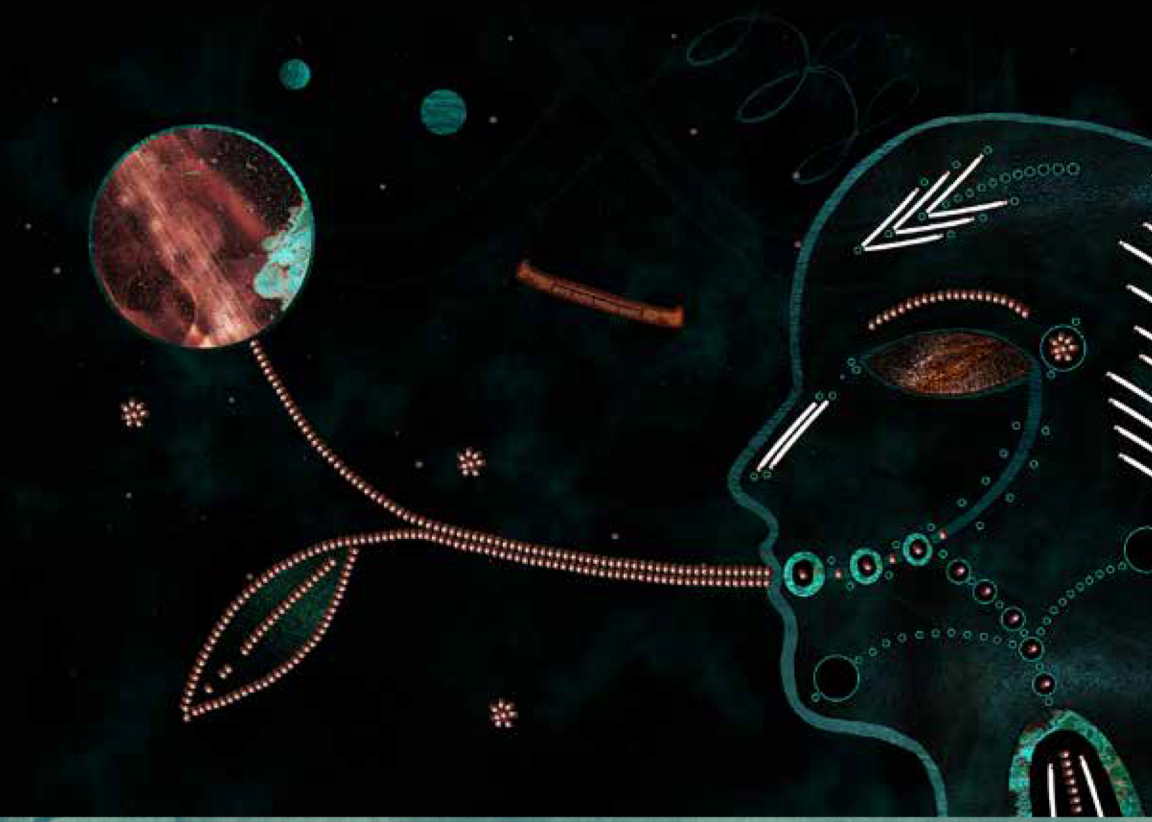
Edited by Ivy Schweitzer and Gordon Henry

AFTERLIVES

OF INDIGENOUS ARCHIVES

Essays in honor of the *Occom Circle*



Afterlives of Indigenous Archives

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Essays in honor of *The Occom Circle*

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FOR THE WATER PROTECTORS AT STANDING ROCK AND FOR ALL OF THOSE WHO PROTECT THE EARTH

WE ALSO DEDICATE THIS VOLUME TO OUR COLLEAGUE TIMOTHY POWELL, WHO DIED IN FALL 2018 AS THIS COLLECTION WAS IN PREPARATION. THE COLLABORATIVE AND INCLUSIVE APPROACH TO AMERICAN STUDIES YOU PIONEERED WAS A LIGHT AND A MODEL TO MANY OF US. MAY IT SHINE FOR A LONG TIME.

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ONE

The Role of Indigenous Communities in Building Digital Archives

Timothy B. Powell

The first generation of large-scale digital archives focused primarily on canonical American literary figures and historical events such as Walt Whitman, Emily Dickinson, and the Civil War.[1] With the publication of *Digital Debates in the Humanities* (2012), scholars led by Alan Liu, Amy E. Earhart, and Tara McPherson launched an important critique, pointedly captured by the title of McPherson's essay: "Why are the Digital Humanities So White?"[2] Indigenous cultures, in particular, seemed once again to be left out of the digital reconstruction of American history and literature. Happily, this has begun to change. As Jennifer O'Neal notes in "'The Right to Know': Decolonizing Native American Archives" (2015), "Over the past decade Native American archives have witnessed a significant transformation across the United States. . . . [N]umerous non-tribal repositories are collaborating with and developing shared stewardship protocols with tribal communities regarding Native American collections." O'Neal goes on to observe an even more recent trend: "More than any time before tribal communities are establishing strong, growing archival collections documenting their histories."[3] This essay will provide an overview of both these phenomena — digital repositories created by archives and/or universities in partnership with Indigenous communities and community-based digital archives managed and maintained by tribal entities. Because the first movement is further along, an overview of some of the more successful archives will demonstrate their importance to

culturally diversifying both the humanities and Western archives with significant Indigenous holdings. Community-based digital archives, however, have not been as fully developed and so the emphasis here will be placed on how scholars, archivists, and community members can work together to strengthen this nascent movement. In both cases, Indigenous communities play a fundamentally important, albeit sometimes precarious, role. By way of addressing how such partnerships can be put into place and the problems that can occur along the way, the intent of this essay is to share stories meant to further both these movements.

A Brief Overview of Indigenous Archives

Digital technology has revolutionized the stewardship of Indigenous materials at Western archives. Funded by forward-looking grant institutions, archives with some of the largest Native American collections in the country are in the midst of digitizing massive quantities of Indigenous materials. The American Philosophical Society, for example, recently digitized more than 3,000 hours of its Native American audio collection. The Archive of Traditional Music at Indiana University is in the process of digitizing its entire audio collection, which includes one of the largest collections of wax cylinder recordings of Indigenous languages.[4] The National Anthropological Archive at the Smithsonian is in the midst of a long-term project to digitize "endangered cultures and languages, indigenous environmental knowledge, and the connections between these subjects."[5] Simultaneously, the California Language Archive is digitizing its valuable collection of recordings of Indigenous languages.[6] Long inaccessible to Native communities, the availability of these manuscripts, photographs, and audio recordings has produced unprecedented partnerships between scholars, archivists, and community members that have, in just a short time, already resulted in remarkable outcomes.[7]

At the same time, Indigenous communities across the continent are in the midst of a wave of cultural revitalization. Although reasons vary from one community to the next, this historical phenomenon has undoubtedly been strengthened by the fact that the first generations in living memory are being raised free from the forced assimilation and cultural genocide inflicted by the boarding school system in the United States and the residential schools in Canada. Truly extraordinary developments in cultural revitalization are unfolding, as in the case of Jessie Little Doe's work to bring back the Wampanoag language, considered extinct for more than 200 years, for which she received a MacArthur genius

grant.[8] In the Tuscarora Nation on the Niagara River, the community has broken ground on the first Longhouse to be built in the community in more than 150 years, providing a place for the stories to be kept and passed on according to well established and highly sophisticated Haudenosaunee protocols. Projects like these, large and small, are being undertaken by hundreds of Indigenous communities ranging from the Kwakwaka'wakw on Vancouver Island to the Penobscot on the northeast coast, from Inuit communities within the Arctic Circle to the Tunica in the southern Mississippi valley.

This confluence of digitization and revitalization has led to the creation of a number of large-scale projects that demonstrate the promise of this unique historical moment. The *Plateau Peoples' Web Portal*, for example, is one of the oldest and most successful examples of collaborations between archives, scholars, and Indigenous communities. Tribal partners include the Spokane Tribe of Indians, the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, the Coeur d'Alene Tribe of Indians, the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, and the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation. Scholarly collaboration is directed by the Center for Digital Scholarship and Curation and Native American Programs at Washington State University (WSU). And the participating archives are WSU's Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections; the Northwest Museum of Art and Culture; the National Anthropological Archives; and the National Museum of the American Indian at the Smithsonian Institution.[9] The archive uses the *Mukurtu* content management system designed by Kimberly Christen and her team. The viewer gains access to the archive through "tribal paths" that foreground the cultures rather than the names of the predominantly non-Native people who collected the archival materials.[10] Baskets are juxtaposed with videos of community members entitled "What does Sovereignty Mean to You?" to provide a rich cultural context that effectively reminds the viewer that Native people are not trapped within the borders of black and white photographs, but are vital partners in the process of retelling the history of Indigenous peoples in the digital age.

On the east coast, the *Yale Indian Papers Project* (YIPP) is a similarly vast collaborative endeavor focused on the New England region that includes seven institutional partners, nine contributing partners, and five tribal/First Nation partners.[11] More focused on primary archival materials, the YIPP's stated goal is:

> To provide greater access to primary source materials by, on, or about New England Native Americans by editing a foundational set of documents that

> explores various aspects of Native history and culture, including sovereignty, land, gender, race, identity, religion, migration, law, and politics, and publishing them in an open-access virtual repository . . . to facilitate greater intellectual access to the documents . . . [and] to re-inscribe indigeneity into a collection of documents that represents a shared history between Americans, Native Americans, Britons, and the Atlantic World by fostering participation of Indian scholars and tribal members . . . [and] by acknowledging them as colleagues, scholars, intellectuals, and representatives of the Native voice.[12]

This recognition of "Indian scholars and tribal members" as equals to academic scholars is a monumentally important step forward. The oft-cited goal of "decolonizing the archive" is not, however, easily achieved.[13] As is so often the case, the researcher trying to locate materials through archival websites is initially confronted by an empty box, which requires a good deal of knowledge about how Western archival systems work in order to find the name of, say, an ancestor who is not recognized as an "author" in the system. Even the search for prominent figures like King Philip produces the answer: "No entries found." If one knows to type in his Indian name, Metacom, this produces two hits: "Letter from Wait Winthrop to John Winthrop, Jr." and "Letter from Roger Williams to Robert Car." Clicking on either entry leads to a long string of Library of Congress subject headings, with a note, "Metacom [Mentioned within document]."[14] The problem, simply stated, is that the knowledge system underlying archival search engines (e.g., Library of Congress headings, Encoded Archival Description [EAD] Finding Aids, or Dublin Core metadata schema) differs sharply from the way that communities remember their own history based on a very different knowledge system (e.g., clan affiliation, genealogy, or stories and songs associated with certain ceremonies).[15] I will come back, in the third section of this chapter, to strategies for reconciling the Western archival and Indigenous knowledge systems.

