Indigenous Oral History Manual

Canada and the United States

Second Edition

Winona Wheeler, Charles E. Trimble,
Mary Kay Quinlan, and Barbara W. Sommer

ROUTLEDGE

Indigenous Oral History Manual

Using examples from Indigenous community oral history projects throughout Canada and the United States, this new edition is informed by best practices to show how oral history can be done in different contexts.

The *Indigenous Oral History Manual: Canada and the United States*, the expanded second edition of *The American Indian Oral History Manual* (2008), contains information about selected Indigenous oral histories, legal and ethical issues, project planning considerations, choosing recording equipment and budgeting, planning and carrying out interviews in various settings, stewardship of project materials, and ways Indigenous communities use oral histories. A centerpiece of the book is a collection of oral history project profiles from Canada and the United States that illustrate the range of possibilities that people interested in Indigenous oral history might pursue. It emphasizes the importance of community engagement and adhering to appropriate local protocols and ethical standards, inviting readers to understand that oral history work can take various forms with people whose cultural heritage has always relied on oral transmission of knowledge.

The book is ideal for students, scholars, and Indigenous communities who seek to engage ethically with tribal and First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities in oral history work that meets community needs.

Winona Wheeler, Fisher River Cree Nation, has almost 40 years of experience as a historian, oral historian, and professor. Her areas of research and publications include Treaty Rights, land claims, local histories, First Nations education, missionary–Indigenous Relations, Indigenous research methodologies, Indigenous oral histories, and anti-colonialism.

Charles E. Trimble (1935–2020) was an advocate for Indigenous rights and development. He founded the Native American Press Association in 1969 and led the National Congress of American Indians from 1972 to 1978. His leadership experience led him to become president of the Nebraska State Historical Society in the 1980s, where he continued his effort to support Indigenous people and their voices.

Mary Kay Quinlan is the editor of the Oral History Association *Newsletter* and an associate dean emerita of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Journalism and Mass Communications. She is co-author of several oral history books, an oral history workshop presenter, and member of the Nebraska Women in Journalism Hall of Fame.

Barbara W. Sommer has over 40 years of experience as an oral historian. She is a long-time member of the Oral History Association (OHA) and is the author and co-author of a number of publications in the field. She holds degrees from Carleton College and the University of Minnesota.

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The Second Edition of The American Indian Oral History Manual

Winona Wheeler, Charles E. Trimble, Mary Kay Quinlan, and Barbara W. Sommer

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Designed cover image: Star Knowledge © Minnesota Historical Society

For generations of Indigenous people on the North American Plains, star quilts like this one, "Star Knowledge," have been created and given as symbols of honor and respect. With this manual we express our deep respect for the knowledge embedded in Indigenous oral history.

Gwen Westerman, Sisseton Wahpeton Dakota artist, poet and teacher in Minnesota, created this star quilt in 2014. It is in the collection of the Minnesota Historical Society and is used here with their permission.

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Preface—Second Edition

As with the first edition of this publication, titled The *American Indian Oral History Manual*, this book was written for use with oral history projects in Indigenous communities. We also wrote it for Indigenous projects in non-tribal communities and for non-Indigenous organizations that have Indigenous recordings in their collections. We have expanded it from the first edition to include both Canadian and US Indigenous oral histories.

There are many collections of Indigenous oral histories in our two countries, collections that are expanding and growing at a steady pace. These histories are grounded in the oral cultures of Indigenous people who have historically relied on well-developed memories. Preserving these memories has built and continues to build broad and strong collections of oral information within tribal communities. The work helps preserve the diversity and depth of Indigenous cultures, documents languages and ties to place, and provides information for current and future generations. And more broadly, when told by Indigenous voices, it expands and deepens knowledge about our countries for all our people.

We dedicate this book to Indigenous oral historians in Canada and the United States.

Acknowledgments—Second Edition

Bringing this book to fruition has been an exciting and challenging project. We have many people to thank. We'll begin with our new-co-author, Winona Wheeler. She has shaped this book in many ways, bringing to it her extensive knowledge and understanding of Indigenous communities and Indigenous oral history in its many forms. The book is a tribute to her knowledge and commitment to this project.

Our thanks also go to the following people for their help and support. First, to Nancy MacKay for her help in navigating the Routledge system. Thank you also to the people who provided information included in our project profiles: Alexander Banks, Jon Ille, Kevin Kooistra, Mary A. Larson, Leslie McCartney, Timothy McCleary, Robert A. Innes, and Francine D. Spang-Willis. Thank you to Sarah Barsness at the Minnesota Historical Society and to A. John Ellinger for providing information on technology, to Christi Belcourt, Kevin Lewis, and Glenda Abbott for consulting on sidebars, and to Ursula Acton for indexing the book. And thank you to our Routledge editors Kimberley Smith and Isabel Voice and also at Routledge—Emily Irvine, Allison Sambucini and Sathyasri Kalyanasundaram, and all those at Routledge and working with Routledge who helped make this book possible. We appreciate and acknowledge your contributions to this book.

And special thanks to the many people over the years who have taught us about oral history and shown us the myriad ways in which it affects people's lives.

Introduction—Second Edition

Oral history is a deceptively complicated practice and process. It involves the basics—planning, recording technology, and archival management—along with the subjective work of dealing with memory, the psychology and relationality of interactions between interviewer and narrator, and understanding of the nuances of spoken information and unspoken communication.

Indigenous communities are oral communities. The heritage of orality is strong and continuous. In this book, we discuss this heritage within the oral history structure. We discuss traditional Indigenous telling practices and comment on the use of oral history practice to help protect and preserve the information as we move further into the Digital Age. In the Introduction to the first edition of this book, Charles E. Trimble commented on his concerns about the danger of a "highly technical generation" to the passing down of oral information. This continues to be a concern. But technology, when used to preserve oral Indigenous information, can also be an asset. Preservation in an Indigenous archive according to Indigenous protocols can help protect the information and make it accessible for generations to come.

This book begins with a brief discussion of Indigenous oral history including the work of Nepia Mahuika. Mahuika's award-winning book, *Rethinking Oral History & Tradition: An Indigenous Perspective*, based on his work with his Maori community, offers insight into looking at the full body of Indigenous oral information, traditional and first-person, as one form of knowledge. The second chapter focuses on ethical and legal issues related to Indigenous oral history in Canada and the United States. Following chapters cover planning needs and decisions, recording equipment, interview preparation, Indigenous interviewing, and stewardship of interview recordings. The book ends with a discussion of uses of Indigenous oral history in the United States and Canada. The center of the book includes project profiles—a sample of various Indigenous oral history projects in the United States and Canada. The Appendices include examples of recordkeeping forms.

At the end of the Introduction to the first edition, Chuck Trimble wrote: "Whatever that future is, this manual helps us prepare to record the stories and traditions in the words of what may be the last generations in an immemorial line of oral historians." Our hope is that, with this book and the growing body of literature on Indigenous oral history, we can help support the "immemorial line of oral historians" for future generations.

Winona Wheeler, Mary Kay Quinlan,
Barbara W. Sommer

In Memoriam—Charles E. Trimble

Our co-author, Charles E. Trimble (1935–2020), died in Omaha, Nebraska, during discussions about a second edition of this book. He is greatly missed.

Charles E. "Chuck" Trimble, Oglala Lakota, a native of Wanblee, South Dakota, on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, is remembered as a well-known and respected leader, nationally and internationally. Among his many accomplishments, he was a strong voice against termination and, in 1969, founded the Native American Press Association to give Indigenous communities throughout the country a national voice. He led the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) for 6 years (1972–1978), working for Indigenous economic development during a time when the US Congress passed the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, the Indian Financing Act, the Indian Health Care Improvement Act, and when tribes saw an unprecedented return of significant lands. During his tenure at NCAI, he also helped mediate and peacefully resolve the 1972 sit-in by the American Indian Movement (AIM) at the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in Washington, DC. After moving to Nebraska to be closer to his and his wife's, Anne's, families, he continued his work in support of Indigenous economic development. In the 1980s, his leadership led him to the Nebraska State Historical Society and election as its president. There he helped resolve issues related to possession and return of Indigenous remains to the Pawnee people in the museum's collections. This action, along with the work by Society anthropologists, Nebraska legal experts, and representatives of tribes with historic ties to Nebraska lands, helped develop the model for the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA, Pub. L., 1990). Throughout his life, Chuck Trimble worked for and fought for Indigenous rights, Indigenous economic development, and support for Indigenous people and their voices throughout the United States. He worked tirelessly, often bringing representatives of many different backgrounds together, to support "self-determination, sovereignty, and human rights" (Seelye 2020). We are proud and honored to have him as our co-author.

Barbara W. Sommer, Mary Kay Quinlan,
Winona Wheeler

Introduction—First Edition

At the time Congress enacted the legislation establishing the Veterans History Project, I was serving my last weeks on the Board of Trustees of the American Folklife Center. The Center was given the responsibility of coordinating and facilitating national efforts to collect the oral histories of men and women who served in the defense of the United States and its interests in all the wars and military actions. The mandate—indeed, the honor—given to the Center carried with it a rather meager budget. The work of collecting the oral histories, along with photographs and memorabilia, would be done voluntarily by local organizations, including veterans groups, historical societies, civic organizations, colleges, and schools.

I believed that Indian Country response to America's call to arms in all its military actions since the Revolutionary War, and a rich history of sacrifice and valor on the part of so many Native American servicemen and women, demanded that Indians be fully represented in the oral history collections on all levels of community and government, especially the Library of Congress. Thus I agreed to work to promote veterans' oral history projects on Indian reservations and in off-reservation Indian communities. However, faced with the lack of funds to do this, I had to find help.

A few years earlier, when I served with the Neihardt Foundation Board, we had contracted with Barbara W. Sommer to do interviews with friends and family members of John G. Neihardt. I approached Ms. Sommer with my problem, and without hesitation she and Mary Kay Quinlan accepted the challenge of finding the funds and developing a manual and teaching video to help organizations and colleges on Indian reservations with the oral history projects to honor their modern-day warriors and heroes.

With help from the Nebraska Humanities Council, we invited representatives from veterans' interests on several Indian reservations in South Dakota, including tribal colleges and Indian studies programs in state colleges. The well-attended meeting, which was held in an auditorium of the Veterans Administration hospital in Omaha, included a presentation on the methodology of oral history and open discussion on the need and demand

for veterans' history projects, as well as consultation on cultural sensitivity and protocol in the collection of oral history among tribal people. With the excellent input from this meeting we set out to develop the manual.

Together with the Nebraska Foundation for the Preservation of Oral History and the South Dakota Oral History Center, the latter under the auspices of the Institute of American Indian Studies at the University of South Dakota, we secured funding from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) to develop, test, and publish the Native American Veterans Oral History Manual, along with a video supplement. This was distributed free of charge to tribal colleges and universities throughout the United States and to several other Native American organizations.

The manual was tested in two workshops, one in South Dakota and one in Nebraska, which were attended by representatives of tribal colleges and veterans' interests. During the presentations, which used the veterans' manual in draft form, participants were asked to discuss cultural or traditional propriety or protocol. They responded accordingly, especially one World War II veteran and much respected elder from the Sisseton-Wahpeton Sioux Tribe, Clifford Canku, Sr., who provided thoughtful input about issues related to ethics and tradition. As he stated, for tribal veterans, it is important to recognize traditional warriors who serve their tribal nations and contribute their "talents, languages, lives and supportive efforts" in wars fought by the US government against foreign nations (Sommer and Quinlan 2005, 3). Comments from the Nebraska workshop included statements about how the manual would be helpful in preparing grant applications for continued oral history work among Native people.

With the distribution of the Native American Veterans manual and teaching video, the NHPRC project was complete. Shortly after, several publishers expressed interest in an expanded version of the manual. Sommer, Quinlan, and I wrote this manual in response to that request. It contains much of the information the veterans' manual did, but in expanded form. The first two chapters, covering background on oral history and legal issues related to transmission of oral information, contain the most extensive changes based on the latest information in these areas. Information on project planning, equipment, budgets, interview preparation, interviewing, and processing also is updated and expanded, as is the chapter on the use of Indian materials.

Most oral history publications include the Oral History Association Evaluation Guidelines, the statement of standards and ethics that guide the work of oral historians, as an appendix item. The statement is reprinted in full in this [first edition of the] manual.

The entire oral history thrust in this country over the past decade is of very special interest to me, having grown up in a Lakota society of

oral tradition. As I enter my seniority in life, I often recall to family and friends my experiences growing up on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. It was a time, in the 1930s and 1940s, when many venerable warriors were still alive, including some who fought at Little Big Horn and some who survived the infamous Wounded Knee massacre. I am often asked why I don't write my remembrances for future generations. As a matter of fact, I am in the process of writing about my experiences. However, I often cringe when I think of what I missed in not recording on paper some of the experiences and wisdom of those tribal elders, which I was privileged to hear in my youth.

The oral traditions of Native America are strong, and there are many of my generation who still carry stories and ceremonial protocols that have come down orally through generations. But oral tradition may be endangered by a new society being brought in by a highly technological generation among our own youths in Native American communities. Philip "Sam" Deloria tells of observing dish antennas on most homes on the reservations and wonders what they might portend in terms of preserving culture and traditions.

Whatever that future is, this manual helps us prepare to record the stories and traditions in the words of what may be the last generations in an immemorial line of oral historians.

Charles E. Trimble

1 Indigenous Oral History

First, they called it a battle. Then, based on spoken memories from the Lakota people who were there that day, it became known as the Wounded Knee Massacre. It took place on December 29, 1890, on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. The massacre began when members of the United States Army surrounded and threatened a peaceful group of Lakota people camped at Wounded Knee Creek. It resulted in the deaths of between 250 and 300 Lakota men, women, and children, and the wounding of another 51 Lakota people, primarily women and children. Jerome A. Greene, in his book *American Carnage: Wounded Knee, 1890*, described the importance of fully understanding the event. It was not, as contemporary newspaper accounts reported, a battle; "it became a full-fledged massacre" (Greene 2014, 234). It also was not about Lakota people struggling against living on reservations; the Lakota had lived on reservations since the treaty of 1868 while retaining hunting and fishing rights in their traditional territory. It was, instead, the result of a combination of factors affecting reservation life and "the Lakotas efforts to deal with critical survival skills facing them *on* their reservations" (Greene 2014, 379).

In the years following the massacre, Lakota leaders, survivors, and South Dakota lawmakers in the United States Congress attempted to recognize and reimburse Wounded Knee survivors (Greene 2014, 370–378; Grua 2016, 157–166). Although they were unsuccessful, the first-person testimonies for reimbursement and liability, especially testimonies given in 1920 and the 1930s, help fill in information missing from the historical record. We now know that soldiers, after the initial fight, spent the day hunting down and killing the fleeing Lakota (CAIRNS 2018). Testimony about unreimbursed material losses, including herds of horses and ponies, saddles, farm wagons, rifles, and other items, documents Lakota personal property and wealth, accumulated during decades of reservation life and lost that day. Stories about deaths of family and friends and terrible wounds suffered by survivors provide insight into ongoing, often unrecognized, intergenerational impact of trauma from the event. Among the

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stories, one man described surviving seven wounds and losing his wife and two sons aged 5 and 7 years though the 7-year-old lived for 2 years before dying of his wounds; another testified that three of his children died at Wounded Knee and his wife died a year later from shock, fright, and exposure (Greene 2014, 370–372; see also Grua 2016, 141–146, 151–157). The information about those who fought to have the stories put on the record tell of the strength of survivors and others who worked with them to preserve the voices and document the history.

Although these statements, and other Indigenous first-person sources such as court testimonies, often pre-date the formal introduction of Indigenous oral history as a research methodology, they illustrate the power of first-person information that oral historians record and researchers seek. They are sources of information that give voice to those who might otherwise not be heard. This book focuses on the recording and use of Indigenous oral histories while acknowledging additional sources of first-person Indigenous information that contribute to documenting history throughout the United States and Canada.

Indigenous Oral History

Oral history is a term with many meanings—so many, in fact, that any manual designed to explain the practice of oral history needs to begin with some definitions. In his book *Rethinking Oral History & Tradition: An Indigenous Perspective*, Nepia Mahuika, Maori oral historian and educator, writes about Indigenous oral history from the perspective of his own Ngāti Porou people's understanding of the past. His analysis of Indigenous views of history and the impacts of colonization continue to re-shape the meaning of Indigenous oral history. As he states in his book, "I argue that indigenous oral histories and traditions cannot be adequately defined by nonindigenous peoples" (Mahuika 2019, 15).

