From Time Immemorial: Centering Indigenous Knowledge In the Archival Paradigm

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Designing the Archive
ICA Conference
Adelaide, Australia
October 24, 2019
TILLIXAM NSAYKA (WE ARE A FAMILY)
“We don’t care what you know, until we know that you care.”

Patricia Cochran
Executive Director
Alaska Native Science Commission

Climate Change and Indigenous Peoples Conference
University of Oregon
Many Nations Longhouse
December 3, 2014
Decolonizing Research: The Northern Paiute History Project

Wilson Wewa, James Gardner, Kevin Hatfield, Myra Johnson Orange, Jennifer O’Neal
Decolonizing Repositories

➢ Methodology:
  “Decolonizing Research Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples”
  Linda Tuhiwai Smith (Maori)
➢ Replace Western ways of managing tribal collections with those rooted in the indigenous epistemological traditional ways of knowing and stewarding collections
Native American Historic Trauma and Displaced Archives
Chiricahua Apache children upon arrival at Carlisle Indian School from Fort Marion, Florida, November 1886

The Legacy of Residential Boarding Schools...

“kill the Indian, save the man”

Chiricahua Apache children four months after arriving at Carlisle Indian school, March 1887
William Hagan, 1978:

“To be an Indian is to have non-Indians control your documents from which other non-Indians write their versions of your history.”
“The Right to Know”: Vine Deloria

- White House Preconference on Indian Library and Information Services On or Near Reservations, October 19-22, 1978, Denver, Colorado

- “need to know; to know the past, to know the traditional alternatives advocated by their ancestors, to know the specific experiences of their communities, and to know about the world that surrounds them...”
“The Right to Know”: Early Call to Action

- Inventory and catalog existing records in federal possession
- Duplicate and make accessible pertinent Native American historical records
  - Develop information services customized for tribal communities
  - Develop library and information science education for tribal members
  - Provide digitization capabilities for tribal cultural resource centers
  - Establish regional research centers
- Appropriate acquisition funding for repatriation
2006 Gathering Northern Arizona University
Drafters of
The Protocols for Native American Archival Materials
Main Goals:

➢ Improve Existing Relationships
➢ Build New Interactions
➢ Respect and Recognition of Tribal Communities
➢ Reciprocity Through Collaborations
➢ Shared Stewardship of Collections
➢ Advocate for Native American Values and Perspectives

➢ http://www2.nau.edu/libnap-p/
PROTOCOLS: MAIN CONCEPTS

- Native American communities are sovereign governments
- Each tribe, community, and band is unique
- **Guidelines** for both the non-tribal repository and the tribal community to properly care for indigenous archives
- Adopt and adapt the culturally responsive recommendations to suit local needs
- 10 Sections address issues regarding collections, ownership, intellectual and cultural property, preservation, handling, access, and use of American Indian archival resources
Archival Paradigm Shift

- Methodology rooted in postcustodial archival theory
- Participatory community archives and social justice archiving
- Profession must evolve and expand non-western theoretical and practical frameworks
- Accept different ways of knowing and managing collections
- Center indigenous perspective in Stewardship and Community Curation
- Act and implement NOW!
Gathered US and Canadian Archivists

Revisited Major Issues of Concern

UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Develop Case Studies

Implementation Guide

Collaborations between ATALM and SAA

SAA finally endorsed Protocols as an external standard in August 2018
The Right of Reply and Centering Indigenous Knowledge In the Archive
ARCHIVES AND MUSEUMS ARE NOT NEUTRAL
“philosophies and community practices of Indigenous peoples as they maintain connections to place, language, history and ceremony. These are the systems of knowledge—the philosophies and practices—that have formed the foundation for Indian survivance* for generations.”

INDIGENOUS SYSTEMS OF KNOWLEDGE

- History
- Land
- Language
- Ceremony
- Storytelling
- Lived Intergenerational Experiences
- Dreaming Visualization
- Oral History Listening Observations
CENTERING INDIGENOUS HISTORY, SOVEREIGNTY AND KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS

The Five Pillars

Collaboration
Reconciliation
Stewardship
Reciprocity
Respect

Indigenous History, Sovereignty, and Knowledge Systems
Implementing a Decolonizing Indigenous Research Model

Wilson Wewa and Ruth Wilson (Northern Paiute)
Terrabone, Oregon, 2014
CENTERING INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE

➢ “The purpose of decolonization is to create space in everyday life, research and academia, and society for an indigenous perspective without it being shunted aside, mocked or dismissed” (Margaret Kovach - Indigenous Methodologies)

➢ Apply Indigenous research methods to collections

➢ Historical Context Matters (Past, Present, Emerging)

➢ Give power back to the Indigenous community
“Identity for Indigenous peoples is grounded in their relationships with the land, with their ancestors who have returned to the land, with future generations who will come into being on the land.

Rather, than viewing ourselves as being in relationship with other people or things, we are the relationships that we hold and are part of.”