Another approach to making large-scale digital repositories of Indigenous holdings accessible to Indigenous audiences is the California Language Archive's (CLA's) map-based interface. Like the *Plateau Peoples' Web Portal* and *YIPP*, CLA is made up of large and prestigious contributing repositories including the Bancroft Library, the Berkeley Language Center, Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology, and Survey of California and Other Languages. Regionally focused like the two repositories described above, CLA, as the name would suggest, concentrates more narrowly on Indigenous languages from the western

coast. The map, in contrast to the blank box that serves as a point of entry for so many other archives, hews much more closely to an Indigenous way of understanding culture in relation to the land. As one zooms in on the map, more and more geographical features and points of identification become recognizable, each designated by tribe/language, thus making the Indigenous communities more immediately present rather than a subfield to the non-Native author or contributor. Clicking on any given point reveals all the material available for that particular language with a metadata scheme that features "contributors," noted parenthetically as (donor), (consultant), and (researcher), such that the collaborative nature of the work between scholars and fluent speakers is more effectively highlighted.[16] This, in turn, allows a member of the tribe to search through a single page for the name of family members or neighbors and, thus, works much more effectively for a community-based audience.

A fourth example of a highly successful digital archive of Indigenous materials is *The Occom Circle*, which digitizes and annotates archival documents by Mohegan author Samson Occom (1723–1794) located in Dartmouth College's collections. Like the Walt Whitman or Emily Dickinson archives, it is tightly focused on one distinguished character in the broader framework of American literary history, though in this case, the author is Native American. Samson Occom is one of the most important early figures in Native American literature written in English, and his work has not received the attention it deserves in part because of its eighteenth-century prose and regionally specific subject matter. *The Occom Circle*'s curated annotations thus make the work much more accessible by transcribing the handwritten documents and utilizing hypertext to identify people, places, organizations, and events related to Occom's life. The project also exemplifies how to train undergraduates to utilize primary research and the digital humanities to more successfully integrate Native American writers into early American literary history. Especially welcome is the way the archive helps American literature students and scholars to appreciate connections to the contemporary Mohegan Nation by linking tribal projects such as "Restoring our Language," "Connecting to our Culture," and "Preserving our Culture," which highlight the wave of cultural revitalization taking place in the community.[17]

Finally, one of the most important and inspiring digital archives to date is Darryl Baldwin's exemplary work at the Myaamia Center at Miami University on behalf of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma. This digital archive includes an online dictionary, "Telling Our Story: A Living History of the Myaamia," which contributed to bringing the Myaamia language back from extinction and teaching

scholars that Native languages, though moribund, can be revitalized through carefully thought-out collaborations between academic, community-based, and digital humanities scholars. The Myaamia Center has also successfully developed an app called niiki ("My Home") that has helped bring the Myaamia language into classrooms and homes outside the academy's walls.[18] Darryl Baldwin has also been instrumental, through his work with the Smithsonian's Recovering Voices and Breath of Life programs, in getting other communities involved with archives and linguists to create partnerships to strengthen language revitalization programs.[19]

I have been fortunate to have worked at a Western archive that possessed state-of-the-art digital infrastructure, a deep-seated commitment to digitally repatriating its holdings to the communities of origin, and a grant officer who raised more than three million dollars to support this work in partnership with distinguished scholars and highly innovative tribal partners. The grants produced a digital archive at the American Philosophical Society that includes more than 3,000 hours of Indigenous audio recordings and hundreds of photographs with information provided by Indigenous communities. The new finding aid for the Native American collection includes a map interface and the names of more than 100 Indigenous contributors, not previously recognized by the older cataloguing system.[20] Having described the results of those projects elsewhere, I want to concentrate on telling some of the stories that did not find their way into the final grant reports or the PR announcements.[21] Moments when the whole enterprise teetered on the brink of collapse until Indigenous elders, teachers, and young people stepped in to help us focus on what mattered most — realizing the extraordinary opportunity created by the simultaneous rise of digital technology and community-based revitalization movements. I do so not to criticize the American Philosophical Society, but rather in the hope that by being honest, these stories may help other institutions and Indigenous communities work together more effectively.

The Role of Elders and Storytelling in Building Digital Archives

The American Philosophical Society (APS) represents the epitome of an august archive, deeply rooted in the colonial tradition. Founded by Benjamin Franklin in 1743, the Native American collection began when Thomas Jefferson, who served concurrently as the president of the APS and president of the country, sent Lewis and Clark off across the continent to collect Indigenous languages.[22]

During the eight years I worked at the APS (2008–2016), projects related to the Native American collections resulted in two Mellon grants to digitize the library's entire Indigenous audio collection of more than 3,000 hours, a Getty grant to gain intellectual control over more than 200,000 images of Native Americans in the collections, and a National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) grant to endow a Center for Native American and Indigenous Research (CNAIR). APS librarian, Martin Levitt, deserves a great deal of credit for overseeing all these projects and building partnerships with Indigenous communities into an enduring part of the institution, as do archivist extraordinaire Brian Carpenter and the development officer, Nanette Holben. None of this would have been possible, however, without the invaluable assistance of elders and community members. These partnerships did not come easily, and so I want to begin by recounting a culturally insensitive but nonetheless revealing moment, which occurred the very first time the APS administration and staff sat down with representatives from the Indigenous Nations whose traditional knowledge was housed in the library.

In 2010, the APS hosted a conference entitled "Building Bridges between Archives and Indigenous Communities," which came at the end of a Mellon grant that digitized the first half, roughly 1,500 hours, of the Native American audio collection.[23] Invited guests included representatives from twelve Indigenous communities, leading scholars in the field such as Kimberly Christen and Jennifer O'Neal, and archivists from peer institutions including the National Anthropological Archives at the Smithsonian Institution, the Folklife Center at the Library of Congress, and Scott Stevens, who was at the time the director of the McNickle Center for American Indian and Indigenous Studies at the Newberry Library. But despite the fact that all the right people were assembled, things went wrong almost immediately.

To demonstrate their commitment to the project, the APS asked that one of its senior library staff speak first. The staff member, who had worked at the APS for many years and delivered dozens of similar presentations to non-Native audiences, began by asking an Indigenous guest to read from one of the books in Franklin's personal library, which impressively lined the walls of the room where we were sitting. Unfortunately, the staff member selected a text that included numerous usages of the word "squaw," which many Indigenous people believe translates into a vulgar term for vagina, or at the very least, a demeaning term for Indian women.[24] It was clear that the Native people in the room were deeply offended, though they remained politely silent, waiting until we were alone to express their dismay. In sharp contrast, the staff member remained utterly

oblivious, having naively assumed that Indigenous people, like other guests, would be impressed by the APS's colonial origins. I honestly do not think any of the APS administrators were aware of the gaff, which would have horrified them as a gross violation of the Society's protocols for treating distinguished guests. And yet, unintended cultural misunderstandings like this one are precisely what make it so challenging to bring together archives and Indigenous communities that can clash without making a sound.

Knowing that the whole endeavor could have imploded almost literally before it began, I quickly jumped to my feet and apologized (fortunately, the staff member had departed the room). I then asked Larry Aitken, an Ojibwe elder from Cass Lake who has been my mentor for many years, to speak. In preparation for this moment, I had invited Aitken to come to the APS a year earlier to see the collections and to seek his advice about forming partnerships between Western archives and Indigenous communities. Based on this earlier visit, Aitken had requested, in advance of the conference's introductory meeting, that a large pictographic map of the Ojibwe migration story from the A. Irving Hallowell collection be spread out across the table.[25] Speaking in the cadences of traditional oratory, Aitken explained to the APS administration: "this story does not belong to the APS. We still possess the birchbark scrolls in our *Midewiwin* (Grand Medicine Society) lodges from which this map was copied." Because the *Midewiwin* teachings are culturally sensitive, Aitken did not discuss the meanings of the story, nor will I, in keeping with his community's protocols. Aitken's point, rather, was that this pictographic map, recounting a story that had occurred more than 500 years ago, clearly demonstrated that "the Ojibwe are the archivists of our people, the keepers of the sacred scrolls. There is nothing that is not archived about our people. It's just an archive with a different symbol, with a different way. And if Western society knew that, they would stop saying that Native people do not keep track of their own history, that we need Western archives to do that for us."[26] He then pointed to the place where the migration ends, Otter Tail Point on Leech Lake (Hallowell annotated the map with the expert assistance of elders) and said: "This is where I'm from, Leech Lake. We remember well that an important *Midewiwin* Lodge stood on this site and we continue to honor and protect Otter Tail Point to this day."[27]

Watie Akins, a Penobscot elder who had never met Aitken before this moment, then rose to speak. Akins pointed to the pictograph where the migration began. "I am from this place, on the east coast. The Penobscot too are Anishinaabeg and we remember well when the Ojibwe were our neighbors" (the Anishinaabeg

are a larger cultural group that include both the Ojibwe and Penobscot).[28] Then, in an immensely touching moment, Aitken apologized to Akins for leaving his people behind, more than 500 years ago, when the time came for the Ojibwe to move west on the migration. The gesture invoked an even older story of the Seven Fires Prophecy, which instructed the Ojibwe, before Europeans arrived, to take the Sacred Scrolls to safety by migrating west until they arrived at a place where food grew in the water (*manonmin,* or wild rice, that, in this scroll's version of the migration, led them to Leech Lake). The prophet of the First Fire foretold that a light-skinned race would come during the period of the Fourth Fire when the Anishinaabeg, who remained on the coast, would nearly be destroyed.[29] For this reason, the Ojibwe were instructed to take the sacred scrolls away to protect them from the foretold European encroachment. Akins nodded in affirmation, since he knew the Seven Fires Prophecy as well.