Over the years, non-Indigenous scholars have divided Indigenous oral narratives into two types: oral history (first-person) and oral tradition (histories and teachings handed down from the past). Indigenous scholars reject this division as artificial. As one scholar suggested, "from a Native perspective . . . oral history is contained within oral tradition" (Wilson 1996b, 8; 1997, 103). Another commented that Western academicians have tried to separate oral history and oral tradition, but they are "one and the same" (Spang-Willis personal communication).

Briefly, to Indigenous communities, knowledge about the past is overarching and is conveyed orally through *oral tradition*. Oral histories of individuals are part of oral tradition, as are stories and teachings, songs, chants, ceremonies, and histories about significant events—information that represents years or centuries of knowledge woven into Indigenous cultures and passed down orally by knowledge keepers from one generation

to the next. Indigenous oral history also includes personal stories, family stories, and community stories that may, in their telling, incorporate information about culture and tradition. Information and stories in Indigenous oral history can overlap, rather than offering a linear view of the past.

What are some basics of Indigenous oral history? This introduction covers points that will be explored in more depth in the following chapters.

Memory

Indigenous communities are still predominantly oral communities. Well-honed memories and long-established practices in handing down teachings through generations are central to this orality. In general, non-Indigenous scholars have expressed doubt about spoken information as a reliable source, preferring instead to rely on written records. Popular opinion has often misunderstood and dismissed memory-based spoken information, especially in Indigenous communities (Fixico 2017, 18–19), yet studies have demonstrated that because non-literate societies had no other mechanisms for recording their pasts, their memories and oral traditions were especially rigorous (Stevenson 2000, 246). Indigenous memory is often supported by mnemonic devices in the form of artistic depictions or natural phenomena and landscapes. Without clocks, Indigenous memories relied on human events, human and natural lifecycles, natural disasters, and astronomical occurrences as time referents (Stevenson 2000, 272). This may be misunderstood by those accustomed to working with written history and western calendars, but anyone working with Indigenous oral histories needs to comprehend and work within the cultural framework of the narrators. Historian Donald L. Fixico (Shawnee, Sac and Fox, Muscogee Creek and Seminole) explains further that the importance of oral traditions goes beyond providing information about the past because it serves as an "an integral part of their lives" (Fixico, 7).

Legal and Ethical Guidelines

Legal and ethical guidelines are basic to the practice of oral history. Recording Indigenous oral history involves the legal system of the country in which the interviews are recorded and Indigenous ownership of information. Both need to be considered, and both have an impact on the status of the interviews and their ongoing preservation, care, and access. Careful documentation of this information guides ongoing preservation and access for Indigenous oral histories.

Interviews

Interviewing in Indigenous oral history is based on long-standing community norms. Charles Eastman (Ohiyesa) described the Dakota way he was

taught to tell traditional stories and teachings as "preserving and transmitting the legends of . . . ancestors" learned by memorizing information and repeating it back until correct (Eastman 1971, 42–43). Elder Stella Neff of Cree ancestry described the process she was taught a century later at the 2005 Oral History in Canada Conference: "When telling the story, use the same words. Do *not* change anything" (Neff 2005). Interviews also may be a blend of ancient telling and contemporary interviewing techniques. An interview given by Mrs. Angela Sidney of Taglish and Inland Tlingit ancestry to Julie Cruikshank provides an example. Mrs. Sidney answered some of the interviewer's questions with a traditional story (teaching Cruikshank the story in the process) to help Cruikshank better understand the answers (Cruikshank 1998, xv). Personal and Indigenous communication patterns guided the interview.

The diversity of Indigenous cultures adds to the complexity of this discussion. Devon Mihesuah emphasized this point when she wrote, "There is no single Indian voice" (Mihesuah 1996, 93). This reflects Indigenous cultures and tribal nations across Canada and the United States that are, as another scholar has stated, as "different from one another as Japanese culture is from Polish culture" (Hill 2003, 6). Within the general guidelines of Indigenous oral history, differences can have an impact on interviewing practices. As Mahuika has written, the decisions on how to do this are in Indigenous hands.

The roles of protocols that guide choices for telling information within diverse Indigenous populations also guide the telling itself. Narrators and interviewers chosen to tell stories can be guided by practices that define how and when they may be told, for example (Wilson 1997, 106–107; Mahuika 2019, 139). Author and cultural anthropologist Timothy Roufs' description of Ojibwe people *never* telling a "winter story out of season" illustrates this point (Roufs personal communication).

The telling of sacred teachings also is critical to the practice of Indigenous oral history. Answers to questions about who is allowed to tell the information, who is allowed to hear the information, how and when the information is allowed to be told, and who is allowed to have access to the information are among the most important interviewing considerations for Indigenous oral historians.

The choice of narrators is another consideration. In Indigenous oral history, a narrator may be a keeper of traditional knowledge asked to record stories according to tribal protocols. The person may be the owner of specific information, such as the ingredients in certain medicines, that are part of a family heritage. And the narrator may be an individual telling his or her own story. Interviews with Indigenous veterans are common examples; many, however, in addition to telling their own stories may also include references to traditional or sacred information.

Documenting interview context is an important oral history maxim. For Indigenous oral history, oral historian and archivist William Schneider described this as the need to "recognize how the stories are used and to try to preserve the intended meaning as part of the recorded account" (Schneider 2002, 63).

Urban/Suburban Indigenous Oral History Projects

In Canada and the United States, the numbers of Indigenous people living off reserve (Canada) and off reservations (United States) have been growing for more than seven decades. Now, an estimated 60 percent of First Nations people and close to 80 percent of American Indian people live in off-reserve and off-reservation rural, urban, and suburban areas (Whittle 2017).

Oral history projects have helped document the moves and their impacts. One example is The Chicago [Illinois] American Indian Oral History Project (Chicago American Indian Project). Conducted through the D'Arcy McNickle Center for American Indian and Indigenous Studies with funding from the Illinois Humanities Council, it ran from 1982 to 1985. Project materials, including 23 transcribed interviews, are held in the Special Collections Library at the Newberry Library in Chicago. The narrators are described as mirroring the composition of Chicago's Native American community with tribal affiliations from across the Midwest. Interview topics include the postwar relocation program, education, employment, housing, cultural traditions, language preservation, and children's experiences. The recordings are closed, and access to the transcripts is a mixture of closed and open access within library and project protocols.

More recently, oral historians are beginning to document the experiences of living in suburban communities. The Ȟaȟa Wakpadaŋ/Bassett Creek Oral History Project (2022) is an example. Through it, 13 oral histories were recorded with members of local tribes who live and work in a Western suburb of Minneapolis, Minnesota. The project, which grew out of development of a Land Acknowledgement Statement, focused on questions about what it means to be a Native person living in a suburb. Recordings and transcripts are held at the Hennepin History Museum in Minneapolis, Minnesota; access is open (Cleveland 2022). (See also Pollard 2023.)

Recording Equipment

Oral historians use audio or video recorders to preserve interview information. Recorders make a fixed copy of the interview, preserving the information as it is spoken. Others wanting to learn from an interview listen to the recording or read a transcript if one is available. In Indigenous oral history, voices on a recording not only preserve spoken information but also serve as living representations of the narrators. Recordings of narrators who have died are accorded the same respect as living narrators.

Emeritus professor and author Cruikshank makes another point about recording stories. She has found that recordings (and transcripts) of traditional information take on "social lives" of their own when the information they contain becomes part of new tellings.

> Written texts become points of reference narrators can allude to when they want to make socially significant statements to family members, to other members of the tribal nation or to the larger world about the potential of stories to make us reevaluate situations we think we understand.
>
> (Cruikshank 1998, xiii–xiv)

The types of recording equipment and media used in an interview are important considerations. This is a popular topic of discussion among oral historians. But for Indigenous oral historians, such decisions can take on added meaning. For example, recordings can help with language preservation, preserving the sound and use of Indigenous speech. Use of a recorder designed for maximum voice quality thus becomes a critical consideration for recordings made with this purpose in mind.

Repository

Cruikshank's comments about the social life of stories point to the importance of another consideration for Indigenous oral historians. A repository plays a role in ongoing preservation, care, and access to the recorded information. In Indigenous oral history, this role expands beyond standard archival practice. Critical questions include the role of tribal protocols in guiding ongoing access and use. A Minnesota project provides an example. Several decades ago, oral historians from the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe collected interviews in the Ojibwe language from the last generation to speak their language as a first language. Bilingual speakers translated the interviews. And just as the Ojibwe don't tell stories out of season, project members did not process or transcribe the stories out of season. Winter stories were recorded during the winter, and translations and transcriptions were made during the winter months as tribal protocols required.

Uses of Indigenous Oral Histories

Over the centuries of white-Indigenous contact, tribal nations faced overwhelming disruption in the preservation of knowledge (Barrett and Britton 1997, 4–25). Nevertheless, the commitment to oral transmission of knowledge continued. Throughout this book, examples of Indigenous oral history in the United States and Canada will help illustrate its ongoing practice and use. For example, the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa in northern Minnesota collected Indigenous oral history to help document information about place, chronicling Indigenous names and their stories that pre-date contact with European colonizers. The work, which includes a handmade map, documents over 100 traditional names including the Anishinabe name for Birch Point on Lake Vermilion as Ginewigwasensikag or "long promontory of birch trees" (Hollingsworth 2022, A1, A4).

Many tribal nations have colleges, cultural centers, museums, and archives designed to collect, protect, and preserve information about their pasts, including recorded oral information. Others work with non-tribal universities and major repositories for the same purpose. When working with recorded Indigenous information, these institutions draw on and are guided both by Western oral history standards, helpful in this digital age, and Indigenous oral history protocols to preserve Indigenous knowledge.

Summary

Some people reading this will wonder about their own family stories handed down through generations. Anyone attending a family reunion knows about such stories. Where do they fit into this discussion? Family stories are important forms of oral communication, but they don't always contain the cultural transfer of knowledge implicit in the telling of Indigenous knowledge. Being part of an oral tradition is central to Indigenous culture, while the same cannot always be said of a written-word-driven culture, even among people with a wealth of family stories.

Indigenous oral history includes the memories of first-person accounts and carefully learned, multigenerational messages, the rich, complex accounts that can predate colonial contact. This is the fabric of an oral culture, practiced in diverse tribal nations across Canada and the United States. Recorded information helps document how people understand and shape experiences, power, and identity. It not only documents the past but is critically important for the future. As Indigenous oral historians, scholars, and tribal community members often say when referring to Indigenous oral history: These are our stories; through them we will tell our histories. Or as a scholar put it in a message to Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities: listen to "approaches from non-Western peoples" (Wilson 2005, 17–18; Krol 2018).

Finally, a note about terms used in this book. In Canada and the United States, a number of terms are regularly used to refer to Indigenous populations. The most common are tribe, band, treaty, Indian Country, nation, American Indian, Native American, and First Nations. Lands reserved for the exclusive use of legally recognized Native Americans and First Nations are, respectively, called reservations and reserves. With the focus of this book on Canadian and US Indigenous people, we have chosen to use the terms Indigenous communities and tribal nations.

The following pages offer basic guidelines for collecting Indigenous oral information. Indigenous oral history is practiced by people with a tradition of orality who recognize and use complex traditional patterns of transmission of knowledge while coexisting with formalized Western oral history standards that include written sources. The steps begin with a careful look at legal and ethical issues.

2 Legal and Ethical Issues

Beginning in the nineteenth century, ethnographers embarked on systematic efforts to collect and record Indigenous stories, prayers, songs, rituals, and customs from what many non-Indigenous people then believed was a dying race. They called it salvage ethnology. The intention was to make such material available for public education and appreciation, but it also clearly resulted in publication of much material never intended for broad public consumption (Osborne 212). In the decades since, Indigenous people in North America have been the objects and subjects of countless research efforts by outsiders attempting to examine their health, social, economic, educational, and cultural traditions.

Any attempt to understand the legal and ethical underpinnings of contemporary efforts to record oral information from Indigenous people must begin with an understanding of Indigenous complaints about how it was collected and used. The American Indian Law Center's Model Tribal Research Code (Model Code 1–2) enumerates many of them, including:

- Coercing participation in health research and misleading people about the purpose of such research
- Using Indigenous communities as an isolated gene pool for laboratory purposes, demeaning their individual and collective dignity
- Disrespecting cultural practices and beliefs, including publication of sensitive religious and cultural information
- Taking information out of context, thus reaching factually incorrect conclusions
- Profiting financially and professionally from research, yet making no attempt to employ local people or otherwise compensate participants
- Pursuing research agendas of marginal interest to Indigenous communities and promising benefits that never materialize and consultation or collaboration that never come to pass

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It's no wonder that Indigenous peoples around the world increasingly are expanding their efforts to control intangible aspects of their culture, much as they strive to maintain control and protection over natural resources such as land, water, fisheries, and the like. "The continued existence of Indigenous peoples depends on cultural maintenance. Protection of both tangible and intangible property is necessary for the survival of Indigenous groups" (Riley 76–77). The axiom "nothing about us without us" is now a widespread expectation (Funnell et al. 2019).

The challenges associated with safeguarding or documenting Indigenous Knowledge are tangled at the intersection of Western and Indigenous cultures. Contemporary Western intellectual property laws, such as those governing copyright, patents, and trademarks, for example, are derived from an individualistic and largely commercially driven frame of reference (Milchan 164, Osborne 228). Such laws are intended to protect the originators of creative works from unauthorized use that may detract from the originators' ability to make a profit, a concept at odds with the more communal emphasis common in Indigenous communities, "in which identity and rights derive from membership in clan, kinship, and tribal networks" (Osborne 224). Intangible elements of Indigenous knowledge and culture—songs, dances, rituals, stories, and the like—are intergenerational creations developed not for profit but to maintain a society.

Because of these competing frameworks, oral historians in both Canada and the United States have adopted practices that address legal and ethical issues associated with conducting oral histories in Indigenous communities. The discussion that follows is not meant to provide legal advice or a comprehensive review of all legal and ethical matters that might pertain to oral history work. Rather, it is intended to serve as a starting point for determining how specific Indigenous oral history projects should address the reality of accommodating competing legal and ethical frameworks.

Tribal memories help pinpoint site of Sand Creek Massacre

Indigenous information can play a critical role in efforts to explore past times and places and was a significant element in the US National Park Service's attempts to document information related to the Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site in southeastern Colorado. Federal legislation passed in 1998 authorized the park service to conduct a site study to determine the precise location of the Sand Creek Massacre.

This particularly ugly episode in the history of the American West unfolded on November 29, 1864, when a group of nearly 700 soldiers slaughtered some 230 Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians, mostly women, children, and Elders, who were camped along Sand Creek in the Colorado Territory. Many sought safety during the nearly eight-hour attack by hastily digging pits and trenches into the banks of the dry creek bed.

The park service employed a multidisciplinary approach to locating the campsite by relying on oral histories or statements about family knowledge of the attack from more than 30 descendants of survivors as well as from written documents, hand-drawn maps, remote imaging, soil analysis, and archaeological exploration. The National Park Service and the affected tribes negotiated memoranda of understanding to conduct the oral histories.

The Northern Cheyenne and Northern Arapaho tribes conducted their oral histories internally, while the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes of Oklahoma contracted with the park service to conduct the oral histories in collaboration with the tribes. The Northern Arapaho project team's priority was protecting the narrators and their stories so they asserted copyright to photos, interview tapes, and transcripts but allowed information from the interviews to be used in the site study. The tribe kept all tapes and photographs for its tribal archives and gave copies to the National Park Service and to Colorado's state historical archives.

Some narrators expressed concern about translation of the interviews from their Indigenous language into English. Elderly Cheyenne speakers, for example, said the rich nuances of meaning in their language often were treated cavalierly in English translations. To accommodate those concerns, translating and transcribing were done collaboratively, and in one case, a 30-minute story in the Cheyenne language took 13 hours to transcribe.

Despite concerns about protecting sensitive information from possible misuse, the narrators became convinced that recording the Sand Creek Massacre descendants' stories was important not only for them but for future generations. Their oral histories as well as participation in site visits with the rest of the researchers contributed significantly to the team's consensus about the location of the nineteenth-century tragedy (Greene and Scott 2004).