~Shawn Wilson, “Research is Ceremony” (2008)
DECOLONIZING ARCHIVES — A CALL TO ACTION
READ AND IMPLEMENT INDIGENOUS GLAM WORK

CHERYL METOYER
ALLY KREBS
MIRANDA BELARDE-LEWIS
MARISA ELENA DURANTE
SANDY LITTLETREE
CAMILLE CALLISON
KIM LAWSON

KIRSTEN THORPE
SHANNON FAULKHEAD
LORIS WILLIAMS
ANGIE ABDILLA
TASHA JAMES
CASSIE WILLIS
LAUREN BOOKER
Indigenous Context and History Is the Foundation
Indigenous Archives - A Call To Action

Our Sovereignty Must Be Respected
Indigenous Archives - A Call To Action

Each Indigenous Community Is Different and Unique
Respect and Implement Our Traditional Knowledge Systems
Indigenous Communities Should Guide the Project
“We don’t care what you know, until we know that you care.”

Patricia Cochran
Executive Director
Alaska Native Science Commission

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NORTHERN PAIUTE HISTORY
NORTHERN PAIUTE TERRITORIES IN OREGON
BEFORE, DURING & AFTER

1805 HISTORIC PAIUTE TERRITORY

1872 MALHEUR RESERVATION

1896 BURNS-PAIUTE COLONY

All maps of tribal territories are based on general and changing tribal boundaries and are approximate only.
1878 – AFTER BANNOCK–PAIUTE WAR, ROUND UP PAIUTES FROM SOUTHEAST OREGON AND REMOVE TO CAMP HARNEY; REMOVAL OF THE PAIUTES FROM CAMP HARNEY TO THE YAKIMA RESERVATION IN WASHINGTON
Decolonizing Research: The Northern Paiute History Project

Wilson Wewa (Northern Paiute), James Gardner, Kevin Hatfield, Myra Johnson Orange (Northern Paiute), Jennifer O’Neal (Grand Ronde)
“By asking scholars to enter (rather than merely study) tribal philosophies, Radical Indigenism asks them to abandon any notion that mainstream academic philosophies, interpretations, and approaches based upon them are, in principle, superior. The demand that researchers enter tribal philosophies cannot stand by itself. If the adoption of those philosophies is to be something more than mere appropriation and exploitation of Native cultures, it must be accompanied by researchers entering tribal relations. Entering tribal relations implies maintaining respect for community values in the search for knowledge. This respect is much more than an attitude, it requires real commitments and real sacrifices on the part of those who practice it.”

Real Indians: identity and Survival of Native America
RESEARCH PROJECT ELEMENTS

Undergraduate Research (papers, posters, presentations)
Collection & Digital Return/Repatriation of Sources
Annual Printing & Return of Paper Collection to Tribal Communities
Annotated Bibliography

Oral History Repository
Northern Paiute Research “Collection”
Restoration History & Memory Institutions
Northern Paiute Historiography
THE NORTHERN PAIUTE HISTORY PROJECT OUTCOMES
2012-PRESENT

• 74 original research papers
• 41 oral presentations and 15 poster presentations at local, regional, and national conferences
• 1 documentary film
• 4 language and art-based projects
• 6 multi-year Clark Honors College (CHC) theses with full UO and tribal government IRB approval
• 3 CHC Thesis Committee with tribal elder as formal member
• 5 bound and printed compilations of student papers
• > 8,000 pages of digitized archival materials
• ~ 150 hours of audio recordings of oral interview and stories (many transcribed)
• $30,000 in academic awards and scholarships to support students’ research
Field Research Trip: Warm Springs Reservation, Kah-nee-tah Lodge
Field Research Trip:
Meeting Northern Paiute Tribal Elders and Community Members
Crooked River Canyon
Tribal Elders Share Stories

Tribal Elders Wilson Wewa and Ruth Lewis Share Northern Paiute Stories with the Class Overlooking the Ancient Northern Paiute Site of “Animal Village” and “Monkey Face”
Students meeting with Northern Paiute tribal elders and community members from Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and Burns Paiute Tribe. Kahneetah Lodge.
FIELD RESEARCH TRIP: STUDENT PERSPECTIVES

“This trip is an essential part of truly understanding the process of decolonizing history...engaging and interacting with the tribal community and writing about what matters to them.”