Watie Akins and Larry Aitken's stories demonstrated very powerfully to the APS administration and staff how traditional knowledge, in the hands of elders, could span the thousand miles that separates Leech Lake in Minnesota from the Penobscot reservation in Maine and, even more impressively, collapse the thousand years between the present moment and the last time the Ojibwe and Penobscot were neighbors. With artful subtlety, Aitken revealed how the traditional knowledge kept in the library (e.g., the pictographic map in the Hallowell collection) and the traditional knowledge kept by the communities (e.g., the stories and scrolls passed down for countless generations) can come to life when reconnected. Even though the APS administration was almost certainly unaware of the intricacies of the Anishinaabe traditional knowledge system, the stories nevertheless worked in the sense that they reassured the Native guests in the aftermath of the staff member's mistake and convinced the APS to apply for a second Mellon grant to complete the digitization of the APS audio recordings and to build digital archives in four partnering communities.

Significantly, the APS also benefitted from these partnerships. The second Mellon grant funded fellowships that allowed representatives from the partnering tribes to come to the APS to select materials for their own digital archives and to share their knowledge of the APS collections. I think it is safe to say that no one at the APS anticipated how mutually beneficial these collaborations would turn out to be. Communities provided the names of relatives in dozens of old photographs, significantly enhancing the metadata and thus making the APS holdings more valuable to researchers. In some cases, elders graciously agreed to make new recordings telling stories about the people in the photographs or

explaining how they felt about listening to recordings of ancestors whose voices they had never heard before the wax cylinders were digitized.[30] Many of the elders who attended the "Building Bridges" conference went on to serve on the APS's Native American advisory board, which established protocols to protect culturally sensitive materials in the Indigenous collections for the first time in the Society's more than 270-year history. In return, the APS allowed their tribal partners to digitize tens of thousands of manuscript pages, audio recordings, and old photographs to begin the process of building their own digital archives.

Reviewing these outcomes, however, it is easy to forget how close all this came to not happening. Digitization of archival materials alone will not suffice. Elders and community members played a vital role in the success of the grant and in convincing the APS to share its resources. Before continuing in the next section to a more detailed discussion of how the communities set up their digital archives, it is important to go deeper into the question of how the stories *worked* to convince the APS to form these partnerships.

About a year after the "Building Bridges between Archives and Indigenous Communities," I went to see Aitken at Leech Lake to ask for his help in understanding how the stories healed the wound inflicted by the staff member's cultural insensitivity and, in turn, helped to create the partnerships that led to the second Mellon grant. Aitken laughed and teased me about being an "academaniac" who studied stories but did not understand how they worked. He then explained, "the preservation of our language, our culture, our history, our people, and our ways to acquire knowledge all ought to be retained, not only for the good of our people . . . but so they can be shared, so you will no longer be a foreigner, a stranger, but you'll be a neighbor." He pointedly reminded me that "we've been neighbors for 500 years and [we have patiently endured this] stifling encroachment on our people . . . our language . . . our epistemology . . . our medicine." Aitken explained that we are now living in the time of the Seventh Fire when, it was prophesized, the dominant whites would either choose the "right road," which leads to a new era of respectful cohabitation with Indigenous peoples, or the "wrong road," which leads to the destruction of the environment and ultimately the human race.[31] "Don't kill our culture," he implored, "embrace it and understand it."[32]

With all due humility, I want to try to address this challenge of finding a way for Western archives and Indigenous communities to work together to return the cultural heritage that has been withheld for so long.[33] I speak here not on Aitken's behalf, but only for myself. Based on my research and what Aitken has taught me about Ojibwe cosmology and epistemology, I know that the pictographic

migration story at the APS, which begins in primordial times and recounts the actions of *manidoog* (spirits), is a form of *aadizookaanag*, which translates roughly to empowered stories about legendary ancestors or dream spirits.[34] Such stories have their own system of protocols. They should, for example, only be told in winter when the thunderbirds migrate south and the bear are sleeping, to minimize the risk the *manidoog* will overhear these stories and be offended.

Another quality *aadizookaanag* possess is animacy. As the anthropologist Tim Ingold explains, myths "tell the lives of non-human persons [e.g., spirits or thunderbirds] — or, to be more precise, the myths *are* those persons, who, in the telling, are not merely commemorated but actually made present for the assembled audience, as though they had been brought to life and invited in." Discussing the animacy of stones in the context of Ojibwe ceremonies, Ingold writes, "animacy . . . is a property not of stones *as such*, but of their positioning within a relational field which includes persons as foci of power."[35] This is why the stories only work their magic in the presence of elders like Aitken, who was formally trained by the Medicine Man Jim Jackson to act as an *oshkabewis,* or someone authorized to translate from one world to another; in this case, to speak on behalf of the ancestral spirits embodied by the pictographic narrative to the APS administrators, who watched with rapt attention.

Having situated the stories within the context of the Ojibwe traditional knowledge system, my hope is that we can now better understand how and why the ancient stories performed so effectively in a contemporary, non-Native environment like the "Building Bridges" conference. Note that Aitken begins by boldly declaring of the migration narrative, "This story does not belong to the APS." I do not believe Aitken intended to challenge US copyright law's definition of ownership, since this would have immediately caused the APS to pull back and, thus, negate the possibility of the traditional knowledge being returned to the communities of origin in digital form. Rather, my impression is that Aitken thoughtfully initiates a process to establish Ojibwe protocols as having equal standing with those of the APS. "We still possess the birchbark scrolls," Aitken continues, "the Ojibwe are the archivists of our people." Here he begins the process of creating a common vocabulary so that the APS and Ojibwe could speak to one another as fellow archivists. The fact that the Ojibwe possessed the sacred scrolls hundreds of years before Ben Franklin founded the APS and continue to care for them to the present day subtly elevates the Anishinaabe system of *aadizookaanag* and, in doing so, silently subverts the hierarchy of ownership enshrined in US copyright law.[36] That is to say, Aitken shifts the frame of reference so that what the APS metadata

refers to as an "oversized map" in the "A. Irving Hallowell Papers" now becomes situated in relation to the much longer continuum of Ojibwe archival history.

Aitken accomplishes this, I believe, by using the word "story" in a highly strategic manner. For once you begin to think about the archival object as a story, it quickly becomes evident that it had a long life prior to coming to the APS as one of the most powerful stories in Ojibwe culture and, moreover, that it is still alive according to the logic of *aadizookaanag*. Or, as Aitken puts it, "whenever we are telling a story, the story itself comes to life." I firmly believe, having witnessed this phenomenon many times, that the stories do come back to life when they are returned to the community of origin and that we need to take this dynamic quality into consideration when building community-based archives. Another quality of *aadizookaanag* that deserves attention is the power of these animate stories to shape-shift. As Ingold observes in "A Circumpolar Night's Dream," the spirits that inhabit these empowered stories also possess the ability to transform in the hands of an elder trained to do this highly specialized work: "this capacity for metamorphosis is . . . a critical index of power: the more powerful the person, the more readily a change of form may be effected."[37] These qualities of metamorphosis and animacy, as we will see in the next section, share a surprising affinity with digital technology that is important to understand as we turn to the question of how digital technology can be most effectively utilized in Indigenous communities.

I do not, however, want to conclude this section by making it seem like digital technology or contributions by elders and community members can rid Western archives of colonization's problematic legacy. Yes, the collaboration had some positive outcomes. The pictographic map, along with more than 300 photographs from the A. Irving Hallowell collection, would become part of a United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Site nomination submitted by the Pimachiowin Aki Corporation — made up of four Anishinaabe communities, the provincial governments of Ontario and Manitoba, and the Canadian government — to protect almost 24,000 square kilometers of boreal forest and the cultural landscape of the Anishinaabeg ancestral homeland.[38] The Penobscot would use a digitized version of a previously unpublished Penobscot-English dictionary written by Frank Siebert to win two grants totaling $800,000 that would enable them to revitalize their language after the last fluent speaker died in 2006.[39] Despite these accomplishments, the end of the grant cycle (2011–2014), as is often the case, led to a sharp drop off in the Digital Knowledge Sharing initiative. When the Mellon Foundation approached

the APS in 2016 about writing a third grant focused on Native American research, the previous administration had retired and the new administration insisted on returning to a system where only scholars in a PhD track or beyond are eligible for the Native American fellowships. As a result, elders like Larry Aitken and Watie Akins, who played such a crucial role in forming the partnerships and were skilled archival researchers in their own right, have been excluded, as were members of the upcoming generation who chose to work on revitalization efforts in their communities rather than leaving the reservation for a multi-year commitment to graduate studies.