In the United States

Oral history interviews in the United States have long been treated as copyrightable documents, deemed as analogous to written autobiographies or memoirs. A copyright holder has the "exclusive legal right to print or otherwise reproduce, publish, or sell copies of original materials, such as oral history interviews, and to license their production and sale by others" (Sommer, Quinlan OHM, 13). As oral history practice evolved in the mid-twentieth century, it became the common practice for both the oral history narrator and interviewer to sign deeds of gift transferring their joint copyright interest in the oral history to the institution sponsoring an oral history project or to an archive or repository where the recordings and other associated materials are kept, with the repository being responsible for maintaining the materials and granting access, subject to whatever restrictions might be detailed on the donor forms. While the repository becomes the copyright holder, many deeds of gift, also known as donor forms, include language assuring that the narrator retains lifetime rights to use his or her own interview. The general oral history practice is to have narrators, interviewers, and anyone else whose voice is on the recording sign a donor form at the end of each interview session when an interview technically becomes copyrightable. Another option for dealing with copyright and related issues of access to interview information is to consider the online Creative Commons, an international nonprofit licensing system in which content creators, including oral historians, can retain ownership of their copyright interest but allow widespread online sharing of the material as long as it is credited to those who created it (Sommer, Quinlan OHM, 31–32).

Widespread sharing of oral history interviews, however, may not match the interests of many community-engaged Indigenous oral history projects. In 2007, a group of archivists, librarians, historians, and other professionals from 15 Indigenous communities, known as the First Archivists Circle, published "Protocols for Native American Archival Materials" to address issues relating to sensitive Indigenous materials. The protocols note: "Libraries and archives must recognize that Native American communities have primary rights for all culturally sensitive materials that are culturally affiliated with them. These rights apply to issues of collection, preservation, access, and use of or restrictions to these materials" (Protocols 5). In 2018, the Society of American Archivists, which represents more than 6,000 professional archivists in North America, endorsed the protocols as a best practice for archives working with Indigenous materials.

Written in part with a focus on non-Indigenous libraries and archives that include Indigenous holdings, the protocols note that while librarians and archivists may be trained in Western traditions that prize intellectual freedom and free access to information, the notion of restricted access to

certain kinds of information is not without precedent. Archives routinely house classified or other kinds of information to which access may be closed for specific time periods or to which access may be restricted, practices that may equally apply to certain Indigenous materials (Protocols 8–9).

The Protocols recommend that matters to be considered in developing research protocols in Indigenous communities include: "intellectual property rights, ownership of data and subsidiary products, research controls, risks, informed consent, community rights, access, right of review confidentiality, deposit with a tribally designated repository, preference in employment and training, and safeguarding individual and communal privacy" (Protocols 18).

The Hopi Tribe of Arizona is one of many Indigenous communities in the United States that have developed such protocols, aiming at cultural preservation in connection with research that relates to oral history, particularly projects generated by outside groups or individuals. In its "Protocol for Research, Publication and Recordings: Motion, Visual, Sound, Multimedia and other Mechanical Devices," the Hopi people state their

> desire to protect their rights to privacy and to Hopi Intellectual Property. Due to the continued abuse, misrepresentation and exploitation of the rights of the Hopi people, it is necessary that guidelines be established and strictly followed so as to protect the rights of the present and future generations of the Hopi people.

The research protocol outlines a permitting process for any "activity involving intellectual property," which must be approved by the Hopi Cultural Preservation Office. It describes in detail how a project must submit a proposal that addresses the following:

- The intent and benefits of the project to the Hopi Tribe
- Any risks associated with the project, including possible "deleterious impact on the cultural, social, economic, or political well being of the community"
- A mechanism to assure informed consent from individuals, families, clans, villages, or the tribal government
- Rights to privacy and how it will be protected
- Confidentiality, including where project materials will be deposited and stored upon project completion
- Detailed information about the use of recording devices and how recorded information will be handled, including possible future uses
- Ownership matters, including the Hopi Tribe's right to prevent publication of certain unauthorized information that misrepresents or stereotypes Hopi people or harms their health, safety, or welfare

- Just compensation or fair return for those who participate in the project
- Preference for Hopi people, Indian people in general, and local residents in employment and training and
- A process by which the Hopi Tribe can review results of the project before publication

(Hopi Cultural Preservation Office 1–3)

Like the protocols recommended by the First Archivists Circle, the American Indian Law Center also has developed a Model Tribal Research Code that focuses on protecting the interests of Indigenous communities rather than individuals, taking into account long-term interests of the tribe. Detailed checklists in the model code call for establishing a research application process that, from the beginning, would assert a tribe's right to contractually bind researchers to ensure that the tribe retained "control over sensitive personal, community, cultural and religious information," including the "tribe's right to prevent publication" of research results (Model Code 14). While the language may be directed largely at safeguarding community knowledge, the language of the model code would allow tribal authorities to claim a right to censor a member's telling of a boarding school experience, military service, management of tribal enterprises, disputes over tribal natural resources, or an endless number of similar examples of historical information that could be important to document but that might challenge the prevailing views of tribal leaders currently in power.

Indeed, the model research code tacitly acknowledges the latter point, noting:

> As in any community, policies may change with the change of government on an Indian reservation. For the sake of stability and reputation of the tribe, it may be advisable for the tribe to include some sort of protection for the researcher in the event that a subsequent administration seeks to cancel the research even though the researcher has complied with all provisions of his/her original license to conduct research.
>
> (Model Code 16)

Research oversight in some American Indian communities is also governed by institutional review boards (IRBs) like those created at research universities under federal regulations aimed at protecting people involved in biomedical research. The federal regulations, at least in part, grew out of some egregiously unethical medical research that harmed unknowing participants. But at many institutions, IRBs dominated by biomedical researchers unfamiliar with humanities and social science research required oral historians to destroy recordings, anonymize narrators, and prohibit asking questions that might be controversial, among other stipulations contrary

to the fundamentals of oral history practice (Sommer and Quinlan OHM 40). Oral historians and others argued that the regulations misconstrued oral history narrators as the objects of research rather than as informed collaborators or research partners, a far cry from biomedical research practices that might involve collecting blood, hair, or other physical samples from research subjects, leading to what the federal regulations call generalizable knowledge. After more than a decade of effort by leaders of the Oral History Association, the American Historical Association, and others, the federal Office for Human Research Protections in 2019 issued revised rules that explicitly exempt "scholarly and journalistic activities" from the definition of research for which IRB approval must be sought. The revised rule cites as examples "oral history, journalism, biography, literary criticism, legal research, and historical scholarship, including the collection and use of information, that focus directly on the specific individuals about whom the information is collected" (Code of Federal Regulations *46.102*).

While the federal regulations intended to protect human research subjects in general apply to colleges, universities, and other institutions that receive federal dollars, Indigenous communities have adopted similar approaches, establishing IRBs to prevent a recurrence of exploitative research by outsiders. The Navajo Nation Human Research Review Board, for example, spells out a 12-step procedure for researchers to gain approval of projects involving Navajo people. The Navajo Nation IRB's first requirement for principal investigators is to formalize partnerships and secure resolutions of support for the research from Navajo Nation chapters, boards, health, and community organizations. The research phases are described in detail, including analysis of data collected, training of appropriate Navajo Nation staff in using the data, and dissemination of research findings to chapters, schools, health boards, and other tribal programs (Navajo Nation, 18–20). The Navajo Nation's IRB is but one example. Some tribes assign research oversight to specific tribally based organizations or departments, such as the Gila River Indian Community of Sacaton, Arizona, which has a Medical and Health Care Research Review Committee. Tribal colleges and community colleges also operate IRBs aimed at ensuring ethical research conduct as does the US Indian Health Service. The extent to which these various IRBs and their oversight processes affect oral history projects is ambiguous in that some review boards' language refers specifically to medical or scientific research while others refer to research more generally (Around Him 71–95). Because of these complexities, oral historians, whether associated with academic institutions or specific Indigenous communities, should thoroughly explore in the planning process the legal and ethical requirements that may affect their particular oral history projects.

While Indigenous communities' protocols and IRB-related processes have evolved as an attempt to codify ethical research behavior, oral historians

have long been acutely aware of and have worked to establish best practices for the ethical conduct of oral history. In fact, ethical standards promulgated by the Oral History Association dovetail with Indigenous protocols in many respects. A recent addition to the OHA suite of best practices, "Guidelines for Social Justice Oral History Work," suggests an alternative, narrator-centered approach to developing agreements between oral historians and narrators regarding informed consent to project participation and to the ultimate disposition of oral history materials. The guidelines suggest using a "rolling consent" approach in which changing circumstances, including changing technology, changing plans for interview usage, or changing political and social context, might alter decisions about expanding or restricting access to oral history materials. Rolling consent would allow for periodic reexamination of agreements as circumstances evolve (OHA Guidelines for Social Justice Oral History Work, 6).

OHA standards and Indigenous traditions and protocols all are based on a fundamental principle of respecting people who give their stories and respecting the stories they tell. For oral historians, the overarching ethical principle is this: oral history narrators must never be exploited and always are entitled to respect. In fact, standards promulgated by the OHA directly address many of the harshest criticisms that Indigenous people have made against outside researchers. Those standards include:

- Fully informed narrators or knowledge keepers, including full disclosure of the ultimate use and disposition of all oral history materials.
- Use of signed release forms to assure appropriate handling and document ownership of oral history materials and possible restrictions on access, as necessary.
- Assuring appropriate training for people who will be involved in an oral history project.
- Rigorous standards for recordkeeping, including an emphasis on providing context for oral history materials to guard against dissemination of inaccurate or misleading information about Indigenous communities and individuals. Complete documentation of context includes information about the circumstances of an interview, background research and preparation, and any other information that would help future users of the material to place it in appropriate context.
- Rigorous standards for stewardship of oral history materials, including recordings, transcripts, photographs, artifacts, or any other materials an oral history project might generate (Protocols 17).

In addition to documenting copyright ownership, access or use restrictions, and other aspects of handling of oral history materials, oral history projects in Indigenous communities also need to be aware of circumstances in

which oral history interviews might contain material that could be considered libelous or slanderous, thus raising the possibility that legal charges might be brought against a project that disseminated such material. Such charges can be legally complex—dead people, for example, cannot be slandered—and it's unclear how often such circumstances might arise in an oral history interview. But when people involved in a project review interview materials, it's advisable to keep such issues in mind and seek legal advice as appropriate.

While this manual focuses on offering guidance to anyone interested in pursuing oral history in Indigenous communities, a discussion of oral history ethics and legal considerations also raises important questions about the legal treatment of Indigenous oral information that oral history projects might document.

In the United States, the role of oral history or orally transmitted knowledge has struggled for recognition in the courts, primarily because of rules of evidence that largely disqualify information deemed as hearsay (Virupaksha Katner 20–21). Written evidence is given preference over oral evidence, and when testimony is based on information handed down through generations, there is no written record to confirm it (Babcock, Hope M. 20–21).

Legal scholar Max Virupaksha Katner points out that although the US legal system's preference for written testimony "presupposes that evidence in written statements provides a greater assurance of accuracy and truth than oral statements, this is not always the case. Writing is as susceptible to forgery, revision, manipulation, and misinterpretation as oral knowledge" (Virupaksha Katner 20).

In a landmark federal case, a court threw cold water on the use of oral traditions as legal evidence, declining to recognize the legal value of oral histories of Pacific Northwest tribes. The case involved the US Army Corps of Engineers' attempts to repatriate human remains unearthed near the Columbia River in 1996 under terms of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990, known by its acronym NAGPRA. At issue was the disposition of human remains estimated to be between 8,340 and 9,200 years old that surfaced near Kennewick, Washington, giving rise to the name "Kennewick Man." The tribes of the Pacific Northwest that sought repatriation of the remains called him "the Ancient One" (Ray 103). A federal appellate court ruling in 2004 dismissed as unreliable the oral histories used to tie the Ancient One to any modern tribe, saying:

> We conclude that these accounts are just not specific enough or reliable enough or relevant enough to show a significant relationship of the Tribal Claimants with Kennewick Man. Because oral accounts have been inevitably changed in context of transmission, because the traditions include myths that cannot be considered as if factual histories,

> because the value of such accounts is limited by concerns of authenticity, reliability, and accuracy, and because the record as a whole does not show where historical fact ends and mythic tale begins, we do not think that the oral traditions . . . were adequate to show the required significant relationship of the Kennewick Man's remains to the Tribal Claimants . . . . 8,340 to 9,200 years between the life of Kennewick Man and the Present is too long a time to bridge merely with evidence of oral traditions.
>
> (United States Court of Appeals)

The remains were subjected to scientific tests, which did not support the conclusion that the Kennewick Man was related to the Pacific Northwest tribes and thus not subject to the repatriation requirements of NAGPRA. But in 2015, subsequent DNA testing not previously available determined that the Kennewick Man was, indeed, "closely related to" modern-day members of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, one of the five tribes that had sought repatriation (Rasmussen 455). The Kennewick Man's remains ultimately were returned to the Colvilles, the Umatilla, Yakama Nation, Nez Perce Tribe and Wanapum Band, and were reburied in an undisclosed location in the high desert of the Columbia Plateau near the Columbia River on February 18, 2017, more than 20 years after they were uncovered (Spokane Spokesman-Review).

In Canada

As in the United States, in Canada copyright comes into play whenever the creators of an original work, such as dramatic, literary, musical, or artistic materials, commit the work into a fixed form, such as a written document, including digital formats. The author or creator of the work generally owns the copyright (Jarvis-Tonus 99). In the case of oral history interviews, which are fixed in a recorded format, the creator is usually deemed to be the oral historian (or the historian's employer) who arranged for and carried out the interview. The person who was interviewed, however, is not generally deemed to have a copyright interest in the resulting interview because their words "being primarily spontaneous and random, constitute ideas rather than a 'work' of intellectual labor and skill" (Jarvis-Tonus, 104). A report by the First Nations Information Governance Centre notes that "by privileging the person capturing the recording, storytellers lose all rights to their own stories. For Indigenous communities where cultural knowledge has been transferred through oral traditions, this can be particularly devastating" (FNIGC, 1).

Jarvis-Tonus suggests, however, that if the person being interviewed recites a traditional story that has been passed down orally in a particular

way in the Indigenous community for generations, once it has been fixed in the recording medium, it might well be argued that the story is not merely random words but a specific, structured "telling" to which the narrator might be able to claim a limited copyright interest (Jarvis-Tonus, 108). She also notes that copyright ownership "can always be changed by written assignment" (Jarvis-Tonus, 103). As in the United States, copyright ownership may be conveyed to an archive or repository by means of a deed of gift or other legal document. Such documents also specify any restrictions a narrator may place on access to or use of an interview (Freund, 227).

Apart from legal concerns related to creation of new oral history interviews, Freund also cautions that researchers who wish to use existing oral history collections need to "establish whether the interviews are restricted in part or in whole and whether permissions need to be obtained from the interviewees, their heirs, or their estates." Because copyright laws vary around the world, "researchers should ask the archivist or librarian how exactly they may use the oral histories under the applicable copyright laws" (Freund, 227).

Beyond legal considerations associated with copyright, Canadian oral historians involved with Indigenous community projects, like their counterparts in the United States, are first obliged to comply with community protocols. While specific practices may vary, such protocols typically reflect the First Nations Principles of OCAP®. The acronym stands for Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession and reflects a First Nations consensus about how First Nations data "should be collected, protected, used and shared" (FNIGC). OCAP® grew out of a 1998 meeting of the National Steering Committee of the First Nations and Inuit Regional Longitudinal Health Survey and primarily reflects First Nations concerns about inappropriate federal government control of, access to, and use of health data and related information about their communities and individual community members. The principles have come to be applied generally to all forms of information gathering in First Nations communities and amount to a concise statement of ethical principles that should be respected in connection with all research involving First Nations communities. The four elements of OCAP®, a registered trademark of the First Nations Information Governance Centre, are:

- Ownership—a recognition that an Indigenous community owns its information collectively just as individuals own their own personal information
- Control—a recognition that Indigenous communities have the right to control research and information management processes that affect them at all stages of a research project

- Access—a recognition that Indigenous communities have the right to make decisions about who can have access to their collective information and under what circumstances, regardless of where the information is held
- Possession—a recognition that in addition to ownership of cultural knowledge, Indigenous communities have a parallel interest in the stewardship of or physical control of data collected about them

(FNIGC OCAP®)

In addition to using the OCAP® principles, along with individual community protocols, as guides when developing community-engaged Indigenous oral history projects, Canadian oral historians engaged in oral history under the auspices of academic institutions are obliged to comply with ethical standards established at the federal level by the Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans, or TCPS. The policy statement was developed by the three major federal agencies that fund a wide variety of research at Canadian colleges and universities: The Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the National Sciences and Engineering Research Council, and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council. Chapter 9 of the TCPS, titled "Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples of Canada," traces the history of abusive research practices involving Indigenous communities, particularly in connection with biomedical research, and details specific ethical practices researchers are obliged to follow as a condition of receiving federal funds. The federal standards are, in effect, enforced by Canadian academic institutions' Research Ethics Boards, analogous to Institutional Review Boards in the United States. Unlike in the United States, however, the TCPS does not exempt oral history from University Research Ethics Boards review.

