

[Bulletin 2020]

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1. The Indigenous Archives Collective (IAC)

- IAC can be followed via the website <https://indigenousarchives.net> and Twitter <https://twitter.com/IndigArchives>

The Indigenous Archives Collective (IAC) is an interdisciplinary and Indigenous-led initiative that aims to provide an online and open access space for critical engagement on Indigenous priorities with the archives sector – both Indigenous and non-Indigenous – and is hosted at the Jumbunna Institute for Indigenous Education and Research at the University of Technology Sydney.

IAC provides a space to encourage discussion, collaboration and support across the sector, whilst upholding the collective's core values of respect, integrity and social justice. The collective aims to share and connect information on innovative projects (Australia and overseas based) that are working respectfully and reciprocally with Indigenous communities and institutionally held knowledge resources. The IAC logo 'Connecting Community Culture and Knowledge', designed by Yorta Yorta/Wamba Wamba/Mutti Mutti/Boonwurrung artist Maree Clarke, is representative of the relational and reciprocal ways in which IAC members work across the archive and research sectors.

Importantly, IAC intends to be a space of critical engagement with current goals and obstacles that pertain to Indigenous peoples, Indigenous Sovereignty and Indigenous knowledges in settler colonial states. Focus areas include; self-determination, Indigenous Cultural & Intellectual Property Rights (ICIP), Indigenous Data Sovereignty, cultural safety, community archives, Decolonisation, galleries, libraries, archives, and museums (GLAM) policies and protocol design and implementation.

Recent posts on the Collective site include articles from the following contributors:

1. “Black Lives Matter and Archives in Australia”

This article by Rose Barrowcliffe responds to the current international Black Lives Matter movement, and discusses the need for cultural institutions in Australia to support and facilitate proactive and grassroots collecting of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social justice movements.

2. “Looking up to Research Ethics”

This article by Duncan Loxton reviews several key research ethics guidelines and policies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research in Australia, that have led to the current NHMRC guidelines and most recent AIATSIS Code of Ethics.

3. “Working With Records of Trauma: A Reflection”

This article by Cassie Willis and Kirsten Thorpe reflects on their experiences working with the New South Wales Aboriginal Trust Fund Repayment Scheme from 2005–2011.

2. Indigenous Governance Models in Canada

New models of post-colonial governance must weave Indigenous community governance models into democratic relationships with state offices. An historic example of this occurred on October 16, 2019, when Kwakwaka’wakw artist Carey Newman (Hayalthkin’geme) and the Canadian Museum for Human Rights (CMHR) finalized a binding agreement through an Indigenous ceremony. Held at Kumugwe, the K’ómoks First Nation Bighouse on Vancouver Island, this event is the first time in Canadian history that a federal Crown Corporation has ratified a legally binding contract through Indigenous traditions. This method of reciprocal agreement has raised interest in legal circles, Indigenous organizations and communities, and in academic disciplines in jurisdictions across the globe.

3. The National Ainu Museum

In July 2020, The National Ainu Museum opened as a symbolic project of the Japanese government’s new Ainu policy.

In 2008, the Japanese government first recognized that the Ainu were an indigenous people in the northern area of Japan¹. Since then, it started new Ainu policies, among which the central and major project was the construction of the Symbolic Space for Ethnic Harmony “*UPOPOY*” in Hokkaido, the former Ainu land. It comprises the museum, the park and the memorial site for human remains (<https://ainu-upopoy.jp/en/>).

However, it is perplexing that these facilities look more like a theme park or tourist attraction rather than a place for the resurgence of Ainu culture; a resurgence based on sincere reflection and respect for the Ainu’s historical experience as an indigenous people. The government had at first planned to open it simultaneously with the Tokyo Olympics 2020, and has also set a goal that *UPOPOY* will receive one million visitors a year.

On the other hand, many Ainu have also participated in making these facilities as curators, performers, or artists. As opposed to the government’s aim to use the facilities for tourism economy,

¹ This recognition was enacted in 2019.

those Ainu have made efforts to actually use *UPOPOY* for retrieving their identity and their cultural resurgence.

The National Ainu Museum is a large two-story building located in the center of the park. Entering it, the first thing we see on the first floor is a theater and a shop in which Ainu handcrafts and souvenirs are available. On the left-hand side of the main entrance there is an inconspicuous closed door, behind which is an escalator to the exhibition room floor. This layout again gives us an impression that this site has been made for tourism. There are three exhibition rooms on the second floor.