Rather than abandoning the partnerships with Indigenous communities, I retired from the APS to start Educational Partnerships with Indigenous Communities (EPIC) at the Penn Language Center in the School of Arts and Sciences at the University of Pennsylvania.[40] EPIC is dedicated to writing grants through tribal institutions (e.g., museums or tribal colleges) that support community-based scholars. EPIC has also expanded the archival consortium to include the APS, Archive of Traditional Music at Indiana University, Bloomington, the Folklife Center at the Library of Congress, and the National Anthropological Archives and Recovering Voices Program at the Smithsonian Institution. A new NEH grant from the Office of Digital Humanities is funding community-based scholars doing innovative work with digital technology to travel to the participating archives and work together to build digital archives in Indian Country. In the next section, I will review some ongoing projects that, taken together, provide a sketch of the complex and diverse ways communities are using digital technology and hopefully inspire other communities to work with archives to take advantage of this unprecedented historical opportunity.

Following the Stories Back Home

By way of conclusion, I want to shift the focus from decolonizing Western archives to building digital archives in Indigenous communities. Rather than seeing it as something inherently Western and new, it may prove more productive to situate digital technology as an extension of the historical continuum of Nations managing their own unique systems of collective memory. Surprisingly, for example, digital technology is able to represent Indigenous instances of the oral tradition much more effectively than print culture, which is unable to record the cadences of traditional oratory or the movement of the dance. Digital recordings and video, on the other hand, reflect more accurately the

animate qualities of traditional knowledge. As the Cherokee elder Tom Belt said, after listening to a newly digitized recording of an ancestor who had died more than 60 years earlier: "The manner in which he spoke was an older form of addressing people. . . . It is a very melodic way of speaking. . . . We learned or know in the Cherokee language how that kind of information is best received. . . . After all, we practiced this for millennia upon millennia." In this sense, Tom Belt concluded, digital technology is able to connect the speaker and the listener across "time and . . . death itself."[41] It is this ability of digital technology to become part of the historical continuum of Cherokee elders passing down animate stories from one generation to the next for "millennia upon millennia" that is so intriguing and suggestive of the exciting possibilities that lie ahead.

STORY #1: WHAT DOES AN ANIMATED, FOUR-THOUSAND-YEAR-OLD ARCHIVE LOOK LIKE?

The Franz Boas Professional Papers at the APS contain more than 10,000 pages of ethnographic notes collected by George Hunt, a Tlingit ethnographer who married into two prominent Kwakwaka'wakw families, with the guidance of Boas, the founding father of American anthropology. Much of the Hunt-Boas collection was never published and therefore has remained unavailable to the communities for a century or more. Kwakwaka'wakw community leaders worked closely with my colleague Brian Carpenter to select hundreds of pages to be digitized with the goal of supporting cultural revitalization in four Kwakwaka'wakw bands. Interestingly, the community did not want the materials in digital form. So we printed out the digital files into two books and made 200 copies of each book to present to the elders and hereditary chiefs at a potlatch ceremony. It was a remarkable opportunity to witness the moment when papers preserved by a Western archive transform to become part of the living archive maintained by the Kwakwaka'wakw for *four millennia*.[42] Within the Big House, where the potlatch ceremony took place, the stories came to life as elaborate dances performed with elegantly carved masks, accompanied by songs sung to the pulsating rhythm of ten men drumming on a hollowed-out cedar log. At either end of the lodge, Siskiutl, the two-headed serpent, watched over the feast in the form of a beautifully carved cedar trunk painted in the palette of the Northwest coast. The dancers wore hats with eagle down sprinkled onto the crown so that with each step, the downy white feathers would fly into the air, become caught in the hot air rising

from the fire and then, as they reached the roof of cedar beams, float down and gently touch each person in the Big House.

What this story tells us is that, once returned, the Western archival materials shapeshift almost immediately into the forms preserved by traditional Kwakwaka'wakw archives — dances, regalia, carvings, songs, oral tradition, and so on.[43] Boas's importance is eclipsed by George Hunt, whose family remains prominent within the community. This shift can be read as metaphor for how the ownership of the materials is transformed as it leaves the "Franz Boas Professional Papers" collection at the APS and becomes part of the Kwakwaka'wakw archives being performed to affirm the Kwakwaka'wakw relation to the land. Given that the potlatch ceremony was banned by the Canadian government from 1885 to 1951, when thousands of masks and carvings were stolen from communities and placed in museum collections throughout the Western world, the return of stories constitutes an important affirmation of Kwakwaka'wakw sovereignty.[44] The restoration of the potlatch system as a traditional form of governance is an extraordinary accomplishment. And even though digital technology plays a very small role in the process, the outcomes of returning the stories back to the community are extraordinary.

There is an important lesson here for the digital humanities, which can sometimes become infatuated with big data projects and the capabilities of supercomputers.[45] What we need, I would argue, is to understand how digital technology can best serve the community. This varies greatly from one community to the next, even within the Kwakwaka'wakw. The community-based U'mista Cultural Centre in Alert Bay, British Columbia, for example, is working with the Archive of Traditional Music (ATM) at Indiana University to oversee the return of digital copies of wax cylinder recordings of Kwakwaka'wakw songs made by Hunt and Boas.[46] Here, then, a very different set of challenges arises, raising important questions about how best to make digital archives accessible to the community. Should the ATM's catalogue descriptions simply be imported, even though this system would be completely foreign to how the Kwakwaka'wakw understand their own traditional archive? Or should a new kind of digital archive be devised that would allow Kwakwaka'wakw people to search the collection based on the genealogies of the families or communities who own the traditional rights to the materials? Or would the community be better served by a relational database that would connect descriptions of masks, regalia, and songs associated with specific ceremonies? All this remains to be pondered. What is important here is to begin the discussion about how to find ways for the archives or institutions of higher

education to train community members to build their own digital archives, based on their own traditional archival systems, so that the knowledge can be passed on to the coming generations who will almost undoubtedly possess much more vivid digital imaginations.

STORY #2

The Frances Densmore collection of wax cylinder recordings of Chippewa (Ojibwe) music in the Folklife Center at the Library of Congress (LOC) was originally recorded in the first decade of the twentieth century and was digitally repatriated to Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College (FDLTCC) 106 years later, in 2014.[47] Lyz Jaakola, the director of the Ojibwemowining Resource Center ("Ojibwe is Spoken Here") at FDLTCC, exemplifies the new generation of community-based, tech-savvy Indigenous scholars who are able to imagine digital possibilities that stretch well beyond the limits of Western archives.[48] Jaakola and I co-wrote an NEH Humanities Initiatives with Tribal Colleges and Universities grant, through FDLTCC, to digitize the Densmore recordings and bring them back to the communities where the recordings had originally been made. When FDLTCC received the digital recordings from the LoC, they were in massive files that made it difficult to correlate each song with Densmore's exquisite ethnographic descriptions. Two graduate students at Vanderbilt and Princeton (Juliet Larkin Gilmore and Joshua Garrett-Davis, respectively) worked for two years to build a digital database that embedded each individual recording with Densmore's notes so that the information would be searchable and, thus, of much greater use to the community. This, however, was just the beginning of songs' journey.

Because many of the songs are associated with the *Midewiwin* (Grand Medicine Society), Jaakola has taken them to a number of lodges to identify which ones should be restricted as culturally sensitive and see whether they could be of use to contemporary *Midewiwin* practices. Jaakola then began working with those songs designated as not culturally sensitive, transforming them from barely audible, scratchy recordings back into living entities that then circulate through the community in fascinating patterns. Jaakola accomplished this by enlisting elders and students at the college to help re-record the songs. These new digital files are being incorporated into curriculum for use by Native and non-Native students throughout northern Minnesota. Jaakola and FDLTCC are currently working with the World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium

(WINHEC) to create new curricula for elementary education, an Environmental Institute, and the American Indian Studies program at FDLTCC, all developed in consultation with Ojibwe elders. Jaakola is also incorporating some of the Densmore recordings and re-recordings into "An Ojibwe-Anishinaabe Music Curriculum" in accordance with grade-level state standards to be used by music educators in the Minnesota public school system. As Jaakola wrote in an article we copublished in the *Oxford Handbook of Musical Repatriation* (2017): "Music in Ojibwe-Anishinaabe culture is more than just a form of entertainment. Music is a living spiritual being."[49]

This story illustrates the complex interplay of digital and traditional archives and the need to coordinate the two carefully in close consultation with the community. The Densmore collection is unique in that it includes descriptions of how both a Western-trained ethnomusicologist documented the songs and the Ojibwe themselves archived the songs. Densmore's meticulous ethnography thus includes musical scores and an analysis of "varied measure lengths and rapid metric unit[s]."[50] In addition, her notes include the name of the singer, the lyrics written in the Ojibwe language, the Ojibwe elder's description of the song's meaning, and even pictographs for each song that would have been etched in birchbark scrolls that Aitken identifies as the original "Ojibwe archive." Beneath each pictograph is a quotation from an elder explaining the symbols. This pictographic system has not been "lost" or "forgotten," as the myth of the Vanishing Indian would have us believe. When I showed Densmore's book, *Chippewa Music*, to an Ojibwe Medicine Man who had been raised in a remote region of Canada and who could not read English, he took one look at the pictographs and immediately began singing the song. Thus, because FDLTCC maintains a robust digital infrastructure, it becomes possible to integrate Western and Indigenous archives and, just as importantly, to keep them separate in accordance with *Midewiwin* protocols.

We stand on the edge of an unprecedented historical moment when it has become possible to return thousands of archival recordings, photographs, and manuscripts to the communities just as a wave of cultural revitalization is sweeping across the continent. We are seeing archival recordings used in the Tuscarora Toddlers program and digital copies of old photographs used by their communities to preserve their ancestral homelands through UNESCO World Heritage nominations. It is the proverbial win-win-win situation for scholars, archives, and communities.