The TCPS says its policy is "based on the premise that engagement with community is an integral part of ethical research involving Indigenous peoples" while respecting "the autonomy of individuals to decide whether they will participate in research" and attempts to "give guidance for balancing individual and collective interests" (TCPS 3). The document focuses on according

> respect to Indigenous peoples' knowledge systems by ensuring that the various and distinct worldviews of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples are represented in planning and decision making, from the earliest stages of conception and design of projects through the analysis and dissemination of results.
>
> (TCPS 3)

The policy statement also includes a detailed definition of "traditional knowledge" in reference to Indigenous communities, noting that "traditional" is not necessarily the same thing as "old":

> Traditional knowledge is specific to place, usually transmitted orally, and rooted in the experience of multiple generations. It is determined by an Indigenous community's land, environment, region, culture and language. Traditional knowledge is usually described by Indigenous peoples as holistic, involving body, mind, feelings and spirit. Knowledge may be expressed in symbols, arts, ceremonial and everyday practices, narratives and, especially, in relationships. . . . Traditional knowledge is held collectively by all members of a community, although some members may have particular responsibility for its transmission. It includes preserved knowledge created by, and received from, past generations and innovations and new knowledge transmitted to subsequent generations.
>
> (TPCS 5)

The standards include requirements to obtain permission from appropriate community governing bodies if research is to be undertaken on lands under Indigenous jurisdiction or with other appropriate community organizations that involve off-reserve Indigenous groups, noting that the majority of Canadians who self-identify as Indigenous "live in rural and urban communities outside of discrete First Nations, Métis or Inuit communities" (TCPS 12). The standards also note that authority structures in some communities and in some domains of knowledge may be complex, and knowledge keepers' authority to permit research may be a matter of custom rather than a matter of who has been elected or appointed to community leadership positions. Seeking approval from both is considered the best course of action. Likewise, researchers are urged to seek participation of subgroups and individuals in a community that might not be represented in formal community leadership (TCPS 13).

The federal ethics standards also emphasize the importance of determining and complying with an Indigenous community's own customs and codes of research practice, noting that some communities make distinctions

> among knowledge that can be publicly disclosed, disclosed to a specific audience, or disclosed under certain conditions. . . . Any restrictions on access to, or use of, traditional or sacred knowledge shared in the course of the research project should be addressed in the research agreement.
>
> (TCPS 15)

The Canadian ethics standards emphasize that even if a researcher has complied with an Indigenous community's own ethical protocols, a planned project is still subject to mandatory review by the researcher's institutional Research Ethics Board to assure that all standards are met, including the expectation that the researcher has engaged appropriately with the First Nations, Inuit or Métis community involved in the project and that an appropriate research agreement has been crafted. Such agreements need to be in place before a researcher can begin to recruit participants for a project, and prospective participants also have to give their consent individually. The standards note that written consent may not be culturally appropriate in all cases, so a researcher is expected to describe an alternative form of consent. In the case of an oral history project, such consent might be expressed orally at the outset of a recorded interview, for example. Researchers also are expected to follow the wishes of participants regarding the use of Indigenous languages and involvement of knowledgeable translators, as necessary, when participants give their consent to participate (TCPS 16–20).

Additional standards that may specifically affect oral historians include instructions to seek community input on identifying Elders or other knowledge keepers to be involved in a project as well as how their role should be recognized. "Each community or nation has particular ways of approaching Elders or knowledge holders respectfully. In many First Nations, this involves the presentation and acceptance of tobacco to symbolize entering into a relationship. In some communities, feasting or gift-giving is appropriate" (TCPS 23). The standards also advise researchers to be aware of participants' privacy concerns, which might be particularly important in small communities where people might be reluctant to participate candidly (TCPS 24).

The plethora of considerations detailed in the Tri-Council ethics document illustrates the importance of taking all such matters into account early in a project's planning process to avoid surprises during the REB review or after a project gets underway. Detailed suggestions about project planning can be found in subsequent chapters of this manual.

Here's an example of the paperwork involved in the Canadian ethics review process. Co-author Winona Wheeler provided a copy of the application form included here.

Canadian scholars, unlike their US counterparts, are required to demonstrate adherence to detailed federal ethics mandates to engage in Indigenous oral history work, and such projects are required to pass institutional review. But when oral Indigenous information arises in a legal context, its treatment in the two countries' court systems can be quite different. Unlike in the United States, courts in Canada have been more willing to accept oral histories and other oral information as evidence because of generally more liberal interpretation of evidentiary rules (Babcock, 19).

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

Behavioural Application

For Internal Use Only
UnivRS Internal ID:
Date Received:

PART 1: KEY INFORMATION

Title*:

Level of Risk: *

Expected Start Date: *

Expected End Date: *

If applicable, explain why this application is time sensitive:

Project Personnel

Principal Investigator

Name:	NSID:	Email:	Phone:	Organization (Department):

Sub-Investigator(s)

Name:	NSID:	Email:	Phone:	Organization (Department):

Student(s)

Name:	NSID:	Email:	Phone:	Organization (Department):

Primary Contact

Name:	NSID:	Email:	Phone:	Organization (Department):

Secondary Contact

Name:	NSID:	Email:	Phone:	Organization (Department):

Figure 2.1 Behavioural Application Template, University of Saskatchewan.

Source: Copyright © University of Saskatchewan, Research Ethics Office, Saskatoon, SK Canada. Used with permission.

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

Sponsor(s)

Sponsor:	Pending / Awarded

Agency(ies)

This project is funded: * ☐ Yes ☐ No

The funding supporting this project will be administrated at the University of Saskatchewan: ☐ Yes, complete Part A ☐ No, complete Part B

Part A: For Grants and Contracts administered by the U of S:

Project Application(s) Directly Associated with the Fund(s) Supporting this Project

Specify the UnivRS internal ID# (for pending grants or contracts):

Project(s) Directly Associated with the Fund(s) Supporting this Project

Specify the UnivRS internal ID# (for awarded grants or contracts):

Part B: For Grants or Contracts not administered by the U of S:

Agency:	Pending / Awarded

Location(s) Where Research Activities Are Conducted

Enter every location where this research will be conducted under this Research Ethics Approval: *

Country(ies):* List all countries where you will be conducting your research under this Research Ethics Approval:

If this project will be conducted within schools, health regions, or other organizations, specify how you will obtain permission to access the site. Submit a copy of the certificate or letter of approval when obtained.

If you do not plan to seek approval, provide a justification:

Other Ethics Approval

This project has applied for/received approval from another Research Ethics Board(s) * ☐ Yes ☐ No

If 'yes', identify the other Research Ethics Board(s):

Conflict of Interest

Confirm whether any member of the research team or their immediate family members will:

Figure 2.1 (Continued)

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

Receive personal benefits over and above the direct costs of conducting the project, such as remuneration or employment: *	☐ Yes ☐ No
Receive significant payments from the Sponsor such as compensation in the form of equipment, supplies or retainers for ongoing consultation and honoraria: *	☐ Yes ☐ No
Have a non-financial relationship with the Sponsor such as unpaid consultant, board membership, advisor or other non-financial interest: *	☐ Yes ☐ No
Have any direct involvement with the Sponsor such as stock ownership, stock options or board membership: *	☐ Yes ☐ No
Hold patents, trademarks, copyrights, licensing agreements or intellectual property rights linked in any way to this project or the Sponsor: *	☐ Yes ☐ No
Have any other relationship, financial or non-financial, that if not disclosed, could be construed as a conflict of interest: *	☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes was answered to any question(s), explain the personal benefit(s) and how the conflict will be managed:

Part 2: Project Overview

Project Overview

Summarize this project, its objectives and potential significance: *

Provide a description of the research design and methods to be used: *

Duration and Location of Data Collection Events

Outline the duration and location of data collection for the following, if applicable:
Audio/Video Recording(s):

Ethnography:

Focus Group(s):

Group Interview(s):

Home Visit(s):

Individual Interview(s):

Non-Invasive Physical Measurement(s):

Participant Observation:

Questionnaire(s):

Secondary Use of Data or Analysis of Existing Data:

Other:

Internet-Based Interaction

Confirm whether this project will involve internet-based interactions with participants, including e-mails: *	☐ Yes ☐ No

Figure 2.1 (Continued)

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

If a third party research or transaction log tool, screen capturing or website survey software or masked survey site is used, describe how the security of data gathered at those sites will be ensured:

Describe how permission to use any third party owned site(s) will be obtained:

If participants may be identified by their email address, IP address or other identifying information, explain how this information will remain private and confidential:

Anonymity and Confidentiality

Confirm whether participants will be anonymous in the data gathering phase of the project: *	☐ Yes ☐ No

If 'No' was answered to the previous question, explain how the confidentiality of participants and their data will be protected, and include whether the research procedures or collected information may reasonably be expected to identify an individual:

Identify any factors that may limit the researchers' ability to guarantee confidentiality:

Limits due to the nature of group activities, such as a focus group where the project team cannot guarantee confidentiality:	☐ Yes ☐ No
Limits due to context: individual participants could be identified because of the nature or size of the sample:	☐ Yes ☐ No
Limits due to context: individual participants could be identified because of their relationship with the project team:	☐ Yes ☐ No
Limits due to selection: procedures for recruiting or selecting participants may compromise the confidentiality of participants, such as those referred to the project by a person outside the project team:	☐ Yes ☐ No

Other confidentiality limits:

Risks and Benefits

Explain the psychological, emotional, physical, social or legal harms that participants may experience during or after their participation:

Describe how the above risks will be managed. If appropriate, identify any resources to which they can be referred:

Describe the likely benefits of the research that may justify the above risk(s):

Part 3: Community Engagement

Aboriginal Peoples and Community Engagement

Aboriginal communities, peoples, language, culture or history is the primary focus of this project: *	☐ Yes ☐ No
Aboriginal people will comprise a sizable proportion of the larger community that is the subject of research even if no Aboriginal-specific conclusions will be made: *	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable

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Figure 2.1 (Continued)

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There is an intention to draw Aboriginal-specific conclusions from this project: *	☐ Yes ☐ No
This project will involve community-based participatory research: *	☐ Yes ☐ No
There will be a research agreement between the researcher and community:	☐ Yes ☐ No

Aboriginal Engagement and Community-Based Participatory Research

If 'yes' was answered to any of the above questions, complete the following:

Outline the process to be followed for consulting with the appropriate community:

Describe the organizational structure and community processes required to obtain approval within the specific community(ies):

Describe any customs and codes of research practice that apply to the particular community(ies) affected by the project:

Describe how the research plan will consider mutual benefit to the participating community(ies), support capacity building through enhancement of the skills of community personnel and the recognition of the role of elders and other knowledge holders:

Describe how the community representatives will have the opportunity to participate in the interpretation of the data and the review of research findings before the completion of any reports or publications:

Describe how the final project results will be shared with the participating community(ies):

PART 4: RECRUITMENT AND CONSENT

Participant Recruitment

Indicate the expected number of participants and provide a brief rationale for the number: *

Describe the criteria for including participants: *

Describe the criteria for excluding participants: *

Provide a detailed description of the method of recruitment, such as how and whom will identify and contact prospective participants: *

If the project involves vulnerable, distinct, or cultural groups, or if the project is above minimal risk, describe the research team's experience or training in working with the population:

Explain any relationship between the researchers and the participants, including any safeguards to prevent possible undue influence, coercion or inducement: *

Provide the details of any compensation or reimbursements offered to the participants:

Consent Process

Describe the consent process:

Specify who will explain the consent form and consent participants: *

Explain where and under what circumstances consent will be obtained from participants: *

Describe any situation where the renewal of consent might be appropriate and how it may be

Figure 2.1 (Continued)

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obtained: *

If deception of any kind will be used, justify its use, describe the protocol for debriefing and re-consenting participants upon completion: *

If any of the participants are not competent to consent, describe the process by which their capacity or competency will be assessed, identify who will consent on his/her behalf (including any permission or information letter to be provided to the person or persons providing alternate consent), as well as the assent process for participants:

Describe how and when participants will be informed about their right to withdraw, including the procedures to be followed for participants who wish to withdraw at any point during the project: *

PART 5: SECURITY AND STORAGE

Data Security and Storage

Identify the research personnel responsible for data collection: *

Specify who will have access to raw data, which may include information that would identify participants: *

Describe the data storage plans, including the arrangements for preventing the loss of data: *

Confirm whether the Principal Investigator will be responsible for data storage: *	☐ Yes ☐ No

If no, specify the reasons and indicate who will be responsible for data storage:

Specify how long data will be retained: * ___

If other, specify duration and provide justification:

Explain how the collected data is intended to be published, presented, or reported: *

Describe the final disposition of research materials: *

State whether data will be transferred to a third party: *	☐ Yes ☐ No

Organization(s) where data will be transferred:

Indicate how data will be transferred to the third party:

If other, please specify:

PART 6: DECLARATION OF PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

By submitting this application form, the Principal Investigator (PI) attests to the following:

- the information provided in this application is complete and correct.
- the PI accepts responsibility for the ethical conduct of this project and for the protection of the rights and welfare of the human participants who are directly or indirectly involved in this project.
- the PI will comply with all policies and guidelines of the University and affiliated institutions where this project will be conducted, as well as with all applicable federal and provincial laws regarding the protection of human participants in research.

Figure 2.1 (Continued)

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

- the PI will ensure that project personnel are qualified, appropriately trained and will adhere to the provisions of the Research Ethics Board-approved application.
- that adequate resources to protect participants (i.e., personnel, funding, time, equipment and space) are in place before implementing the research project, and that the research will stop if adequate resources become unavailable.
- any changes to the project, including the proposed method, consent process or recruitment procedures, will be reported to the Research Ethics Board for consideration in advance of implementation.
- will ensure that a status report will be submitted to the Research Ethics Board for consideration within one month of the current expiry date each year the project remains open, and upon project completion.
- if personal health information is requested, the PI assures that it is the minimum necessary to meet the research objective and will not be reused or disclosed to any parties other than those described in the Research Ethics Board-approved application, except as required by law.
- if a contract or grant related to this project is being reviewed by the University or Health Region, the PI understands a copy of the application, may be forwarded to the person responsible for the review of the contract or grant.
- if the project involves Health Authority resources or facilities, a copy of the ethics application may be forwarded to the Health Authority research coordinator to facilitate operational approval.

DOCUMENT(S)

Please provide a list of documents that are being submitted along with this application: e.g. Consent forms, questionnaires, interview questions, data collection sheets, recruitment materials.

Figure 2.1 (Continued)

One of the most significant cases that dealt with oral history as evidence was *Delgamuukw vs. BC* (British Columbia Supreme Court, 1991) and *Delgamuukw vs. BC* (Supreme Court of Canada, 1997). In summary, the hereditary chiefs of the Gitskan and Wet'suwet'en Nations claimed ownership and jurisdiction (Aboriginal Title) over their territory covering 54,000 square kilometers of "Crown" land along the Skeena River in Northern British Columbia. They based their claim on their oral histories that contain their traditional laws. These oral histories consist of the Gitksan adawaak, which are a collection of sacred stories about ancestors, historical events and territories, and the Wet'suwet'en kungax, which are a collection of songs about the trails between territories that link them to the land and impress the importance of place (Cruikshank 1992, 34–35). These stories and songs are held by Chiefs and designated Elders and have "been publicly told and retold, witnessed, paid for, disputed, and confirmed over and over again for centuries" (Culhane 1992, 68). In a landmark ruling in 1991, Judge McEachern in the BC Supreme Court exempted some of the oral traditions from the hearsay rule and allowed the testimony to proceed. Ultimately, however, McEachern dismissed the oral evidence, he stated, "because I have a different view of what is a fact and what is a belief" (cited in Cruikshank 1992, 26). Numerous scholars critiqued McEachern's reasoning, and the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en took their case to the Supreme Court of Canada. In another landmark decision in 1997, the Supreme Court of Canada found the trial judge in error for rejecting oral histories and held that "laws of evidence are to be 'adapted' to ensure that oral history is 'accommodated and placed on an equal footing' " with written documentary evidence in Indigenous land and rights claims (Potamianos 2021, 5).