“made the relevance and importance of our projects come to light...I now feel encouraged to work even more diligently on the research because we have met those whom it is very important to.”
Northern Paiute Tribal Elders: Ruth Lewis (left), Beverly Beers (center), and Myra Johnson Orange (right)
Class photograph with tribal elders outside Museum at Warm Springs
FIELD RESEARCH TRIP DAY 2: Northern Paiute Tribal Elder Myra Johnson Orange welcomes students to the Museum at Warm Springs
Students and Tribal Elders and Visiting Scholar at Kahneetah, Warm Springs Reservation
Shayleen Macy, Warm Springs Tribal Member, language educator, and environmental activist, describes one of her mixed media art pieces.
Myra Johnson Orange gifts students with portions of her yearly salmon bounty from the Columbia River. Tribal elders receive the first distribution of the catch, and Myra honored the class with salmon she canned along with some hard tack crackers for lunch.
Warm Springs Culture & Heritage Department Headquarters: Originally the Boys Dormitory for the Warm Springs Boarding School
Former Boarding School where Native Languages were suppressed and assimilation to English enforced is now the site of teaching Indigenous languages to children.
Myra Johnson Orange share a recently published Paiute language dictionary with the students in the “Northern Paiute History Archive.”
Northern Paiute Elder and Director of Warm Springs Culture and Heritage Department
Visit the 2013 Class

Myra Johnson-Orange, Northern Paiute Elder (second from right), and Valerie Switzler, Director of Warm Springs Culture and Heritage Department (seated far right)
Research in Special Collections and University Archives and Discussions with Visiting Scholars
Climate Change and Indigenous Peoples Conference
University of Oregon
December 2-3, 2014

Students presented their research to tribal community course partners, visiting scholars, and the general public
Warm Springs Tribe Course Partners: Shayleen Macy, Myra Johnson Orange, and Wilson Wewa

Climate Change and Indigenous Peoples Conference
University of Oregon
Poster Session: Global Scholars Hall
December 2, 2014
Dean Dier

This Year the Birds Fly North: An Historical Short Story of Medicine Man Oytes and the Forced Removal of the Northern Paiute to Yakima

Oral Presentation Sessions
Climate Change and Indigenous Peoples Conference
University of Oregon
Many Nations Longhouse
December 3, 2014
Fall 2017 Students with (from left)
James Gardner, Wilson Wewa, Rosie Tom, and Myra Johnson Orange
Fall 2017 Field Research Trip
Day One Discussions with Myra Johnson Orange, Wilson Wewa, Buffy Hurtado, Diane Teeman, Rosie Tom
Fall 2017 Field Research Trip
Day One Evening Discussions with Myra Johnson Orange, Wilson Wewa, Rosie Tom and James Gardner
DIGITAL RETURN PROJECT

- Digitized Primary source materials (>8k pages)
- Research at National Archives (Seattle and DC)
- Digitization of thousands of documents
- Comprehensive, annotated and classified bibliography
- Centered around respectful relationships with tribal communities
During that winter these two commandos destroyed 4 villages of hostiles not leaving one to tell the story, and we had peace before spring more than half the tribe being killed and the remnant cried for quarters.
FROM COMMISSIONER PRICE TO AGENT SMITH (WARM SPRINGS)

JULY 28, 1885

"IF PIUTES COME TO YOUR RESERVATION YOU MUST SEND THEM BACK TO YAKIMA AGENCY. IF THEY REFUSE TO RETURN YOU MUST NOT FEED THEM."
Mukurtu West Hub Site

Spokes:
- UO Libraries Special Collections & University Archives,
- UO Museum of Natural and Cultural History
- The Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians

Future Communities:
- The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde
- Coos, Lower Umpqua, Siuslaw
- Coquille Indians
- Cow Creek Tribe
- Burn Paiute Tribe
Mukurtu West: University of Oregon Hub

Featured Content
University of Oregon Annual Mother's Day Pow Wow Posters
Wapus' basket, cylindrical bag with deer

COMMUNITY:
University of Oregon Museum of Natural and Cultural History

PROTOCOL:
University of Oregon Museum of Natural and Cultural History Public Access

CATEGORY:
Artistry and Artifacts

KEYWORDS:
salty bag, twine

ORIGINAL DATE:
2019 February 28th

ORIGINAL DATE DESCRIPTION:
2000

CREATOR:
Maker: Natalie Kirk. Culture Group/Area: Wasco, Tribal Affiliations:
Early Digital Return Project:

consists mainly of photocopies of original documents pertaining to the history of the Native peoples of Oregon.

SWORP aims to repatriate these materials to the Native American Tribes.

Re-connection
Relationships
Reconciliation
WESTERN SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE
PORTLAND, OR, APRIL 2015

“THE NORTHERN PAIUTE HISTORY PROJECT: ENGAGING UNDERGRADUATES IN DE-COLONIZING RESEARCH WITH TRIBAL COMMUNITY MEMBERS”

From Left: Kevin Hatfield, Dean Dier, Savannah Carter, Myra Johnson-Orange, Ayantu Megerssa, Jennifer O'Neal
Ayantu Megerssa: “Assimilation and Activism: An Analysis of Native Boarding School Curriculum and Native Student Activism in the 20th Century”

*Also winner of the MLK Student Essay Award
CLARA GORMAN


Full IRB Process

VPRI Undergraduate Research Fellowship

3 years of sustained relationships with tribal elders (2016-2018)

Invited to Warm Springs Longhouse for cultural days

Mukurtu Fellow for Washington State University
Myra Johnson Orange’s “Northern Paiute Language and Culture” Class at Madras High School, March 2015
THANK YOU!

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