But we still need some help. In closing, I would ask the granting agencies, archives, colleges, and universities to recognize the important work being done by elders, dancers, drummers, and K–12 teachers. Archival and university fellowships need to be rethought so they do not require a PhD, nor do they require community-based scholars to leave the reservation so they can be in residence somewhere far away. As Richard Hill, the director of the Deyohahá:ge Indigenous Knowledge Centre at Six Nations Polytechnic, told me when we were discussing a new grant application, we need to be concentrating on developing community-based digital humanities scholars who will be able to imagine new ways for Western archival materials to take on new life to benefit those, as the Haudenosaunee say, seven generations in the future.[51]

Notes

1. See, for example, Walt Whitman Archive, http://whitmanarchive.org; Emily Dickinson Archive, http://www.edickinson.org; Valley of the Shadow: Two Communities in the American Civil War, http://valley.lib.virginia.edu.

2. See Alan Liu, "Where Is Cultural Criticism in the Digital Humanities?" *Debates in the Digital Humanities*, ed. Matthew K. Gold (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), 490–507. Amy E. Earhart, "Can Information Be Unfettered? Race and the New Digital Humanities Canon," *Debates in DH*: 309–318. Tara McPherson, "Why Are the Digital Humanities So White? Or Thinking the Histories of Race and Computation," *Debates in DH*: 139–160.

3. Jennifer R. O'Neal, "'The Right to Know': Decolonizing Native American Archives," *Journal of Western Archives* 5:1 (2015): 1.

4. "ATM and MDPI to Preserve Wax Cylinder Collections," *IU Newsroom* (April 20, 2015), https://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=1013&context=rs_papers.

5. "National Anthropological Archives, in Partnership with the Recovering Voices Initiative, Awarded $1 Million Grant to Digitize Materials," Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, https://newsdesk.si.edu/releases/national-museum-natural-history-receives-1-million-increase-global-access-endangered-langua.

6. California Language Archive, http://cla.berkeley.edu/about-us.

7. Siobhan Senier, "Digitizing Indigenous History: Trends and Challenges," *Journal of Victorian Culture* 19:3 (2014): 396–402; Joshua A. Bell, Kimberley Christen, Mark Turin, "Introduction: After the Return," *Museum Anthropology Review* 7:1–2 (2013): 1–21; Guha Shankar and Corelia Hooee, "Zuni Cultural Heritage Materials in the American Folklife Center: The Potential of Return," *Museum Anthropology Review* 7:1–2 (2013): 74–84;

Timothy B. Powell, "Digital Knowledge Sharing," *Museum Anthropology Review* 10:2 (2016): 66–90.

8. "Jessie Little Doe Baird," *MacArthur Foundation*, https://www.macfound.org/fellows/24/.

9. *Plateau Peoples' Web Portal*, https://plateauportal.libraries.wsu.edu.

10. Kimberly Christen, "Opening Archives: Respectful Repatriation," *The American Archivist* 74 (Spring/Summer 2011): 185–210.

11. Paul Grant-Costa, Tobias Glaza, and Michael Sletcher, "The Common Pot: Editing Native American Materials," *The Annual of the Association for Documentary Editing* 33 (2012): 1–18.

12. "Mission Statement," *Yale Indian Papers Project*, https://yipp.yale.edu/mission-statement accessed January 3, 2018.

13. See Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (London: Zed Books Ltd, 2008); Ellen Cushman, "Wampum, Sequoyan, and Story: Decolonizing the Digital Archive," *College English* 76:2: 115–135; Elizabeth A. Povinelli, "The Woman on the Other Side of the Wall: Archiving the Otherwise in Postcolonial Digital Archives, *A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 11:1 (2011): 146–171.

14. http://findit.library.yale.edu/yipp/?utf8=%E2%9C%93&search_field=all_fields&q=metacom.

15. For a fuller discussion of this problem see O'Neal, "'The Right to Know'", 2–10; Gywneira Isaac, "Perclusive Alliances: Digital 3-D, Museums, and the Reconciling of Culturally Diverse Knowledges," *Current Anthropology* 56, supplement 12 (December 2015): S286-S296; Kimberly Christen, "Opening Archives: Respectful Repatriation," *The American Archivist* 74:1 (2011): 185–210.

16. http://cla.berkeley.edu/explorer.

17. "The Occom Circle," Dartmouth College, http://www.dartmouth.edu/~occom/; Mohegan Nation website, https://www.mohegan.nsn.us/

18. "Mission & Statement of Purpose," *Myaamia Center: Researching Myaamia Language, Culture and History*, http://myaamiacenter.org/statement-of-purpose/.

19. *Recovering Voices*, http://recoveringvoices.si.edu; *National Breath of Life Archival Institute for Indigenous Languages*, http://nationalbreathoflife.org. See also Darryl Baldwin, David J. Costa, Douglas Troy, "Myaamiaataweenki eekincikoonihkiinki eeyoonk aapisaataweeki: A Miami Language Digital Tool for Language Reclamation," *Language Documentation & Conservation* 10 (2016): 394–410.

20. "Guide to the Indigenous Materials at the American Philosophical Society," https://search.amphilsoc.org//natam/search.

21. Powell, "Digital Knowledge Sharing," 72–78.

22. Timothy B. Powell, "Steering a Course Set by Thomas Jefferson: New Developments in the Native American Collections at the American Philosophical Society," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 159 (Spring 2015): 282–295.

23. Timothy B. Powell, "Building Bridges between Archives and Indian Communities," *News from the American Philosophical Society* 12:1 (2010): 2–3.

24. "Squaw," *Wikipedia*, accessed December 19, 2017, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Squaw.

25. Map can be found in the A. Irving Hallowell collection at the American Philosophical Society library, Mss.ms.Coll.26. It has been deemed culturally sensitive and reproduction is prohibited.

26. The quotations from Larry Aitken come from two sources, personal memory of the event and an interview I did with Larry in 2009, in which we discuss many of the same issues that Larry discussed at the APS in 2010. Those videos have been donated to the American Philosophical Society. Other videos of Larry Aitken are available on the "Ojibwe Digital Archive" YouTube channel, including excerpts of the 2009 interview. See for example, https://youtu.be/mHdQNPiBzhs. Hereafter cited as Larry Aitken, pers. comm., May, 2010.

27. Larry Aitken, pers. comm., May 2010.

28. Watie Akins, personal correspondence, May 2010.

29. Eddie Benton-Banai, *The Mishomis Book: The Voice of the Ojibway* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 89–93.

30. For more on the value of such collaborations see: Diana E. Marsh, Ricardo L. Punzalan, Robert Leopold, Brian Butler, and Masssimo Petrozzie, "Stories of Impact: The Role of Narrative in Understanding the Value and Impact of Digital Collections," *Archival Science* 16:4 (2016): 327–372.

31. Benton-Benai, *Mishomis*, 93.

32. Aitken, personal correspondence November 2011.

33. For more on this subject see Kate Hennessy, "Virtual Repatriation and Digital Cultural Heritage," *Anthropology News* (April 2009): 5–6; Siobhan Senier, "Decolonizing the Archive: Digitizing Native Literature with Students and Tribal Communities," *Resilience: A Journal of the Environmental Humanities* 1:3 (Fall 2014), http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5250/resilience.1.3.006?seq=1&cid=pdf- reference#references_tab_contents; for an alternative view see Robin Boast and Jim Enote, " 'Virtual Repatriation: It is Neither Virtual nor Repatriation,' Heritage in the Context of Globalization," *SpringerBriefs in Archaeology* 8 (2013): 103–113

34. Maureen Matthews, *Naamiwan's Drum: The Story of a Contested Repatriation of Anishinaabe Artefacts* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2016), 112.

35. Tim Ingold, "A Circumpolar Night's Dream," *The Perception of the Environment: Essays on Livelihood, Dwelling and Skill* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 92, 95.

36. See Peter B. Hirtle, Emily Hudson, and Andrew T. Kenyon, "Case Study 1: Interview and Oral Histories," *Copyright and Cultural Institutions: Guidelines for Digitization for*

U.S. Libraries, Archives, and Museums (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Library, 2009); Jane Anderson, "Intellectual Property and the Safeguarding of Traditional Cultures," *Heritage & Society* 4:2 (2012): 253–260; Jane Anderson and Kimberly Christen, "'Chuck a Copyright on It': Dilemmas of Digital Return and the Possibilities for Traditional Knowledge Licenses and Labels," *Museum Anthropology Review* 7:1–2 (2013):105–126.

37. Ingold, "Circumpolar's Night Dream," 91.

38. *Pimachiowin Aki*, http://pimachiowinaki.org.

39. Powell, "Digital Knowledge Sharing," 75–76.

40. Jacquie Posey, "Penn's Timothy Powell: Forging Partnerships to Promote Native Languages, Culture," (February 8, 2017), https://news.upenn.edu/news/penns-timothy-powell-forging-partnerships-promote-native-languages-culture; The EPIC website (http://pennds.org/epic) is still in the early stages of development. When complete it will bring together several pre-existing archives, curated by Powell including the Gibagadinaamaagoom site with a digital archive prototype based on the seven directions of the Ojibwe cosmology. The new site will feature Scalar-based digital exhibits created in partnerships with tribal partners.

41. Tom Belt, "Commentary on Will West Long's 'Long Life and Going to Heaven,'" recording, American Philosophical Society digital library.

42. Four thousand years was the age of Kwakwaka'wakw culture given at the potlatch ceremonies. Estimates vary widely. The *Canadian Encyclopedia* states: "Archaeological evidence shows habitation in the Kwak'wala-speaking area for at least 8,000 years," http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/kwakiutl.

43. Diana Taylor makes an interesting distinction between "archive" and "repertoire." She associates the latter with "embodied memory, because it is live, [and] exceeds the archive's ability to capture it," *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press), 20.

44. "Our Masks Come Home," *Living Tradition: the Kwakwaka'wakw Potlatch on the Northwest Coast*, https://umistapotlatch.ca/nos_masques_come_home-our_masks_come_home-eng.php.