There have been numerous studies on how the courts have since treated Indigenous oral histories as evidence. Most agree that since 1997 the courts have tightened and narrowed the admission and uses of oral history as evidence making it more difficult for Indigenous oral history to "counter dominant understandings of Indigenous presence and relationships to land" (Potamianos 2021, 24). Much of the work that has influenced courts in this manner comes from federal government "experts" on Indigenous oral histories who take a rationalist approach to the law of evidence and appeal to judges' well-ingrained beliefs and inability to "adapt" the laws of evidence to accommodate Indigenous oral histories. One of these "experts" whose expertise is dubious as they have no actual experience in working with Indigenous Elders or conducting Indigenous oral history (Westman 2013) has all but undone 30 years of gainful understandings by presenting "simplified, Eurocentric account[s] of Aboriginal oral materials" that again marginalize Indigenous voices and worldviews (Brownlee 2016). For example, Judge Max M. Teitelbaum (Federal Court of Canada) rejected

the protocols followed by Indigenous knowledge keepers in the "gathering and transmission of oral history traditions as guarantees of validation" (Hutchins et al. n.d., 45).

Many Indigenous communities have well-established protocols governing the ownership and transmission of knowledge. The late Cree Elder Harold Cardinal explained that there are not many things in Cree life where the right of ownership, as in exclusive ownership, is recognized. The areas where it does apply are stories and ceremonies. Harold explained further that Treaty Elders, for example, acquired the knowledge and earned the right to transmit Treaty oral histories through long years of apprenticeship. These apprenticeships required that they make personal sacrifices, learn the ceremonies the knowledge is embedded in, and be able to transmit the stories in their original forms, word for word, before they were given permission to share them. An apprentice has a duty to recount the story exactly as it was given to them because it is not their story to do with as they please. That rule applies whether it is in the context of ceremonies or specific events. Among the Cree, for every kind of knowledge one seeks there are protocols that must be adhered to, because if you take something that is not yours, something you have not been given the right to use, it is theft. Harold Cardinal and others refer to these rules as traditional copyright (Stevenson 2000, 239–241).

It is the responsibility of the researcher, the oral historian, the individual seeking Indigenous knowledge, to make sure that they learn what the local protocols are before they approach individuals for interviews.

3 Planning an Indigenous Oral History Project

This chapter covers basic project planning guidelines. Although its focus is on tribal community-based projects, many of the planning steps also are useful for non-Indigenous archives holding Indigenous recordings in their collections.

A project plan identifies the shared vision, goals, and scope of the research, methodology, responsibilities, resources, schedules, and costs. Planning helps ensure recordings that allow their narrators, the knowledge keepers, to continue to teach as living voices (Wheeler 2005, 204; GWICH'IN Tribal Council (GTC 2017)).

This chapter focuses on the logistics of planning and project development. Research ethics is covered in Chapter 2, equipment and funding decisions are covered in Chapter 4, and interview preparation is covered in more detail in Chapter 5.

Project Development

Community Engagement

Oral histories begin with an idea. In Indigenous communities, the idea often emerges from the community through discussion and identification of needs. Oral historians define community as "a group of individuals bound together by a sense of shared identity" (MacKay et al. 2013, 28). They are found in many places such as local historical organizations, neighborhood groups, and professional associations. For Indigenous oral historians, the role of community is based on a fundamental cultural sense of tribal nation. The statement developed by Canada's three federal research agencies in Chapter 9, "Research Involving First Nations, Inuit and Métis People of Canada" (TCPS 3), calls attention to this central role, defining community as "a group of people with a shared identity or interest that has the capacity to act or express itself as a collective." It is the

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tribal community expressing itself as a collective that is critical for Indigenous oral history; it provides the basis for active and effective community engagement and lays the groundwork for using oral history in community-engaged research.

Community-engaged research focuses on collaboration between the researched and the researcher. There are a number of definitions. The Canadian Tri-Council Policy description is an example: community engagement is a process that promotes a collaborative relationship between researchers and communities that can take many forms but generally involves community involvement at all stages:

> The engagement may take many forms including review and approval from formal leadership to conduct research in the community, joint planning with a responsible agency, commitment to a partnership formalized in a research agreement, or dialogue with an advisory group expert in the customs governing the knowledge being sought. The engagement may range from information sharing to active participation and collaboration, to empowerment and shared leadership of the research project. Communities may also choose not to engage actively in a research project, but simply to acknowledge it and register no objection to it.
>
> (TCPS 3)

Indigenous community engagement supports a redistribution of power that extends beyond the concept of shared authority to empowering people often described as the researched and the observed. Maori oral historian Nepia Mahuika describes this as relocating "power in the hands of the observed rather than the observers" (Mahuika 2019, 138–139). Sarah Nickle of Tk'emlupsemc (Kamloops Secwepemc of French Canadian, and Ukrainian heritage) describes this further as "research with" Indigenous peoples through sources such as oral history (Nickle 2016). Co-author Winona Wheeler of Cree/Assiniboine/Saulteaux and English/Irish descent summarizes community engagement as:

- Community-situated—taking an idea and developing it into a research topic of practical relevance to the community and carried out in community settings
- Collaborative—community members and researchers share control of the research agenda through active and reciprocal involvement in the research design, implementation, and dissemination
- Action-oriented—the process and results are useful to community members in making positive social change and to promote social equity (Wheeler 2022, slide 21)

Through community-engaged research, a tribal community can identify the scope and goals of an oral history project, identify possible narrators, guide the interviewers on the local code of ethics or protocols, guide recording steps, and define the parameters on how interviews may be used. It can define the critical leadership role of the community, those who "own, design, interpret, report, and ultimately benefit from the research process," as the leaders and decision-makers in the research process (Snow et al. 2015, 359–360).

As Indigenous oral historian Francine D. Spang-Willis, of Cheyenne, Pawnee, and settler descent, describes it, planning is a "long and thoughtful" process (Spang-Willis personal communication). Alaskan oral historian and archivist William Schneider described it as "a springboard for elaboration, not a fence that delineates the bounds of discussion" (Schneider 2002, 106). A project planning step is the time and place to discuss questions such as the following: Why are we considering this project? What community needs will it meet? How will it benefit our community? What is most important to the community—for example, language preservation, documenting an Indigenous landscape, preserving ceremonial stories and teachings, and overall, as many have said, telling our own history? What about tribal codes of ethics and protocols? Who should tell the stories and how should they be told? Who may own the stories and what does this mean? What is informed consent and how will this be communicated to the narrators? What is the balance between Indigenous ownership and copyright laws? How can oral history help take back ownership of stories and teachings that have been mis-labeled by others as myths, legends, or folklore? When working with a designated repository, what will be needed to protect access and use? What gifts will be given? Answers to questions like these can help guide development of a project and its recording, preservation, and access steps as well as acknowledging and respecting a community's oral customs and recognizing the leading role of the community and its narrators as experts.

Throughout the process, document the community's decisions. That will help future users understand the content and context of information in the interviews, laying the foundation for accurate and thoughtful use.

Protocol and Ethics Statements

The telling and use of Indigenous knowledge are often governed by local protocols and ethical research guidelines. Protocols help define the circumstances of telling and guide ongoing access and use. They can help identify ethics guiding the narrator, the interviewer, and when and how a story may be told. Information about the protocols, defined and documented during the planning process, also can help guide the interviewing step and, at the end of a project, provide a basis for ongoing care of and access to the oral histories.

As explained in Chapter 2, modern legal and ethical guidelines have arisen from efforts to protect and control intellectual and cultural property rights. During community-engaged planning, project leaders can develop policies based on answers to questions like: What is the status of the information to be recorded? Who owns the information? What are the legal and ethical guidelines governing its telling and use? What are the Indigenous protocols guiding its telling and use? Project planners may choose to develop a project protocols statement such as those described in Chapter 2 if the community doesn't already have such a document.

Several resources are helpful here, including "Protocols for Native American Archival Materials," published by the First Archivists Circle and endorsed by the Society of American Archivists, and also in Canada, the First Nations Principles of OCAP® and the Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans. All are described in detail in Chapter 2.

Another set of project planning questions can be about standards established by the Oral History Association (OHA). The OHA's "Principles and Best Practices" guide the work. In 2022, offering further support, Indigenous oral historians created the Indigenous Oral Historians' Caucus in the Oral History Association. It offers a welcoming space and a community of support for Indigenous oral historians.

Gabriel Dumont Institute, Virtual Museum

The Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research (GDI) is a multifaceted post-secondary and cultural institution in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. It was named after Gabriel Dumont (1837–1906), a prominent Métis buffalo hunter, political, and military leader. He is best known for his major role in the 1885 Métis North-West Resistance and his vision to protect Métis political and economic independence (Prefontaine 2010). Formed in 1980, the GDI's core mandate is to provide Métis-specific research, educational, training, bursaries/scholarships, and cultural programming to Métis communities in the province and education to the general public to preserve and promote Métis history, culture and language, which only 5–10 percent of the Métis population now speaks. It maintains an active research program on Métis-specific histories and cultures, a virtual museum and archives, Michif language resources, and the development and publication of Métis-specific educational resources.

The GDI Press is the only publisher in Canada that exclusively publishes Métis authors and Métis-specific educational and cultural resources. Over the years, it has produced more than 160 books, audio visual, and multimedia resources available to purchase. In addition to publishing established and emerging Métis authors, GDI publishes its own research and research conducted in collaboration with Métis artists, scholars, and communities.

The Culture and Heritage section of the GDI's website includes the library, a virtual museum, the Order of Gabriel Dumont Awards, the Métis Veterans Memorial Monument, online access to *The New Nation: La novel naasyoon Magazine* that promotes Métis history and culture, and the Métis Cultural Development Fund, which supports community activities that preserve, strengthen, and transmit Métis culture and traditions in Saskatchewan.

The Virtual Museum of Métis History and Culture includes a database of the largest collection of Métis resources in the country, including Canada's largest collection of Métis-specific oral histories, interviews, and traditional stories. The collection includes interviews donated by individuals and gathered from other repositories, as well as interviews GDI staff conducted on a range of topics. It includes oral history audio and video files, transcripts, and a resources page with interviewing guides, and indices to all the oral history materials (www.metismuseum.ca/browse/index.php/57).

Métis people are famous storytellers, and their corpus of oral narratives includes historical accounts, teaching stories, and traditional stories, often sacred, profane, or humorous (Shmon 2022). We can learn more about the significance and role of Métis storytelling from Maria Campbell, Métis author, playwright, filmmaker and Elder. She is also an oral historian who has interviewed many Elders on traditional teachings, significant historical events, and Métis traditional stories. Raised in a Métis community where storytelling was alive and vibrant, she tells us:

There are different ways of telling stories. Some people would get up and they would recite really long stories; they would almost sing or chant them. Then there were stories that people played with fiddles and were part of fiddle dances. There were the stories that were told in the evening in the winter—and there were stories that had laws and taught us how to live good lives (Campbell 2019).

Interviews, Narrators/Knowledge Keepers, and Interviewers

Interviews are at the center of oral history. Often defined as one-on-one interactions that cover a set of open-ended questions, interviews in the Indigenous world expand that description to formats that recognize the importance of Indigenous practices. This can apply to both group interviews and individual interviews.

The role of the narrator or knowledge keeper is key to this practice; the narrator is the expert, the person with knowledge about a community and its history, and the person who tells a story. The interviewer is sometimes described as the student. The planning process can clarify these roles and help provide answers to some basic questions. Who are the knowledge keepers and what stories will they be asked to tell? How should they be asked? Who will be involved in telling the story? Is the information of central cultural significance—a "tobacco story" as some may define it? If so, what does telling this story involve? Are there stories a narrator does not want to tell? How much time is needed for the narrator to help the interviewer get to know the background and setting of a story (Cruikshank 1998, xiii–xv)? What protocols are involved in its telling? What protocols are involved in its ongoing use?

Group Interviews

In the late 1970s, co-author Barbara W. Sommer recorded oral history interviews with members of the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa in Minnesota for a tribal project. After several people were interviewed individually, the narrators asked to be interviewed together. During the group interview, William D. "Dave" Savage, the narrator acknowledged as the speaker for the group, answered each question, and discussed each topic. The others were quiet but indicated they agreed with what he said. In doing this, they offered community support for him and affirmation for his statements about their shared history ("Boundary Changes" 1978–1979).

Sometimes group interviews take the form of focus groups where a number of knowledge keepers are brought together to share their knowledge on a certain topic. An example is the focus group methods employed by the Manitoba Treaties Oral History Project, a joint project of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs and the Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba. Working closely with an Elders Advisory Council, the researchers hosted focus groups in each of the seven Treaty regions in the province of Manitoba. The Advisory Council members from each Treaty region followed local protocol and invited the Treaty Elders to participate. The Advisory Council Elder then served as facilitator for the 2-day focus group sessions. Each focus group followed local protocols. In some instances, a pipe

ceremony opened the proceedings; in other instances, there were Christian prayers. The major benefit of the focus group approach in this instance was that the Elders reminded each other, supported each other, and found the session enjoyable. That the facilitator was another Elder whom they knew and trusted created a safe and comfortable environment and positive relations with the research team (Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba).

Scholars have identified the pros and cons of doing group interviews or focus groups. Some are concerned that individuals influence each other or that the more outspoken knowledge keepers overshadow the quieter ones. These and other concerns need to be weighed against the positive effects, which include the narrators aiding each other's memories, the creation of a more comfortable and familiar interview environment, and the benefits of conversational research methods (Kovach 2010). According to Kovach, the conversational method is inherently relational, where the interviewer researcher is positioned as a participant, and where the informal nature of the sharing is more in line with how knowledge is transmitted and shared in everyday life.

Individual Narrators

Indigenous oral histories also include interviews with individual narrators. Some individual narrators record information about the community; other interviews focus on personal stories. Individuals providing traditional information may be narrators asked by the community to tell a story, either as a knowledge keeper or as the owner of a particular story. Individuals providing personal information could be recounting experience in military service or, perhaps, government service—experiences that are unique to the individual's knowledge and life experience.

Individual narrators discussing knowledge passed down among family or community, often including sacred and ceremonial knowledge, are guided by responsibility to the community and protocols, guidelines about when and how to tell a story. Codes of ethics or protocol statements spell out these guidelines. When discussing interviews covering traditional topics, review and document community guidelines on how to handle telling of the information. If the narrators want family members with them when telling the story, include discussions about this as part of the planning process and document the decision for future understanding of the context in which the story was recorded. This also applies to narrators who may not want to tell certain stories (Schneider 2002, 21).

Follow a similar practice when working with narrators on personal stories. Does the story include common cultural issues such as religion, education, and family background? These subjects may be part of a narrator's understanding and interpretation of their story. Maori author and oral

historian Nepia Mahuika, in his discussions of Indigenous oral history and traditions, provides an example. Describing what he terms as "personal memories," he states, they "intertwine with what is remembered of other lives, generations, and collectives, and woven in layered narratives that broach topics of gender, work, education, religion, and identity" (Mahuika 2019, 143). Sensitivity to the role that cultural issues play in working with individual or personal memories is part of the planning process. Discussions about the role of ethics guidelines with the narrators, project leaders, and interviewers are a helpful part of the planning process. As with all planning steps, document the discussions as context for the interviews.

Project Management

Personnel

In addition to narrators or knowledge keepers, oral history projects involve people with a variety of backgrounds and experience. Oral history personnel can include a project manager or co-managers, interviewer, treasurer, office manager, processor, transcriber, and translator. Each of these is an area of responsibility that can help keep the scheduling and recording of oral histories on target and determine how to provide community access for future generations. The positions may or may not be held by the same person. They all take a certain amount of time.

- The project manager is responsible for progress and completion of the interviews. This position may be held by one person or duties may be shared by co-managers. Managers or co-managers lead the community engagement process and guide planning decisions. They also make decisions about day-to-day administration, interviewer training, how to represent the project to the community, and have an understanding of tribal knowledge transmission patterns. Project managers generally are responsible for making sure a project meets its goals.
- The interviewer is a classic oral history position. In Indigenous communities, an interviewer often spends time getting to know the narrator and the person's background before beginning an interview. Depending on the interviewer and narrator, interviews follow traditional Indigenous telling patterns, sometimes using the question-and-answer approach in a follow-up interview if needed. The interviewer's role throughout is to learn from the knowledge keeper and to acknowledge and respect the narrator's role as the expert.

  Whenever possible in Indigenous communities, interviewers are tribal community members who know and understand cultural norms and traditional telling patterns and are fluent in the languages of the area.

Interviewers are not, however, assumed to be in a position to have access to sacred knowledge; this access, if it is part of an interviewing plan, must be done according to tribal and community protocols and community management decisions. Overall, interviewers trained in the needs and goals of an Indigenous project are critical to achieving its goals.