The permanent exhibition is designed by a Working Group comprised of five Ainu members and eight non-Ainu members. The room is adorned with materials that display the cultural and historic narrative of the Ainu people. Captions on the displays use the word “we” to differentiate from other museums where Ainu people did not take part in the design or display materials. This expresses that the Ainu produced the work as a display of self-representation. The exhibition shows six themes; language, beliefs and world view, traditional way of living, history, occupation of the past and the present, relations with other indigenous peoples overseas.

Among themes above, the display of historical discourse can be problematic, as the Japanese government has not actually accepted the history of colonization of the Ainu land. While it now recognizes the Ainu as an indigenous people, it always uses the term ‘modernization’ instead of ‘colonization’ to refer to the process of incorporation of the Ainu land in the mid-19th century. This reflects the government’s unacceptance of their history of colonization. Thus, it has not yet provided any indigenous rights to the Ainu.

In this circumstance, the displays of history are a kind of mixture of an authoritative history, alongside another view of history from the Ainu perspective. While it explains the incorporation of the Ainu land without the term ‘colonization,’ it explains the government’s oppressive policies against the Ainu individually: such as assimilation policy, deprivation of land and forced relocation, as well as the Ainu’s response against it.

Another characteristic of this museum is collaboration with many Ainu from multiple regions, in multiple processes of making exhibition. For instance, the permanent exhibition room displays many beautiful wooden ritual tools called *Inaw*, which were produced by local Ainu craftsmen. Multilingual captions also include the Ainu language, which Ainu people from different regions made in their local dialects. These are efforts to recover traditional skills and their language. The Museum has a policy that it is the facility not only for preservation of old materials but also for a revitalization of Ainu language and culture.

Visitors might experience many contradictions and competing aims in multiple levels in this museum. On the one hand it may appear like a tourist site using indigenous culture without sincerely facing the colonial past. On the other hand, there are people, both the Ainu and the non-Ainu, who are making efforts to use it as a tool to disseminate both knowledge of the Ainu’s past and their presence in contemporary Japan. In this sense, it is actually a ‘Symbolic Space’ that suggests the reality of the Ainu’s situation in Japan today.

4. Joseph Gosnell Sr., CC, OBC

Dr. Gosnell was a hereditary chief of the Laxgiiik (Eagle) Clan. He carried the name Sim’oogit Hleek. As the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs observed, “Joseph was an architect of the reclamation of

Indigenous dignity and authority; he pioneered a pathway to reconciliation and sovereignty that will be an everlasting and inspiring legacy for generations to come.”

Dr. Gosnell grew up in the communities of Gitwinksihlkw and Gitlaxt'aamiks near the Nass River in Nisga'a territory. Dr. Gosnell attended St. Michael's Residential School in Alert Bay on Vancouver Island, a great distance from his homeland. In spite of this early education, he remained a forceful advocate for Indigenous and particularly Nisga'a culture and identity. He began his working life a commercial fisherman, carpenter and traditional carver. Over time, he became a band Councillor and Chief of the Gitlaxt'aamiks Band. Dr. Gosnell was the lead negotiator for the Nisga'a Treaty, the first modern treaty between a B.C. First Nation, the government of British Columbia, and Canada. It was signed on May 27, 1998. Following the unprecedented agreement, he became the first elected President of the Nisga'a Lisims Government and was instrumental in bringing modern medical care, education and resource management to his Nation.

Dr. Gosnell received many honours in his life in recognition of his work for Indigenous peoples. He received the Order of British Columbia in 1999, the Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation, now Indspire, in 2000. The federal government named him an Officer of the Order of Canada in 2001 and promoted him to Companion in 2006. He received the Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee Medal in 2002. The University of Northern British Columbia selected him as their seventh Chancellor in 2019. He remained his entire life an inspiration for Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination. As the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs noted, “Dr. Joseph Gosnell will be remembered as a titan and champion of Indigenous rights – a man who was a pillar of strength and wisdom for his nation and Indigenous peoples around the world.”

5. Sami Heritage Archives

a) Digital access to Sami Heritage Archives project

Decolonize and revitalize Sami culture through archives

This is a cross boarder project funded by EU and Interreg Nord and it has institutions in Norway, Finland and Sweden working in a multi-disciplinary collaboration towards the goal of improving accessibility to the Sámi Cultural heritage.