45. See Frédéric Kaplan, "A Map for Big Data Research in Digital Humanities," *Frontiers in the Digital Humanities*, May 6, 2015, https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fdigh.2015.00001/full; Tim Hitchcock, "Big Data, Small Data and Meaning," *Histoyonics*, http://historyonics.blogspot.com/2014/11/big-data-small-data-and-meaning_9.html.

46. Personal Correspondence with Alan Burdette, director of Archive of Traditional Music, June 2014.

47. Lyz Jaakola and Timothy B. Powell, "'The Songs Are Alive': Bringing Frances Densmore's Recordings Back Home," *The Oxford Handbook of Musical Repatriation* (New York: Oxford University Press, June 2018).

48. Ojibwemowining Resource Center, http://fdltcc.edu/ojibwemowiningresource center.

49. Jaakola, "'The Songs Are Alive.'"

50. Frances Densmore, *Chippewa Music* (Washington, D.C.: Bureau of American Ethnology, 1910), 83.

51. "Chiefs," *Onondaga Nation: People of the Hills*, http://www.onondaganation.org /government/chiefs.

TWO

From Time Immemorial: Centering Indigenous Traditional Knowledge and Ways of Knowing in the Archival Paradigm

Jennifer R. O'Neal

"We wish our ethics were the norm and not the exception."[1]

First Nation, Inuit, and Metis peoples reiterated this maxim at the "Working Better Together Conference on Indigenous Research Ethics" hosted by Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, BC, in February 2015.[2] Making this statement a reality and reconciling hundreds of years of colonization of Native American and Indigenous people is not easy, especially in countries that have tried systemically to eradicate our culture, lifeways, and traditions. Yet our communities are rising stronger than ever, fighting for our inherent sovereignty and traditional ways after years of oppression, genocide, assimilation, and termination. Now there is a distinct urgency to make right the atrocities and injustices against so many for far too long. This call to action appears across North America, both formally as part of official federal truth and reconciliation processes, and also as more focused calls for immediate changes in the way academics, researchers, and curators engage with, approach, and collaborate with Indigenous communities. This is part of a larger movement to educate the academy about approaching research and the management of collections with openness and empathy by ethically and respectfully centering Indigenous knowledge and traditional ways of knowing.

I have dedicated my career to bringing awareness about the historical legacy of displaced Native American archives and the reconciliation work that has emerged within the context of Indigenous activism. Throughout my teaching, research, and publications, I have argued for the respectful care of Indigenous archives held at non-tribal repositories and called for decolonizing Native American archives as a form of respect, reciprocity, and reconciliation.[3] In this chapter, I seek to build upon this work by examining one specific aspect of my decolonizing effort, the centering of Indigenous traditional knowledge systems, which, I argue, is the foundation and key to embodying these changes in the archival paradigm and beyond. I will highlight recent developments in Indigenous activism surrounding policies regarding Indigenous archives, research ethics, and collaborative stewardship. I examine the thinking of various Indigenous scholars, elders, and policy makers to argue that we must apply the same methodologies, policies, and recommendations utilized for Indigenous research ethics to the management and stewardship of Indigenous archives.

"The Protocols for Native American Archival Materials:" Then and Now

The publication of "The Protocols for Native American Archival Materials" (PNAAM) in 2006 generated important discussions and debate both nationally and internationally about the proper care of Native American cultural heritage archives housed at non-Tribal repositories. PNAAM served as a catalyst for a larger paradigm shift, generally within the archival profession, that called for new non-Western perspectives and methodologies, including, but not limited to, participatory and community archiving in archival education and practices for managing archival collections.[4] Although some organizations and repositories endorsed and successfully implemented PNAAM, not all archive professional groups agreed with the document, specifically with guidelines concerning access, use, and repatriation.[5] Still, the document highlighted issues surrounding Native American archives and began much needed conversations about their care and preservation. More importantly, it broadened discussions and viewpoints about ways of managing these archival collections from a Native perspective.

Significant activist work has continued since that time, and in the summer of 2015, a small group gathered at the yearly conference for the Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums (ATALM) for an "Archives Summit" to review and assess PNAAM after ten years, discussing successes, challenges, and

possible next steps for further implementation across the United States. Based on the original intent of PNAAM as a living document, this pre-conference summit brought together some of the original drafters of PNAAM, as well as key archivist allies in the United States and Canada, to review and reflect on lessons learned from PNAAM and other key international documents, for general overall discussions of specific sections, and to determine possible next steps and updates to the document based on recent case studies, conversations, and research. A larger overall goal of the gathering was to utilize this momentum as a call to action about human rights through the framework of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, with the objective of contributing to the efforts of decolonizing Indigenous archives. Both United States and Canadian Indigenous archivists gave presentations that highlighted major accomplishments in each country to date, including the development and implementation of various guidelines, such as PNAAM in the United States and the Canadian Aboriginal Archives Guide, as well as major groundbreaking initiatives such as the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Presenters also made clear the inherent need to enhance and expand these resources even further to ensure the implementation of the guidelines across various repositories, the creation of practical tools for managing Indigenous archives, and the inclusion of these guidelines in various educational programs.

The group collectively determined that the following next steps should be taken regarding PNAAM: include specific case studies into each section, develop a practical implementation guide, continue dialogue through presentations at conferences, and collaborate with other groups working on similar initiatives, including, among others, the ATALM Museum Summit. The group has now undertaken these goals within the auspices of ATALM and the Society of American Archivists Native American Archives Section.

Recontextulizing Archives through Centering Indigenous Knowledge

As a participant in the original drafting of PNAAM and then organizer of the Archives Summit, I have a unique perspective on the development, implementation, evolution, and varied perspectives of the guidelines over the past ten years. PNAAM has led to an increased awareness of the importance of incorporating notions of stewardship, rather than just custodianship, into the traditional procedures and roles of an archivist and curator. Since PNAAM launched in 2006, it

has become evident that the guidelines contradict various aspects of conventional archival practice, namely issues of open access and ownership. Over the years, as a part of various conference presentations on PNAAM urging for its implementation, I witnessed non-Indigenous archivists express their strong opinions and concerns about these issues, especially regarding the specific guidelines calling for limiting access to Indigenous collections, the possible return of materials, and the development of stewardship and consultation policies.[6] These concerns speak to the core of the inherent historic problem within archival repositories that have served as sites of power over Indigenous history, culture, and lifeways, by controlling and disseminating our history according to the repositories' interpretation, often based upon the individuals (i.e., anthropologists, ethnographers, historians, etc.) who appropriated the materials, rather than by and with Indigenous communities. Archives have not been historically neutral entities for these collections, and the power dynamics within the management of these collections needs to shift to ensure the implementation of PNAAM. These important changes are not just about restricting access or returning collections, but finally giving Indigenous communities control over their histories, centering their traditional knowledge, and undoing historic trauma.

Despite initial reactionary responses, numerous non-Tribal repositories have successfully implemented or are seeking to implement PNAAM.[7] This indicates that the archival profession continues to evolve and expand theoretical and practical frameworks to include approaches that are outside the conventional Western ways of knowing and operating. The information profession is finally embracing alternative ways of knowing and managing collections, which gives power back to source communities to provide some form of social justice through reconciliation. This is also evident in the larger conversations about and implementation of the post-modern, post-custodial, and participatory archiving methodology for various ethnic and community archives, not just Indigenous archives.[8]

While some have adopted and implemented PNAAM, many non-Indigenous archives and archivists have yet failed to do so or are still wrestling with some of the core recommendations outlined in PNAAM. Despite these concerns, it is time archival repositories and archivists stop wondering about how to address the recommendations of PNAAM and simply begin doing the work. Information professionals must now listen to repeated requests from those in the Indigenous communities who are pleading for proper care of these collections and for implementation of stewardship changes in repositories containing Indigenous materials. These recommendations must be implemented, not in the future,

but *now*. After years of colonization, assimilation, termination, and restoration, Indigenous communities have waited far too long to reconnect with these collections and to provide the missing Indigenous context and traditional knowledge required to treat those collections respectfully and in accord with the cultural, spiritual, and epistemological needs and concerns of Indigenous people. Addressing this need will ensure a beginning to social justice and reconciliation for this historic trauma.

Throughout the nearly ten years between the drafting of PNAAM and the summit gathering, the drafters and supporters have always emphasized that the foundation of the guidelines is collaboration, relationship building, and shared stewardship. However, while archivists and library professionals may be more open to general ideas of collaboration and relationship building, I have often found that a deterrent or uncertainty regarding Indigenous collections stems from a lack of knowledge or understanding of Native American history and the importance of centering Indigenous sovereignty and traditional knowledge within the archival paradigm to show why these collections need to be approached differently. Furthermore, most archivists do not know exactly how to begin this work. I have experienced this frequently when speaking with library information professionals about Indigenous collections, especially with non-Indigenous archivists who are often hesitant to implement PNAAM, or who may not know where to start.

While some archivists have a general understanding of Native American history, education at the secondary level often lacks and overlooks knowledge of key elements of Indigenous history and existence, including community specific historical trauma and pain; hundreds of years of destruction and genocide faced by our communities; why our sovereign status sets us apart; the uniqueness of our tribally specific histories; and the importance of traditional knowledge specific to each Tribal community. Some states have finally passed laws to ensure that secondary schools appropriately teach basic location-based Native American history, but we should require this knowledge and training at the undergraduate and graduate levels as well.[9] Various graduate schools have implemented significant changes, incorporating different approaches to the stewardship of collections, including post-custodial frameworks and PNAAM. In order to ensure that these changes persist, we must infuse the basics of Indigenous history, traditional ways of knowing, and research methodologies into the larger Library and Information Science (LIS) curriculum. And for those that are already practicing in the profession, repositories and organizations should require workshops or cultural competency trainings to train staff in these issues as well.