- The treasurer oversees finances. This includes reviewing and approving expenditures and providing regular financial statements to the project manager or co-managers. Many projects are grant supported; if this is the case, the treasurer often is responsible for writing and submitting any required final reports.
- Many projects work with tribal, college, or museum archivists. This person holds another key position by keeping project systems in place. Responsibilities can include helping the co-managers and interviewer keep track of the interview schedule and manage the equipment. They catalog the interviews and maintain project files. An archivist also can help document interview context and develop policies for ongoing care, access, and use of the recordings and the information they contain.
- Transcribing, done either by individuals or by using computer apps, prepare word-for-word written copies of interviews. Transcribing helps make interview information accessible and can support language revitalization and preservation, but does not provide the experience of listening to the spoken voice; a transcript is a preservation tool.

Repositories

One of the most frequently asked questions in oral history is: "Where will we keep the interviews and other project materials?" This point is especially important because preserving oral histories and making them publicly accessible is what helps define this particular methodology and sets it apart from other types of interviewing and recording practices.

Oral history projects generate a surprising amount of material. This includes the recordings, transcripts, project forms, documentation of project planning decisions, and other recordkeeping files. When you add items that the narrator may want you to have, such as photographs (copies or originals) and other personal materials, the list grows longer. The question of who will provide long-term care for the materials is a critical one that should be attended to as early in development of a project as possible.

Repositories generally are tribal archives, museums, cultural centers, or colleges. Because of their missions, staff training, and the ability to provide the specialized environmental needs for care of recordings and transcripts, this is a workable and helpful arrangement. Check with the repository about adding the interviews to its collections. Discuss what is needed to protect and maintain the recordings and identify available sources of

funding for this purpose. Review examples of cataloging to determine what information is needed to best present the materials to the community and to researchers who will ask to use it. Discuss guidelines for access, what will or will not be allowed and why. And review the project forms to make sure their wording meets community, Indigenous oral history, and repository needs.

Project managers may want to realize that, although it may be tempting to start a project without a designated place to keep the interviews, this can present difficulties in the long run. Lack of a designated place to keep the interviews for the long-term or a clear determination of who is or is not allowed to use interview information can be confusing for future users.

Recordings

Oral history project managers and repository representatives often determine how recorded information will be accessed and handled. Questions for tribal materials reflect their specialized needs. Will access to interview information be open or restricted and, if restricted, what are the terms of the restrictions for tribal and non-tribal researchers? Will the information be available for tribal museums and educational purposes such as museum exhibits? What about individual tribal member use? Answers to questions like these can help project planners guide long-term use of the information.

Photographs and Memorabilia

Project narrators sometimes ask about including a discussion of photographs or documents such as letters and maps as part of an interview. Use of photographs can contribute to an interview. Project managers, working with repository personnel, often include guidelines for this as part of interviewer training.

Interviewers also can face questions about caring for a family's photographs, scrapbooks, and other archival materials. This can involve digitizing photographs and arranging for care of other materials, often with help from a tribal repository. Project managers also often include guidelines, developed with repository personnel, for handling this situation as part of interviewer training.

Objects and Place

What is the relationship of oral information to objects? To place? Museums and cultural centers, including many that are non-Native, realize the importance of documenting traditional information linked to statues, carvings, monuments, structures, and other objects of importance to Indigenous

families and Native communities. Will this be part of the oral history project? If so, how will project leaders and interviewers prepare for such interviews? Are the stories linked to objects and, if so, what will be involved in telling them? What about stories linked to places? How will they be handled? Will stories about objects or places be enhanced by the use of visuals? If so, how will they be documented? Things may change during the project, but thinking through these questions as part of developing a master list of narrators helps define overall project needs. If this is part of an interview, it can involve asking the project repository for guidance or working collaboratively with the owners of the objects and the repository. It may involve copying photographs and working with the owners to determine ownership.

If asked about care or donation of objects, interviewers should check with the repository, especially if it is a museum or cultural center, to determine how this should be handled. They may want to put a representative from the repository in contact with the owner of the materials. The interviewer can help with this process, working with the narrator and his or her family to make a decision on disposition. Again, determining during the planning process how such situations should be handled could be part of interviewer training.

Recordkeeping

Developing forms is part of the planning process. Forms help document content and context, useful both for the repository and for guiding future uses of the interview information. They usually follow basic archival standards and include information that helps document interview content and context. Project forms often include a project statement (informed consent) form, a gift or legal release agreement—also called a donor form for both narrator and interviewer—and several management forms: a biographical information form—usually filled out by the narrator and interviewer—to identify the narrator for repository cataloging needs; an interview information form designed to document interview content and context; and a photo and memorabilia form to document materials that may be identified during an interview.

The project statement (informed consent) form gives the narrator background about the project and its purposes, including proposed uses of the interview information. It also explains the gift or legal release (donor) form. An informed consent form, with a place for participant signatures, is an important part of oral history practice and helps build narrator trust.

There are several options for donor forms. In the United States, the first is a standard copyright transfer agreement. In Canada, the gift or legal release (donor) form for the narrator and interviewer gives the gift of the interview information as recorded to the tribe or designated repository but

does not convey ownership of the information itself. Their wording varies, but the message for each is clearly stated. In Canada, the informed consent form includes the same provisions as the US donor form and copyright transfer agreement but is longer and more detailed as it also includes provisions for confidentiality, potential harms, and the other issues the Canadian Tri-Council has identified (see Chapter 2).

See Appendix A for examples of informed consent and legal release forms and Appendix B for examples of project management forms.

Additional Planning Considerations

The previous steps provide the basic structure for an oral history project. Several additional steps also deserve consideration. One is a project name. Project managers usually decide this as part of the community engagement process. A project name gives a project identity in the community.

And what about a celebration when the project is finished? Oral history projects are good reasons for community celebrations and are good opportunities to honor everyone involved in the project. Planning for a celebration is another suggested organizational step.

Non-Tribal Participants

The guidelines in this manual are for projects developed by and for tribal communities. But there will be cases where, because of funding and personnel needs, non-tribal participants will be part of a project. An example of this is when recordings are held in non-Indigenous repositories. This brings up another set of project planning questions. Who are the non-tribal personnel and how will they coordinate with tribal representatives? How will tribal intellectual property be handled and what will be the disposition of the recordings and information? What about use of the information, both short and long terms?

When working with non-tribal members, develop memoranda of understanding (MOAs) that define the responsibilities for everyone involved and maintain this information in the project files.

Use of a Non-Indigenous Repository

What if project planners do not have access to a tribal repository? Or if the repository does not have the resources to care for oral history materials? In such cases, tribal project managers may want to collaborate with Indigenous/Native American studies concentration areas at accessible non-Indigenous colleges and universities or with non-Indigenous museums or cultural centers. This can add another area of careful planning.

Protocol and ethics statements also provide needed guidelines for non-tribal repositories. This leads to several project planning questions. As with tribal repositories, ask what the recommended status of the oral information is. Is it known to be sacred? Is the focus on multigenerational oral traditions or on first-person history (for example, interviews about boarding school experiences)? How will the repository document this information in its files?

Information from the First Archivists Circle and the Society of American Archivists can help provide a helpful guide in answering these questions.

In addition to considering internal codes of ethics, Indigenous oral history planning steps can draw on national resources providing information about archival and oral history standards. In addition to those mentioned in this chapter, see also the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), Indigenous Peoples Museum Network and the Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums (ATALM).

Benefits to the Community

In addition to collecting information important to the community, how else can the community benefit from an oral history project? First, for the community, projects record information based on research that is a core principle of community engagement. Second, community outreach is an integral part of oral history project work. Some tribes use this outreach to help provide social services to narrators or knowledge keepers. Projects also become catalysts for identifying people to help with tribal cultural programs, programs for children, or with programs in a cultural center or museum. Regular meals and social activities can be built into project organization. Projects can also be capacity building by providing training to community members. Oral history projects are community projects. Managers can use information learned from the community engagement step to go beyond the specifics of oral history and determine how the project can help meet a variety of community needs.

Conclusion

This covers key steps in project development. Additional adaptations by community and tribal managers or co-managers will reflect specific tribal and community needs and circumstances.

Equipment and funding decisions also are important parts of oral history project development. They are covered in the next chapter.

4 Equipment and Funding

This chapter covers two of the most discussed areas of oral history project planning: equipment and funding. Equipment is a topic about which oral historians have many—and strong—views. While important for all oral historians, equipment decisions, which also are part of funding decisions, can take on added importance for Indigenous projects.

Equipment decisions are often thought of in the present tense. But they are part of the future as well. Choosing equipment that the project or Indigenous community can continue to support is important, as is thinking about maintaining future access to the recorded interviews. Information collected by ethnologists on wax cylinders in the early twentieth century provides a striking lesson here. The wax cylinders, cutting-edge technology at the time, contain priceless Indigenous information. But this technology now is obsolete. Because of the fragile nature of the recordings, the information on them is at great risk. Although this is an extreme example, it illustrates the need to carefully think about the future of technology, the future of Indigenous oral history recordings, and the ability to support continued access to recorded information to the best of everyone's ability.

We are in the midst of what many call the Digital Revolution (Thomson 2007, 68–70). The result is a rapidly changing equipment and media environment. This chapter covers information about technology guides as well as planning processes that can provide the basis for informed equipment decisions.

Equipment and Media

Equipment options and decisions are central to oral history planning discussions. Questions about access to recordings take on immediacy here. Project participants often ask about long-term use of the recorded information. What will happen after project participants move on? Answers to these questions are a part of the planning process.

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Recorded interviews benefit Indigenous projects in many ways. They preserve information, even as an artifact of the moment. They preserve the sounds of the spoken language. They collect information that can become part of the oral tradition through the social lives of the stories themselves. These are important benefits. Determining how access to interview information will be handled can help guide recording-equipment decisions and become part of the informed consent discussion with narrators. It also can help define the path for future use of the materials in ways that will help people, now and in the future, take in the stories.

Oral history project managers and co-managers will decide what kinds of recording equipment—audio or video—to use. The basic recommendations for oral historians are:

- Use the highest-quality recording equipment available within the project's budget
- Use a high-quality external microphone whenever possible
- Use high-quality connecting cables
- Use headphones whenever possible
- Use high-quality recording media

Audio-video archivists and the Oral History Association are good sources for the most up-to-date information (OHA, Oral History in the Digital Age). Specifications are updated regularly.

The next equipment-planning choices help refine options. As equipment discussions unfold, planners may decide there is no one best format. All decisions involve a series of compromises. Archival quality is one equipment consideration, but it can have several meanings. Generally, for equipment and media, the following guidelines help determine archival quality for oral history purposes:

- The approximate length of time the recording technology is expected to last
- The life span of the media
- The length of time playback equipment will be available
- The availability of the technology to the public

(Russell 2004)

The specific needs of the project also are an important consideration. Will the interviews be done in an Indigenous language? What about recording songs and chants? Check with technology sources to identify recommended recorders and media for each need.

Figure 4.1 Mardell Plainfeather, Francine D. Spang-Willis, and Rubie Sooktis, American Indian Tribal Histories Project staff, January 2004.

Source: Courtesy John Warner, Billings Gazette. Permission to use from Larry Mayer, Billings (MT) Gazette.

Recording Equipment

Determining standards for archival quality based on the previous guidelines can help when making equipment decisions. Ideally, the goal is to use

equipment and media that are best designed for the needs and that will stand the test of time. Questions are wide-ranging:

- Is the equipment universal, meaning any recording may be played on any piece of equipment?
- Does the digital equipment conform to national and international standards regarding basic specifications, interchangeability, and compatibility among brands?
- Does the digital equipment use proprietary software or hardware? Proprietary refers to hardware and software with restrictions affecting recording and playback options that are linked to specific manufacturers.
- Does the equipment have the option to record in unreduced (uncompressed) audio WAVE (.wav) or. AIFF (.aif or. aiff) format? This file extension is lossless (does not lose sound when edited or updated) and is an oral history standard; it has a large range of coded access but is proprietary to Microsoft and IBM.
- Does the equipment have the option to record in recommended archival video formats?
- Is the media used in the equipment backward compatible and, if so, for how many generations?
- The default setting on recorders usually is in a lossy codec. Lossy codecs do not allow restoration of data to an original acoustic condition. Lossless codecs decompress to the original form without loss.

Equipment questions also have an impact on the choice of the repository. Questions again are wide-ranging.

- What are the long-term care needs, such as climate-controlled archives, server space for uncompressed audio and large video files, and climate-controlled off-site storage areas for the oral history materials, including the recordings?
- Does the repository have the staff, equipment, and facilities to provide ongoing care for, and access to, recordings?
- What are the plans for regular software and hardware upgrades to provide ongoing access?

Check for current standards and updates as changes can rapidly occur.

Audio and Video Recording

Oral historians also grapple with decisions about recording in audio and video (MacKay 2016, 91). Generally, unless there are special needs, this is a subjective decision. Which will better meet project needs and why? What is the cost and is this a critical budget item?

Interviewer training also is a factor in the audio-video decision. Are the interviewers trained in audio? Are they trained in video? (Ritchie 2015, 146–147). Some projects incorporate both audio and video by recording the interview in audio and then picking up highlights on video. Other options, such as remote web applications, allow for simultaneous recording of audio and video. Think about which will meet project needs and train accordingly.

Equipment specifications can change rapidly. Check websites serving oral historians, such as the Oral History Association and the Oral History Society, for the most recent equipment specifications.

Boarding Schools in the United States

Officials in the United States have lagged behind Canada in fully documenting the country's boarding school history but are making efforts to catch up. Boarding schools in the United States began with the Indian Civilization Act Fund of 1819, which incentivized religious missions to start schools to "civilize" Indian children. The US Congress later adopted the Indian Boarding School Policy, which was summed up in the phrase "Kill the Indian, Save the Man." Between 1819 and 1969, the United States operated 408 federal boarding schools in 37 states. Another 1,000 schools, including day schools and religious schools, were operated by various federal and non-federal organizations. Schools were funded in various ways, including Congressional appropriations, money from religious institutions, funds from the 1819 Civilization Fund, and money held in tribal trust accounts. Education generally focused on vocational skills, and students' manual labor supported operations. Punishment for breaking school rules included whipping, solitary confinement, and withholding food. Most schools prevented students from speaking their language or participating in Indigenous religious practices. Various forms of abuse have been documented, disease often ran rampant, and deaths of children at the schools were not always reported to parents. Efforts are underway to identify unmarked graves on the grounds of many of the schools.

In May 2022, under the direction of United States Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland, a member of the Pueblo of Laguna and the first American Indian to serve as a U.S. cabinet secretary, the department released Volume 1 of the *Federal Indian Boarding School*

Initiative: Investigative Report. (Newland 2022). The report, for the first time, comprehensively documented the number and location of the schools, the types of schools (federal and non-federal), educational practices, work demands placed on the children, and burial sites on the school grounds; it also suggested actions for the federal government going forward.

Oral history projects are critical in helping document the histories of the schools. In Nebraska, the Genoa School Digital Reconciliation Project has been using oral histories of the school, which operated from 1884 to 1934, along with digitization of records, to document stories of the school for its attendees and their descendants. The effort also has led to identification of the probable location of a cemetery on the school grounds. The project was developed as a collaboration between the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, the Genoa U.S. Indian School Foundation, community advisors from five tribes in the state, and descendants of children who attended the school (Nieland 2020). In 2023, the U.S. Department of the Interior partnered with the National Endowment for the Humanities to document stories of boarding school survivors in the United States.

Others are working on oral histories as well. In 2022, the Episcopal Church established a fact-finding commission to research its role in Indigenous boarding schools. Its responsibilities include gathering information about the experiences of survivors and their descendants. Bishop Carol Joy Walkingstick Gallagher, a member of the Cherokee nation, described the importance of the church's action: "For Indigenous people, listening is always the first step and really hearing the stories and living into the stories and working toward a consensus of what will . . . come next" (Miller 2022).

Additional Options

The digital age has opened up new recording opportunities such as use of smartphones as recorders. When using devices not originally designed as recorders, there are several points to consider. Smartphones are an example.