The materials of the Sámi cultural heritage exist in several archives and collections. Due to historical reasons artefacts have also been stored in museums and collections in Europe. So far the project found and gathered around 45 000 different digital archives and materials all over Europe.

The project Digital Access to Sámi Heritage Archives seeks to improve the accessibility of the Sámi cultural heritage. The project develops a technical solution, with a usable and intuitive user interface design, to find the information and materials about the Sámi cultural heritage from different archives and collections easily and simultaneously. Accessing Sámi archives is important for the cultural revitalization, and of interest to both Sámi society itself, Sámi private sector, and non-Sámi users interested in the culture. Read more about the project, here: digisamiarchives.com

b) Design Sensibilities workshop at the NordichI2020 for Human-Computer Interaction.

The project *Digital Access to Sami Heritages Archives* is also working simultaneously to host a workshop at the main Nordic forum and research for Human-computer Interaction, that is held in Tallinn, Estonia, 25-26 October 2020. This workshop aims to address the cultural sensitivity when designing interactive systems. The challenges in culturally sensitive design can arise e.g. from historical, ideological, or ethical factors, and needs to be taken into account when conducting HCI

research e.g. with cultural heritage, under-represented user groups, topics of cultural rituals, or in cross-cultural interfaces.

The aim of the workshop is to gather together researchers, designers and practitioners that are working with culturally sensitive topics. The workshop works towards recognizing the culturally sensitive contexts, topics and issues, and distributing the knowledge of best practices and experiences to prevent conflicts when designing for culturally sensitive topics.

AREAS OF INTEREST:

The workshop invites researchers and practitioners with a background in, but not limited to, Human-Computer Interaction (HCI), design, memory organizations, cultural studies, and indigenous cultural heritage. The workshop invites submissions of case studies, applications, methodological notes, as well as position papers, related to HCI and design for topics such as

- indigenous communities
- under-represented cultural groups and emerging sub-cultures
- culturally sensitive heritage, sacred sites, and religion
- using historical artifacts, contexts, and materials for design
- death, remembrance, and rituals
- political and ideological tension
- cross-cultural contexts, and differences in symbolism, semantics, and UI design
- ethics, participatory, and cross-generation approaches to cultural sensitivity
- cybercultures and online etiquette
- ethics with cultural sensitivities

The workshop will support online participation. We invite interested candidates to submit a short paper in *ACM Submission Format*. For participation and information about the workshop, visit: digisamiarchives.com/design-sensibilities/

c) Refining the Sámi vocal archives

With new, digital tools, the Sámi vocal archives are being touched up and refined. Digitized archives are being improved, sound quality wise. Background noises, reverb, clicks, hums and hiss are removed or attenuated to get existing vocal archives to be as clear as possible and pleasant to listen to. The vocal archives are also mastered to EBU-R128 standards for loudness so they are ready to be broadcasted with ease.

6. TRC in Norway

In 2 years, the Commission to Investigate the Norwegianization Policy and Injustice against the Sámi and Kvens/Norwegian Finns will deliver its archive to the National Archives and the Sámi Archives in Norway.

Parts of the records are recently created audio and audiovisual records. By giving their own individual and personal accounts, a few hundred people so far, have strengthened the commission's investigation of the ethnic assimilation policy's consequences for culture, language, living conditions and social relations. Records from the commission's public meetings will also be stored for the future, by now accessible on the commission's own YouTube channel.

These records will be included as parts of the knowledgebase for the Commission's final report to the Norwegian Parliament, which they will deliver in the autumn of 2022. In turn, this report will

propose measures for reconciliation and greater equality between the ethnic majority population, the minority groups and the indigenous people.

The mandate, given by the Norwegian Parliament, emphasizes strongly the protection of the individual's private life and the archive will be restricted in the future. The 12 commission members are subject to a 100-year duty of confidentiality to protect safe sensitive information about individual persons. After ending their work, they will prepare special restrictions to protect the personally identifiable information that satisfies agreements with the originators as well as ethical guidelines. Ensuring access for researchers will also be emphasized.

On request of the National Archive, the Norwegian Parliament recently decided to provide the 12 members of the Commission with a special permission to access archives while completing their mission.

Further information is to be found on the Norwegian TRC's own website and YouTube Channel:

https://uit.no/kommisjonen_en

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCnZLE3cieN3EsXjhD7L_KjA