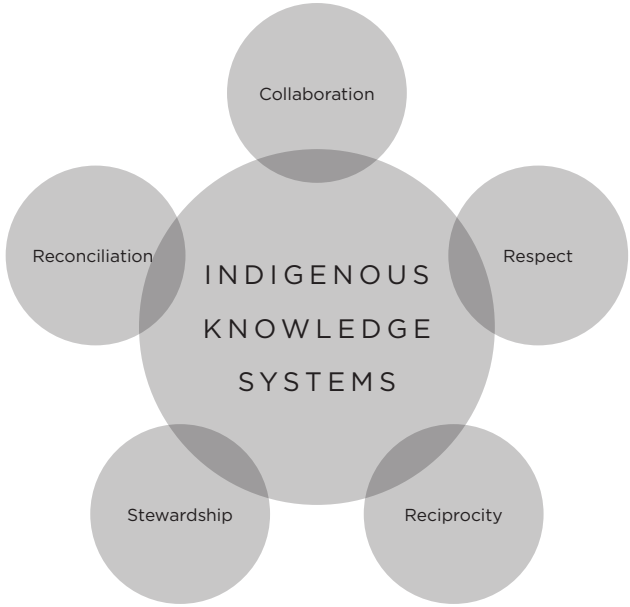

FIGURE 2.1. Centering Indigenous Knowledge Systems: The Five Pillars

Over the past fifteen years, through my work and activism as a Native American historian and archivist, I have traveled to various Indigenous and Aboriginal locations for conferences, discussions, and consultations. Through these unique interactions, I have determined that the one unifying factor in ensuring a successful collaboration for both Tribal and non-Tribal participants is making collaboration, stewardship, respect, reciprocity and reconciliation the key anchors of Indigenous knowledge systems and relationship building that honors sovereignty (see Figure 2.1). This means entering into these relationships with purpose, intent, and with the goal of making a significant social change and, most importantly, putting Indigenous communities and traditional knowledge at the center of the work, driving the project.

In addition to this core foundation, I have also determined that in order for information professionals to implement new non-Western ways of managing Indigenous archives, they must first learn and respect our unique Indigenous histories and our traditional practices in order to center them within archival collections. We can define Indigenous systems of knowledge as "the 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."[10] These traditional ways of knowing include storytelling, dreaming/visualization, oral history, observations, listening, lived inter-generational experiences, and various other methods for orally passing down our histories and cultural practices. All of these approaches are tied to our sacred history, land, language, and ceremony.

Making these changes in the profession means recognizing the historical Indigenous-settler relationship that often governs these collections and revealing the relational power dynamics between Indigenous and Western science that permeates archival repositories today. Thus, we must *recontextualize* the historical narrative by placing Indigenous history and knowledge at the center of the archival paradigm. To do this, the profession must stop privileging the Western, non-Indigenous narrative and perspective in information education, repositories, and among granting agencies. Indigenous researchers, academics, informational professionals, and professors are calling on professional archivists and librarians to be leaders in this effort to undo hundreds of years of colonization and oppression and to finally center traditional Indigenous knowledge in collections and the curriculum through collaboration, stewardship, respectful relationships, reciprocity, and finally reconciliation.

Implementing a Decolonizing Indigenous Research Model into the Archival Paradigm

> The purpose of decolonization is to create space in everyday life, research, academia, and society for an Indigenous perspective without it being neglected, shunted aside, mocked, or dismissed.[11]
>
> *Margaret Kovach*

Building on the decolonizing research methodologies of renowned Indigenous scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith,[12] I argue that we must also apply the Indigenous knowledge research methodologies and frameworks espoused by Aboriginal educator, researcher, and professor Margaret Kovach, to the archival paradigm. We should apply the same recommendations she provides for conducting Indigenous research to archivists stewarding Indigenous collections in non-Tribal repositories. While archivists may find these research methodologies challenging, they have proved successful and ensure that Tribal knowledge and epistemologies are respected and remain at the center of the research. I examine Kovach's

methodology for centering traditional cultural knowledge in Indigenous archives, and provide some practical frameworks for its implementation.

As Kovach argues, those studying or working with Indigenous communities encounter inherent politics of knowledge (i.e. what knowledge gets privileged?), as Western research processes often already define these communities as marginalized. To counteract this, Kovach notes the groundbreaking work of Smith, which "applies a decolonizing analysis to reveal the degree to which Indigenous knowledges have been marginalized within Western research processes." She concludes that "while few non-Indigenous scholars would contest marginalization and colonization, much has been written about this concept yet action has been minimal by a smaller community of allies, but it seems to be growing." This provides hope to Indigenous researchers, academics, and curators who have been calling for this type of work for numerous years. However, it also provides a lens through which to measure major challenges and how much work still remains to be done, especially in relation to how we foundationally approach curation when stewarding Indigenous collections.[13]

Kovach further contends that part of the challenge of applying decolonizing approaches within an academic environment stems from the theoretical positioning of Indigenous studies, which obscures the necessity of historical analysis. As she correctly concludes, some critical theorists have applied "post-colonial" to some Indigenous studies and stop there. But from an Indigenous perspective, applying the prefix "post" does not mean that it is finished business or no longer requires historical analysis. She argues that "in actuality this causes numerous challenges within a United States context, where non-Indigenous scholars are adept at ignoring, forgetting, and often reproducing the colonial past, when in fact that very complex colonial past influences daily Indigenous life."[14] This point supports my argument noted above, that it is critical to learn unique Indigenous histories and knowledge systems. These histories provide key and sometimes missing contexts for understanding Indigenous archival collections. We need context to determine how the collection was gathered, by whom, and why, since outsiders gathered many of the items in archives, sometimes as a manifestation of colonization, to define Indigenous communities as vanishing. The context matters because only Tribal members may know the importance of the history and knowledge the collection contains. It is imperative that we preserve this context and present it in conjunction with Tribal community partners.

Acknowledging context matters not only in remembering the historical colonial past, but also acknowledging the present and future, since, as Kovach

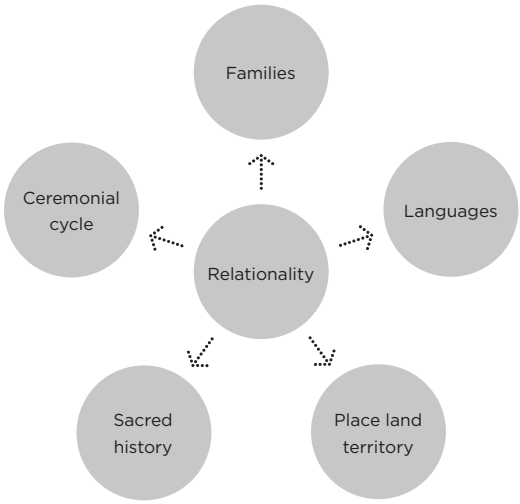

FIGURE 2.2. The Core Components of Indigenous Relationality

argues, there is "no way to address tribal knowledge and epistemologies without considering continued colonial interruptions, including but not limited to globalization and consumerism, and the continued effects of historic and current settler colonialism on Indigenous communities." Learning and providing historical context, then, ensures that we also acknowledge the continued effects of colonization still pervading Indigenous communities today.[15]

In addition to centering Indigenous historical context, we need to recognize another key concept in centering Indigenous knowledge systems into the archival paradigm — the concept of relationality. Indigenous researcher Shawn Wilson states that building relationships and relationality is what it means to be Indigenous. This refers to our various relationships with our families, importance of sacred histories, ceremonies, and languages, as well as the ties we have to place and land. It is all interconnected and related to who we are (see Figure 2.2). Wilson reflects on the importance of land and space to Indigenous peoples rather than just our history: "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."[16] Thus, the concept of relationality should be applied to how archival repositories approach, manage, curate, and disseminate archival

holdings. Relationality is at the core of centering Indigenous knowledge systems into archival collections.

An Indigenous Archives "Call To Action"

After spending numerous years working in the archives and history field, as well as dedicating my career to advocating for the respectful and proper care of Indigenous collections, I share here what I have learned during my career, what I have learned from important Indigenous thinkers, and what, thus, fuels my call to action for curators, collections managers, archivists, etc. working with Indigenous archives. This builds on my previous arguments about context and Indigenous ways of knowing that must be at the center of this work. Before I detail some specific suggestions for ways forward, I want first to present a few scenarios that I often encounter in the field as some examples, again to provide context.

Curators, especially those who are non-Indigenous or who have been in the profession for a long time, are often fearful of how to properly care for these collections. They may be under the assumption that their efforts in collaborative stewardship are going to be too difficult and, thus, often fail to act and continue operating under conventional Western ways of managing collections. Then, another staff member, Indigenous curator, or a Tribal researcher creates the impetus for change. This situation covers a small percentage of curators or collection managers, and is increasingly rare, with a newer, younger, more diversely educated generation coming into the profession.

Another scenario I see frequently is that curators, especially Indigenous curators, have to strike a challenging ethical balance between our own inherent societal and financial needs (i.e. having a job to earn money to care for ourselves, our families, our future, etc.), yet find ourselves working for organizations that house Indigenous collections at non-Tribal repositories such as historical societies, local archives, universities, colleges, federal repositories, and various others. Thus, many Indigenous curators find themselves torn between their inherent need and desire to engage in proper, respectful, and ethical work and the historic colonial bureaucratic infrastructure created in the organizations we work for. Although we personally have the ethics and dedication to implement changes in the stewardship of these collections, we are faced with navigating the bureaucracy of colonial institutions that lack the malleability to support these changes.

Although each of the above scenarios presents unique challenges, there are some basic foundational steps and concepts that we can follow as we move forward to implement important changes in our repositories. The key is to do *something*. Do not wait for someone else to implement changes or wait for someone who fills your positions after you to do this work. If you see something wrong with how collections are being cared for or if you see something wrong in how collections display, interpret, or contextualize Indigenous materials, say and do something about it.