- Begin by checking the amount of memory on the phone, confirming that there is enough to hold a recorded interview and that the phone has the capability of transferring large recorded files to another device

- Check the recording format on the phone. Phones often record in WAV, the recommended audio for oral historians, but be aware it creates large files
- Use a tripod with a phone holder to maintain audio and visual quality and stability
- Turn off all notifications on the phone including incoming calls and texts
- Check the interview setting and the lighting; generally interviewees are photographed in head-and-shoulders shots, front lit with soft or natural light
- Use an external microphone plugged into the phone; this can be either lavalier microphones for interviewer and narrator or a single omnidirectional mic attached to the phone
- Keep an eye on the phone to make sure it is not overheating
- When finished, copy the recording onto a dedicated computer or external hard drive

Remote interviewing is another Digital Age option. It has been in use for several decades through such applications as Skype though came into more common use during the years of the COVID-19 pandemic. A number of alternatives are available; base decisions on accessibility, ease of use, quality of recordings, privacy and control over recordings, comfort with the equipment, and need (situations when an in-person interview may not be a possibility). Although oral historians, in general, prefer in-person interviews, the convenience of remote interviewing can open up opportunities that might not otherwise be available. Check organizations such as the Oral History Association in the United States and the Oral History Society in Britain for up-to-date oral history remote interviewing information and guidelines.

Microphones

What about microphones? The options are lavaliers (microphones clipped on clothing) or those that need a stand or a pad. Microphones come in two types—condenser and dynamic. A condenser translates acoustical signals into electrical ones but requires a battery. A dynamic does the same but generates its own current and does not need a battery. Microphones also have a range of polar or sound pick-up patterns. Polar patterns are omnidirectional (a microphone that picks up all voices in a field around it) or cardioid microphones (directional or unidirectional microphones that pick up sound in a heart-shaped pattern predominantly from the direction it is pointed). The goal is to capture both the narrator's and interviewer's voices as clearly as possible.

Recording Media

What about recording media? If using a recorder, choose one that has a memory card. Each card holds a specific amount of recording time. Audio, even uncompressed, takes less space on a card than video; keep this in mind when making media decisions. Other guidelines:

- Video recordings take more space than audio recordings, but compressed video formats such as jpeg are not as large as those needed for high definition recordings; judge the memory space on a card accordingly
- Use a larger card (64 GB and up) when shooting in high definition (HD)
- Speed of cards (U1 and U3) also is a factor; use higher speed cards for larger and more complex files

Media standards can change often. For up-to-date information, see the Society of American Archivists "Standards Portal" (Society of American Archivists, "Standards Portal") and "Climate Change Resources for Archivists." For information on formats, see the United States Library of Congress "Recommended Formats Statement," "Audio-Media independent (digital)" section, updated every 2 years (United States Library of Congress 2022–2023). Also see the website "Oral History in the Digital Age" and the Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums (ATALM). The bottom line? Use the highest-quality digital media that you can find and afford for the type of recording (voice or songs, for example) you will be doing.

Transcribing and Storage Equipment

With recording equipment decisions covered, there are several other pieces of equipment to consider. The first is a dedicated external hard drive large enough to hold the interviews and transcripts. Oral historians recommend making copies of recordings and transcripts for preservation purposes; the copies can be kept on the dedicated device. Copies also can be stored in dedicated tribal server space. The second is transcribing equipment which comes with a variety of attachments, such as foot pedals and headphones. If looking for more flexibility, check on apps that allow the user to stop, start, and edit, and transcribe on a computer outfitted with the software.

Transcribing apps are another option. They are most often used for languages that are widely spoken (English and French, for example), though research into use for Indigenous languages is ongoing. If using, base decisions on the possibility of training the app in the language of the interview, access, privacy, control, cost, accuracy, and support for translations. Plan

on time for a thorough audit-edit, checking for spelling of proper names and place names, correct attribution of speakers, confusion over homonyms (to, too, two, for example), and general overall accuracy of transcription of the spoken words throughout the document.

Recording an Interview

Interview Setting

Interview setting guidelines include:

- Use an accessible location with comfortable seating
- Pay attention to the sound environment to maximize recording quality
- Decline offers of food and drink when the recorder is on to maintain sound quality

Audio Recording

- Put the recorder on a table or sturdy surface next to the interviewer and place the narrator's chair no more than six feet from the recorder
- Use either lavalier microphones clipped to the narrator and interviewer or a stand microphone placed two or three feet from the narrator, pointed toward the narrator
- If there is more than one narrator, ask each speaker to identify themselves and take notes to help identify the speakers
- Use headphones to continuously monitor the sound quality of the interview

Video Recording

- Before the interview, check the location for accessibility, comfortable seating, and the technology—the microphones, lighting, sound quality, and camera location.
- If indoors, shoot in soft light that properly illuminates the interview setting.
- Keep the camera on the narrator; use one shot, such as a head-and-shoulders, and make sure there are no lamps, plants, and other distracting items behind the narrator.
- Center the narrator at eye level in the shot; maintain a camera range that gives the narrator "head room" and "look space."
- If there is more than one narrator, position the camera so that all faces are clearly visible.
- Use headphones to continually monitor the sound quality of the interview.

Recording in Less Than Optimum Conditions

Oral historians all have stories about recording in less than optimum conditions. Co-author Barbara Sommer remembers many years ago recording an interview in the home of a commercial fisherman in a remote area along the shore of Lake Superior. The home had no electricity; a set of batteries from the recording kit saved the day. Winona Wheeler remembers interviewing and recording people outdoors at local events and having to improvise for wind noise by wrapping microphones with socks (preferably nice clean ones, as she described them) while sitting on the back of a truck. Videographers recording outdoors have to contend with sunlight, clouds, wind, and changing shadows—at the very least. No one can fully predict all circumstances, but everyone knows that recording conditions will not always be perfect. Carry a recording kit with items needed for less than optimum conditions and be prepared to improvise on the spot.

Doris Duke American Indian Oral History Program

The Doris Duke American Indian Oral History Program was organized in 1966 with funding from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. Through it, oral history interviews were recorded with Indigenous people from more than 150 tribal nations and communities throughout the United States. The interviews, recorded between 1967 and 1972, were done through partnerships with history and anthropology departments at the following universities: the University of Arizona, University of California at Los Angeles (1 year), University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, University of New Mexico, University of Oklahoma, University of South Dakota, University of Utah, and University of Florida (replaced UCLA). Student interviewers recorded the interviews in English and, in some cases, in Indigenous languages, using the best technology available at the time—portable tape recorders. The master recordings were deposited in the archives of the universities, and copies were given to the communities (Repp 2005).

The interviews contain much traditional, cultural, and historical information and are recognized as unique Indigenous sources. Work on digitization, preservation, and access at the university archives and tribal nations supports their ongoing use. The collaboration

between the University of Florida and the Poarch Band of Creek Indians in Alabama is an example. Tribal projects, ranging from regular public presentations based on information in the interviews to research supporting tribal federal recognition, are some of the ways this community has used information from the interviews (Ortiz et al. 2020). Indigenous communities throughout the country, along with the universities and the Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums (ATALM), are working with and using the information for projects that benefit their members.

Equipment Wrap-Up

There are several types of recorders and media that oral historians do not recommend. Voice-activated recorders do not provide good sound quality and are not recommended. Micro-recording (media) cards also are not recommended; they do not have the stability of standard size cards. Generally, try to avoid highly proprietary formats wherever possible. Ultimately, the best advice when making equipment choices is to do your homework. The optimal choice may not be the newest or latest technology, especially if it doesn't meet the community's archival standards or it cannot be supported by the repository. Where funding is an issue, projects often purchase a good recorder, a very good microphone, and the best-quality connecting cables they can find. This helps maximize the quality of the recording, supporting long-term possibilities for future use.

Once a choice is made, because of rapidly changing technology, include these steps as well:

- Keep more than one piece of the recording equipment on hand, with the extra or extras held in good repair as backups or for parts.
- Develop an ongoing migration plan, including digitizing (transferring analog to digital), refreshing (recreating files on new software–hardware systems), reformatting (moving files to software–hardware systems with different specifications), and migrating (moving data between media).
- Keep and store backup copies of the interviews in multiple formats (for instance, archivists recommend keeping the original analog copy of digital recordings).
- Document technology decisions so that future users can understand why an interview was recorded the way it was, using only audio, for example. Keep the documentation with interview files.

These Digital Age steps will help maintain ongoing access to voices on the recordings. They require some planning but can serve as a safety net for the future.

Funding

Oral history budgets, although they do not generate as much discussion as equipment decisions, are an equally important part of project development. Finding funding for oral history projects often isn't easy. Oral historians need to do considerable research to locate sources, some of which are short term or even one-time grants. Many projects use volunteers to help make ends meet. But even with volunteer help, there are fixed costs. They include one-time expenses, overhead expenses, interviewing expenses, and long-term storage expenses. Costs may be covered by several administrative units, but taken together, they represent standard oral history budget items.

When looking for project funding, Indigenous cultural centers, archival facilities, museums, and colleges often take the lead. Sometimes several institutions work collaboratively with Indigenous individuals or communities; sometimes the project is large enough that developing a consortium works best. In the United States, federal and state funding sources offer grants as do humanities councils or historical and educational organizations. Other possible sources include heritage and historic preservation programs, libraries, museums, and cultural diversity centers. The caution when looking for funding is to balance the needs of the project with the strings that can be a part of funding options.

For many tribal nations, successful businesses and archives have helped generate support for Indigenous cultural programs, including oral history work. For example, grants are available in Canada that specifically support Indigenous oral history preservation. The Library and Archives Canada (LAC) created the "Listen, Hear Our Voices" program, as part of the Indigenous documentary heritage initiatives, which focuses on increasing access to Indigenous-related content in the LAC collections and to support Indigenous communities in their efforts to preserve First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nation culture and language recordings. In the 2020–2021 funding year, 19 Indigenous organizations, communities, and university–community partnerships received 1-year funding. The 2022–2023 funding was expanded to include support for community capacity building, to help communities build the skills, knowledge, and resources needed to do this work themselves (LAC 2022).

In the final analysis, do not let lack of funding stop a project. Although oral history can be costly, knowledge of the basic guidelines can help project planners accomplish a great deal with available resources.

Project Profiles

Countless North American individuals, educational institutions, museums, libraries, cultural centers, and Indigenous communities of all sorts have engaged in recording oral information for their own or others' use. Summarized here are examples of such work that illustrate how varied the Indigenous oral history landscape can be. The predominantly community-based oral history projects described later reflect the disparate realities of time and place in which they were established, but they all have one thing in common: Their development was systematic and based on fundamental principles, with appropriate variations to meet local community needs.

Information about each of the projects was predominantly derived from telephone interviews and email communications with individuals involved in each one. The project representatives reviewed project notes and these descriptions to confirm accuracy. The authors are deeply grateful for the information all the project representatives shared and for their generous contribution of time and enthusiasm.

The projects here are presented in alphabetical order.

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Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum Oral History Program

Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation, Florida, USA

Figure P1.1 Former Seminole Tribe of Florida Chairman James Billie in Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum Oral History Program setting. Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum, Seminole Tribe of Florida, Clewiston, Florida.

Source: Used with permission.

Program origin: The Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum, whose name in the Seminole language means "A Place to Learn, A Place to Remember," was founded in 1997. Existing oral history interviews were pulled together from various sources and made part of the museum collections division. An ongoing program of oral history interviewing was established at that time to preserve local knowledge and document lives of tribal members.

Nature of the collection: The museum's oral history collection contains approximately 300 interviews with more than 200 unique narrators, the oldest dating from the 1960s. Most are from 1990s to the present. Up to 40 interviews added annually.

Methodology: Interviewers initially used a list of standard questions to conduct interviews, but that changed to simply asking narrators to tell their stories in their own ways. The interviews focus on recording life stories of tribal members, who have an open invitation to come to the museum and share their stories. Some interviews focus on specific topical themes, which vary widely and include Seminole tribal development, environment, tourism and other tribal business, including casino

development, beadwork, songs, traditional foods, and alligator wrestling, among others.

Collection management, including technology, funding, and access: Recordings initially were made on a wide variety of media formats from reel-to-reel to digital and everything in between. All recordings are being digitized with master recordings safeguarded in a vault in the museum. Audio and video recordings are kept on a hard drive with transcripts kept on a network drive. Materials on the hard drive are updated every 5 years. Seminole protocols govern access, with sensitive information not available to the general public. Information in the interviews is open to tribal members, but outside researchers are required to submit a research permit request, which must be approved by the tribal historic preservation office. Tribal funds support the museum and its oral history program, which follows guidelines of the Oral History Association and the American Alliance of Museums.

Uses of the collection: The museum's oral history program is seen largely as a service to the Seminole community, but information from the collection has been used for podcasts, some museum exhibits, and language preservation.

Other highlights: Museum staff have been involved in a project with the US Army Corps of Engineers to conduct ethnographic interviews gathering information about geographic locations important to Seminole people in South Florida. Such information also helps document the tribe's environmental concerns related to the ways in which land use and water management have harmed the Everglades.

American Indian Tribal Histories Project

Western Heritage Center, Billings, Montana, USA

Figure P1.2 YHPB Logo. Permission to use from Western Heritage Center, Bozeman, Montana.

Source: Used with permission.

Program origin: From 2003 to 2009, the American Indian Tribal Histories Project amassed 81 interviews with Crow people and 56 interviews with Northern Cheyenne people to document in both English and Native languages a wide array of historical and cultural topics—information and voices that otherwise might be lost—for the two tribes whose adjacent reservations are in southeast Montana. The project grew out of the educational experiences of founder Francine D. Spang-Willis, who lamented that while she learned about her Cheyenne history and culture from her family and her community, not from her K-12 schooling, other children might not have the same good fortune she did growing up. The project's overarching goal was to provide an opportunity for the Cheyenne and Crow people to share their history and culture in their own voices through an Indigenous lens, creating a gift to present and future generations.

Nature of the collection: Interviews in the collection deal with widely varying topics, including tribal government, traditional and contemporary dances and music, berry picking and bread baking, establishment of the Northern Cheyenne Reservation, breaking horses, tanning hides, tribal origin stories, schools, ethnobotany, agriculture, historic sites in the Big Horn Mountains, athletics, religion, warrior societies, and the clan system. Some of the interviews are with people who spoke Cheyenne or Crow languages as their first language, which could contribute to efforts to revitalize the Native languages.

Methodology: In leading the project, Spang-Willis was joined by Mardell Plainfeather, Crow field director and fluent Cree speaker, Jona Charette, Northern Cheyenne field director, and Rubie Sooktis, production coordinator and fluent Cheyenne speaker. They met with tribal cultural committees to develop the project, asking the committee members what they wanted to share and who should be interviewed. The Crow people were open with their willingness to share information, although one cultural committee member specifically noted that he wanted Crow stories told by Crow people, not by white historians. Northern Cheyenne representatives, however, were less eager to share their knowledge, expressing concern about what would be done with it and how they would benefit. Cheyenne cultural committee members said not all Cheyenne knowledge was intended for everyone to have, so the project planners asked them to decide what to share and who should share it, which they did. A second round of funding for the project led to a collaboration with another group who eventually decided to restrict access to the interviews; they remain in storage.

Project planners worked with an intellectual property rights lawyer to develop appropriate release forms to help ensure the long-term protection of and accessibility to the oral histories.

Collection management, including technology, funding, and access: The American Indian Tribal Histories Project state-of-the-art recordings and other related materials are housed at the Western Heritage Center, a non-Indigenous museum in Billings, Montana. The museum holds copyright to the recordings of the stories, but not to the stories themselves, which belong to the narrators. Copies of the oral history recordings, transcripts, narrator biographies, and photographs were given to the Northern Cheyenne Tribe's Chief Dull Knife College in Lame Deer, Montana, and to the Crow Tribe's Little Big Horn College in Crow Agency, Montana. The colleges created public viewing stations for access to the materials, all of which could be viewed but not downloaded. In the project's early days, planners unearthed some existing interviews recorded on reel-to-reel and cassette tapes. But the fragility of the reel-to-reel recordings in particular—and the challenge of accessing the obsolete technology—made the project planners acutely aware of the need to safeguard oral history materials and assure future accessibility. Digitized copies of all the interviews, transcripts, photos, and narrator biographies were placed on a main server at the Western History Center. The original recordings are held in a water and fireproof safe and on off-site servers. Funds for the project came from the U.S. Department of the Interior's Office of Indian Education. People who want access to the interviews at the Western History Center must submit an oral history permission-to-use form providing information about the researchers and their projects.

Uses of the collection: Information in the interviews has been used to create educational videos, lesson plans for teachers, stationary and traveling exhibits, including exhibits at the Billings airport, shopping mall, and other public spaces around the state. One of the traveling exhibits, "Parading Through History: The Apsáalooke Nation," relates the history and culture of the Crow Tribe. Created by Mardell Plainfeather and other Crow consultants, the exhibit is one of the few museum exhibits ever researched, organized, and designed completely from an Apsáalooke perspective.

