall, this is a sweet little make-believe story that provides a different interpretation of the Christmas tree tradition. It will be enjoyed by pre-readers and older elementary school children.

Recommended for elementary school libraries and public libraries. 5 stars out of 5.

¹Jackson, C. I. *Does Anyone Read Lake Hazen?* 2002. Edmonton, AB: CCI Press, p. 81.



Northern Lights in Svalbard. Image by [Noel Bauza](#) from Pixabay.



Sámi Special Library in Finland *continued*

service. E-books and audiobooks in Sámi languages are still produced in relatively small quantities, and hardly at all in Finland. However, the national [Accessibility Library Celia](#) has long offered audiobooks in Sámi. Currently, the national e-library offers a few books in Sámi. Hopefully, the situation will improve in the coming years.

The visibility and discoverability of Sámi languages and culture have been enhanced by a project carried out by the National Library of Finland between 2022 and 2024, supported by a broad cooperation network. The project produced Northern Sámi support for national digital services, including user interfaces for the Finna search service and the Finto vocabulary service, which are now available in Northern Sámi. The General Finnish Thesaurus now also includes Northern Sámi terms.

Despite these developments, Sámi-language library and literacy work still face many challenges on the path toward equal library services. The Sámi Special Library fulfills its mission by participating in diverse networks.

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