There are many archivists, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, who have devoted their careers to doing this work and have shared guidance, lessons learned, and ways to move forward. It is important to become familiar with this work and a variety of related topics. PNAAM serves as one of the key foundations to learning about the beauty and complexities of Indigenous archives, and offers guidelines for how to care for Indigenous holdings in non-Tribal repositories. However, since the first publication of PNAAM in 2006, numerous other resources and publications have advanced examples of successful projects and guidance.[17] In addition, there are a growing number of Indigenous information professionals and professors who are producing very important research on the topic of imagining and centering Indigenous ways of knowing in the profession. This includes, but is not limited to, Cheryl Metoyer, Loriene Roy, Miranda Belarde-Lewis, Marisa Elena Durante, Sandy Littletree, Camille Callison, and Kim Lawson, as well as those that have already walked on, including Ally Krebs and Ann Massmann.[18]

If this is the first time you are beginning this type of work or project, it can often feel overwhelming. Therefore, I have highlighted some basic key steps to guide you. I have found these to be the foundation to successful stewardship of Indigenous collections. These stem both from key concepts and issues addressed in PNAAM, as well as lessons I learned in my own work and research and, most importantly, lessons I learned from other Indigenous scholars, curators, educators, and spiritual leaders.

First, **the foundation is Indigenous context and history**. You must learn and understand why Indigenous communities are unique, how these collections were often illegally acquired or displaced from their original source community, and the legacy of colonization for our communities. Colonization is real and our people and collections are affected by it to this day. This is why these collections are different, and why you must do something to address the effects of hundreds of years of colonization on our history, heritage, and lifeways.

Our sovereignty must be respected. Tribes have had their own traditional governments since time immemorial and prior to colonization. These governments determine their own laws and legal restrictions surrounding cultural issues. While some tribes have federal recognition, others hold state recognition. Information professionals should understand and respect Native American rights and laws, as recognized in the United States constitution and treaties.

Each Indigenous community is different and unique. It is critically important to remember that as a researcher, instructor, curator, or practitioner, you must always take into account the unique nature of each Indigenous community's histories, laws, practices, and culture. Thus, figure out, learn, and respect the community's specific histories and needs as you embark on working with a community, whether in terms of a collection, item, interview, etc. What works for one community may not work for another because each has different histories, cultures, traditions, and stories that constitute the uniqueness of their communities.

Respect and implement our traditional knowledge systems. One of the most important actions in this process is to learn as much as possible about that community, their history, lifeways, traditions, and beliefs. This should always serve as your foundation as each community is different and each one requires different ways of approaching the stewardship of its archive. This knowledge and understanding will in turn guide how you enter and build trust in the relationship. Begin implementing our knowledge-keeping systems into our collections housed at your repositories. For example, if you house documents or recordings that include stories that should only be told certain times of the year or only told by a certain gender, begin assigning certain cultural access protocols to these items to ensure adherence to the needs of the community and to their unique knowledge-keeping systems.

Indigenous people should determine next steps. As you enter these relationships and collaborations, the Indigenous community should always provide the central perspective and drive the project. This also means determining and accepting what your role is or may not be in the process. Perhaps you take on the role of facilitator, rather than project manager. Listen and understand what your role is and how you can coordinate with the community. The Tribal community members must always be the ones shaping the research and project.

If you are feeling overwhelmed and not sure where to start, simply **select one Indigenous collection as a pilot project** to test how your repository can begin working collaboratively with Indigenous communities to steward the collection.

Although this work is very challenging, it will always be rewarding and important to Indigenous communities. It pushes archivists and researchers to make themselves vulnerable, to step out of their comfort zones, to understand hidden histories and different ways of knowing. It opens their eyes to different ways of seeing themselves and the Indigenous peoples who have been here since time immemorial. At the center of this work must be Indigenous traditional knowledge. This knowledge is medicine and will help to bring a form of reconciliation to our people.

Notes

1. "Working Better Together Conference on Indigenous Research." Simon Fraser University, February 18–20, 2015, Vancouver, BC. https://www.sfu.ca/ipinch/events/ipinch-events/working-better-together-conference-indigenous-research-ethics/ accessed February 1, 2018.

2. Throughout this paper I use the term "Indigenous" to refer to the original inhabitants of North America. More specifically, I use "First Nation," "Inuit" and "Metis" to refer to the Aboriginal people of Canada, and "Native American," "American Indian," "Indian," and "Tribal" to refer to the Indigenous peoples of the United States. And more importantly, when known, I identify specific Tribal or Aboriginal community names or names they prefer.

3. Jennifer R. O'Neal, "The Right to Know: Decolonizing Native American Archives," *Journal of Western Archives* 6:1 (2015); "Respect, Recognition, and Reciprocity: The Protocols for Native American Archival Materials," in *Identity Palimpsests: Archiving Ethnicity in the US and Canada*, eds. Dominique Daniel and Amalia Levi (Sacramento: Litwin Press, 2014), 125–142.

4. First Archivists Circle, "The Protocols for Native American Archival Materials," 2006. http://www2.nau.edu/libnap-p/ accessed February 1, 2018. For a full overview of PNAAM see, Karen J. Underhill, "Protocols for Native American Archival Materials," *RBM: A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Cultural Heritage* 7:2 (2006): 134–145.

5. The following organizations, institutions, and Native American communities endorsed the principles expressed in PNAAM: American Association for State and Local History, First Archivists Circle, Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs, Union of British Indian Chiefs Resource Centre, Native American Archives Roundtable (Society of American Archivists), and Cline Library, Northern Arizona University. Later on, others followed their lead, but these were some of the first to endorse the document.

6. See the Native American Protocols Forum Working Group held at the Society of American Archivists Annual Meetings, 2008–2012. The first forum was held August 27,

2008, "Forum on 'Protocols for Native American Archival Materials.'" For a full summary of the three forums, see the groups' final report, http://www2.archivists.org/sites/all/files/0112-V-I-NativeAmProtocolsForum.pdf accessed February 1, 2018. See also, John Bolcer, "*The Protocols for Native American Archival Materials*: Considerations and Concerns from the Perspective of a Non-Tribal Archivist," *Easy Access: Newsletter of the Northwest Archivists, Inc.* 34 (2009): 3–6. "During the drafting of this article, the Society of American Archivists finally officially endorsed PNAAM on August 13, 2018, see statement, https://www2.archivists.org/statements/saa-council-endorsement-of-protocols-for-native-american-archival-materials, accessed January 26, 2019.

7. Elizabeth Joffrion and Natalia Fernandez, "Collaborations between Tribal and Non-Tribal Organizations: Suggested Best Practices for Sharing Expertise, Cultural Resources, and Knowledge." *The American Archivist* 78:1 (Spring/Summer 2015): 192–237.

8. Katie Shilton and Ramesh Srinivasan, "Participatory Appraisal and Arrangement for Multicultural Archival Collections," *Archivaria* 63 (Spring 2007): 87–101.

9. Washington, Montana, and Oregon now require that place-based Native American history be taught at the K–12 level.

10. G. R. Vizenor, *Fugitive Poses: Native American Indian Scenes of Absence and Presence* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998); Sandy Littletree, Society of American Archivists Annual Conference Presentation, July, 2018.

11. Margaret Kovach, *Indigenous Methodologies: Characteristics, Conversations, and Contexts* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 85.

12. Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Research Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (London: Zed Books, 1999).

13. Kovach, *Indigenous Methodologies*, 75.

14. Kovach, *Indigenous Methodologies*, 75–76.

15. Kovach, *Indigenous Methodologies*, 76. See also, Kimberly Christen. "Tribal Archives, Traditional Knowledge, and Local Contexts: Why the 's' Matters," *Journal of Western Archives* 6:1 (2015).

16. Shawn Wilson, *Research is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods* (Halifax: Fenwood Publishing, 2008), 80.

17. See examples in Elizabeth Joffrion and Natalia Fernandez, "Collaborations between Tribal and Non-Tribal Organizations: Suggested Best Practices for Sharing Expertise, Cultural Resources, and Knowledge." *The American Archivist* 78:1 Spring/Summer (2015) and in Kimberly Christen, "Tribal Archives, Traditional Knowledge, and Local Contexts: Why the 's' Matters."

18. Cheryl A. Metoyer and Ann M. Doyle, "Introduction to Special Issues: Cataloging & Classification Quarterly Special Issue — Indigenous Knowledge Organization," *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 53, no. 5–6 (2015): 475–478; Cheryl Metoyer and Sandy Littletree, "Knowledge Organization from an Indigenous Perspective: The Mashantucket

Pequot Thesaurus of American Indian Terminology Project." *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 53, no. 5–6 (2015): 640–657; Marisa Elena Duarte and Miranda Belarde-Lewis. "Imagining: Creating Spaces for Indigenous Ontologies." *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 53, no. 5–6 (2015): 677–702; Brett Lougheed, Ry Moran, and Camille Callison, "Reconciliation through Description: Using Metadata to Realize the Vision of the National Research Centre for Truth and Reconciliation," *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 53, no. 5–6 (2015): 596–614; Camille Callison, Loriene Roy, and Gretchen Alice LeCheminant, eds., *Indigenous Notions of Ownership and Libraries, Archives, and Museums* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016); Allison Boucher Krebs, "Native America's twenty-first-century right to know" *Archival Science* 12, no. 2 (2012): 173–190; Ann Massmann, "Center for Southwest Research, university libraries, University of New Mexico: An interdisciplinary archive" *Journal of the West* 47, no. 1 (2008): 43; Ann M. Doyle, Kimberly Lawson, and Sarah Dupont, "Indigenization of Knowledge Organization at the Xwi7xwa Library," *Journal of Library and Information Studies* 13, no. 2 (December 2015): 107–134.

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