Other highlights: Spang-Willis noted that because Crow and Northern Cheyenne people often are described as marginalized, the project has had a critical, although perhaps less visible outcome. It gave tribal members a sense of empowerment, because *they* are the experts when it comes to knowing their own history and culture and *they* can give their information to future generations (For more information, see Herman 2021).

Crow Indian Historical and Cultural Collection, Little Big Horn College Archives

Crow Indian Reservation, Crow Agency, Montana, USA

Figure P1.3 Little Big Horn College Library Oral History Office, Crow Agency, Montana.

Source: Used with permission.

Program origin: Little Big Horn College is a 2-year, accredited, public college chartered in 1980 by the Crow Tribe of Indians. Its Crow Indian Historical and Cultural Collection was created in 1989 to pursue oral history projects emphasizing the post-World War II history of the tribe as told by tribal members themselves.

Nature of the collection: The college archives, housed in a new, climate-controlled building that also includes the library and cultural center, hold more than 2,700 audio and video recordings, including hundreds of oral histories, some dating from the 1950s that focus on the pre-World War II era. Most of the interviews are in the Crow language, and some are translated into English. They document a wide range of subjects, including Crow midwifery, tribal government, coal development on the reservation, Crow Indians in the Montana legislature, voting rights,

education, women's activism, and Crow relocation to urban areas in the 1960s and 1970s as part of the federal War on Poverty. Crow families also have donated cultural materials to the archives for safekeeping.

Methodology: The college has created an array of resources to facilitate oral history work. History professor Timothy McCleary wrote an oral history manual as an early guide to train community members to conduct interviews in accord with community standards. Project methodology is guided by Crow protocols along with oral history and archival standards promulgated by the Oral History Association and the Society of American Archivists. Interviews are conducted and recorded at the archives building. Narrators are paid $100 plus $50 in gas money to participate.

Collection management, including technology, funding, and access: A locally developed policies and procedures manual, collections policy, and cataloguing guide, which are updated as new standards are developed, govern collection management. Projects largely have been funded by federal grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. The Native American Church funded a project on traditional Crow religious practices, and the National Science Foundation supported a project on Crow Indian astronomy. Support from the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act helped document proper handling of sacred objects like medicine bundles. Federal funds also have supported digitizing the materials to create preservation masters and MP3 (audio) or MP4 (video) access copies. The University of Montana provides off-site storage but not access for the recordings. Access to most materials is either in person or online, an openness in keeping with Crow cultural traditions and local protocols. The archives, however, has a firmly stated policy of "Crow Control" over all materials, emphasizing that all historical items in its collections will be kept on the reservation for the benefit of Crow people.

Uses of the collection: The college's new museum will be able to draw on oral histories, repatriated items, and other cultural materials in its collections to develop exhibits. The oral history interviews in particular contribute to language preservation, a universal goal in Indigenous communities. Teaching modules also have been developed based on information in some of the interviews. The largely open access to the oral histories also makes it possible for researchers, family members, teachers, and others to delve into the collections and expand their knowledge of what archivist Jon Ille calls "the whole history" of the Crow people.

Other highlights: To experience a taste of Crow culture beyond the archives, plan to visit the annual Crow Fair, which the tribe calls "the biggest family reunion." For more than 100 years, Native people have thronged to an encampment on the Little Big Horn River in southeast Montana. The event now attracts tens of thousands of visitors for 4 days of parades, ceremonies, dances, rodeo competitions, horse races and music celebrating Indigenous culture.

Elder Brother and the Law of the People

Cowessess First Nation, Treaty 4 Territory, Saskatchewan, Canada

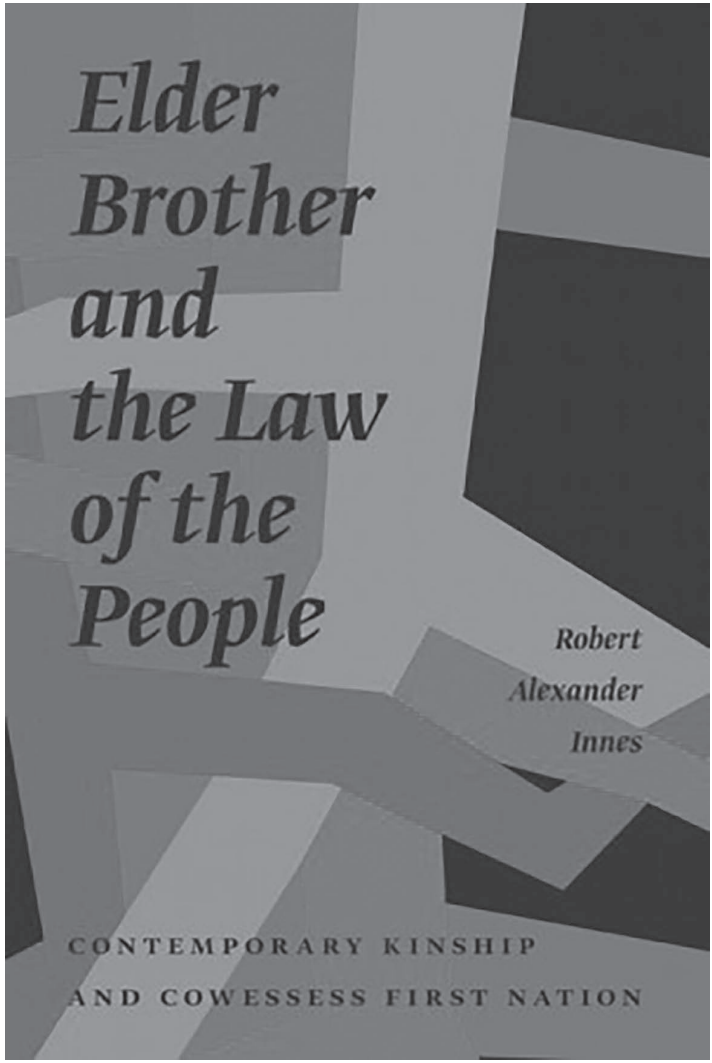

Figure P1.4 *Elder Brother and the Law of the People*, a book based on a PhD dissertation in American Indian Studies at the University of Arizona conducted by Robert A. Innes, a Cree/Saulteaux/Metis member of the Cowessess First Nation.

Source: Used with permission.

Program origins: *Elder Brother* is a PhD dissertation in American Indian Studies at the University of Arizona conducted by Robert A. Innes, a Cree/Saulteaux/Metis member of the Cowessess First Nation. The study arose out the historical experiences of Innes's own immediate family, beginning when his mother lost her Indian status and Band membership when she married Innes's non-Indian father as per legal requirements in the *Indian Act*. When the legislation was amended in 1985 through Bill C-31 and the Innes family regained their status and Band membership, Robert Innes was struck by how welcoming the community was. This study examines how and why older Cowessess members acknowledged and welcomed new Bill C-31 members, despite the increased strain on their limited resources. What he learned was that the community continued to adhere to traditional kinship laws, as articulated in the stories of Elder Brother in their sacred teachings. The stories of Elder Brother, or Wísahkécáhk, contain the laws governing social interaction, marriage, adoption, and kinship roles and responsibilities. Continued adherence to these laws highlights the importance of kinship to the community and "blurs the boundaries (as defined by the *Indian Act*) between status Indians, Bill C-31s, Métis, and non-status Indians, proving the artificiality of those boundaries" (Innes 2007, 12).

Nature of the collection: Twenty-seven interviews were conducted over the span of a few years in this study. Innes had every intention of making these interviews available to the community and depositing them in a public archives. However, as the stories that emerged in the focus group and interviews contained a considerable amount of personal information which could not be made public, they realized they cannot be made public.

Methodology: As a new member of Cowessess First Nation, Innes did not have a well-established network or close relations with his mother's kin to step into. According to Innes, he was both an insider and an outsider researcher. He was an outsider because prior to the research he did not know anyone he interviewed. "However, my outsider status was tempered by the fact that I am a Cowessess member and a relative to some of the participants," who gave him acceptance and welcome (Innes 2007, 33). The research process included attending community events, participating in a local program, and visiting to get to know relatives and other community members, and more importantly, to introduce himself and who he was related to. He then conducted 22 interviews with on- and off-reserve members, and one group interview with seven Elders residing in the community. Innes followed University of Arizona ethical standards and prioritized accountability to the community. He requested permission in advance to conduct

the research and then met with the Chief and Council to present his objectives, discuss the potential risks and benefits to the community, and present a timeline. The local leadership then voted to allow his project to commence.

Participant selection relied on snowball sampling where research participants are asked to assist the researcher in identifying others to interview. Band employees also assisted in identifying participants. There were no specific criteria other than being a member of Cowessess First Nation and being willing to be interviewed. He had a set of prepared questions but in the end used them as a guide so participants could comfortably speak without interruptions and on matters important to them.

The interviews were then transcribed and returned to the 27 participants so they could verify, delete, add, clarify, or withdraw their transcripts from use.

Collection management, including technology, funding, and access: The interview data were stored in the secured possession of the interviewer for 5 years, after which the originals and copies were destroyed. The researcher was permitted to use the research data for his dissertation and for the resulting publications, which included several peer-reviewed articles, a scholarly book, and numerous conference presentations. Innes's dissertation research and writing was sponsored by the Cowessess Education Authority, a Hubert E. Carter Graduate Interdisciplinary Fellowship from the University of Arizona, and Pre-Doctoral Fellowship from the American Indian Studies Program at Michigan State University. The personal nature of the content of the interviews was such that they could not be made public and so there is no opportunity to review the interview recordings.

Uses of the collection: While the original interviews are not available, the published work arising from this project has several valuable uses. The community reviewed a copy of the dissertation, the articles, and the book arising from the research for their own information and to inform the development of new Band membership criteria. The research results are now widely used by Cowessess members and other scholars for its analytical framework based on Elder Brother teachings and the invaluable documentation of one-of-a-kind oral history accounts.

Other highlights: It is not often that graduate theses have served to not just build new relations but to revive lifelong relations. In many ways, this study was a journey in restoring lost relations and coming home through stories. The use of Elder Brother as an analytical framework to better understand historical and contemporary kinship systems has made a valuable contribution to the expansion of Indigenous Studies research methodology.

National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation

University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada Treaty 1 Territory and Traditional Lands of the Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, Dene & Métis Peoples

Figure P1.5 This Bentwood Box, created by Coast Salish artist Luke Marston from a single piece of old growth red cedar, spent 5 years (2010–2015) traveling Canada during Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings. Indian Residential School survivors filled it with ceremonial expressions of reconciliation, from drawings and letters to moccasins and homemade baby blankets. The box and thousands of archived items are housed at the National Centre for Truth *and* Reconciliation at the University of Manitoba.

Source: https://archives.nctr.ca/S00067. National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation Archives, Photograph (Bentwood Box): DSC_9052. Used with permission.

Program origin: The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR) houses the research materials, reports, and publications generated by the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC). The TRC was created out of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement, the largest class action settlement in Canadian history between Indian Residential School Survivors in Canada, the Assembly of First Nations which is a national advocacy organization representing First Nations in

Canada, Inuit representatives, and the federal government and churches that were responsible for the creation and operations of the Indian Residential Schools (IRSs). The TRC functioned from 2007 to 2015 under the leadership of Chief Commissioner the Honorable Mr. Justice Murray Sinclair, an Anishinaabe member of Peguis First Nation (Treaty 1), and Commissioners Chief Wilton Littlechild, a Plains Cree member of Maskwacis First Nation (Treaty 6) and Dr. Marie Wilson, a non-Indigenous journalist. The TRC mandate was to inform Canadians about what happened in the IRSs, to provide a safe place for survivor truth telling, and to document the truths of IRS survivors, families, communities, and anyone personally affected by the IRS experience. The TRC heard and collected the testimonies of more than 6,750 individuals at the seven national events, numerous regional events, and community hearings across the country. The result was the creation of 1,355 hours of testimony recordings, and a six-volume final report including 94 Calls to Action to further reconciliation between Indigenous Peoples and other Canadians. Calls to Action 65, 71, 72, and 78 refer to the creation of NCTR and its role as stewards of these truths.

Nature of the collection: The NCTR is the permanent, safe home for all the statements, documents, reports, and other materials gathered and generated by the TRC. It currently houses more than five million records and is generating more as it continues the work of record collection on subjects and issues important to Indigenous communities across the country. The archives include:

- Thousands of hours of testimonies and statements;
- Recordings from the public events including expressions of reconciliation, honorary witness reflections, dialogues, sharing circles, and commissioner sharing panels;
- Gifts and other expressions of reconciliation including sacred and material objects, art, music, poetry, and other media;
- Archival materials including student records, school histories, administration records, photographs, maps, plans, and drawings from government and church archives;
- TRC reports and publications.

Methodology: Each TRC gathering was conducted according to culturally appropriate customs and protocols that provided a safe and sensitive environment for truth sharing and taking. A critical element for survivors was the presence of honorary witnesses whose role was to hear, validate, and remember the truths witnesses bravely shared. Some of the testimonies were shared publicly; others shared privately with only the Commissioners and an honorary witness. All proceedings were governed by local and/or individual tribal protocols and ethical guidelines. Unlike conventional oral history interviews, the testimonials were uninterrupted and not guided by questions. The only exception was when a

speaker mentioned the death of a child, then they were asked for more specific information that the TRC research team could follow up on. Survivor statements were received and treated as a sacred trust (Wilson 2023). The NCTR continues to follow and promote best research practices based on Indigenous and Western research ethics and standards.

Collection management, including technology, funding, and access: The collection is stored in the AtoM (Access to Memory) database, an open-source app that provides access in a multilingual and multi-repository environment. The NCTR stresses that preserving records is more than holding documents in a vault. It incorporates Indigenous perspectives on memory, archival practices, and ownership. By respecting and following the authority of Survivors and Elders, they have created a decolonizing archive built on the principles of honesty, wisdom, courage, humility, love, and truth. They follow appropriate protocols of language, environment, and culture in determining access to traditional knowledge and testimonies in the collection. The online archives are searchable by IRS, events, record types, subjects, and places. All new records are identified as such. See https://archives.nctr.ca/

The federal government provided an initial $10 million in funding in 2016 to help the NCTR get set up and to run for 9 years. In 2021, the Government of Canada announced a $28.5 million multi-year funding commitment for the NCTR to continue its work collecting, reviewing and making accessible IRS school records, and supporting community-led efforts to locate and identify unmarked graves. The new funding will support additional initiatives including the National Residential School Student Death Register, the online National Cemetery Register, and the National Advisory Committee on Missing Children and Unmarked Burials. In November 2022, the NCTR received additional funding of $60 million to cover the overall costs of building a new international learning centre and to continue supporting community-led efforts to locate, identify, memorialize, and commemorate missing children and unmarked burials. The NCTR has also partnered with other agencies, like the Social Science and Humanities Research Council to support community-engaged research on a range of topics on the history and ongoing impacts of IRSs and the federal policies of assimilation.

Uses of the collection: The online collection is open to the public at large for educational and curriculum development, and to communities and individuals who are seeking, for example, to learn more about the experiences of their families and to help locate missing children.

Other highlights: The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation is more than an archive housing oral history projects. It is a place of learning and dialogue grounded in Indigenous ways of knowing and doing. The centre was gifted the spirit name bezhig miigwan, an Anishnaabe term meaning "one feather" which serves as a reminder that all IRS survivors need to be shown the respect that an eagle feather deserves. It also teaches that the NRTC is vital to the work of reconciliation in Canada.

University of Alaska Fairbanks Oral History Program (Project Jukebox)

Fairbanks, Alaska, USA

Figure P1.6 Akiak Community Illustration, University of Alaska Fairbanks Oral History Program, Project Jukebox.

Source: Used with permission.

Program origin: The idea that became Project Jukebox was born in 1987 when University of Alaska Fairbanks graduate student Felix Vogt and UAF oral history program director William Schneider explored the prospect of digitizing UAF's oral history interviews as a way to make them more accessible and to avoid transcribing costs. In the decades since, that germ of an idea planted in pre-internet days has blossomed into what is known today as Project Jukebox. Today, Project Jukebox is an online platform from the UAF Oral History program, part of the larger Alaska and Polar Regions Collections & Archives housed in the Elmer E. Rasmuson Library. It makes selected recordings from the overall history collection available online along with archival photos, film, photographs, and transcripts. When digital technology for disseminating oral

history was in its infancy, the idea was to digitize analog audio onto CDs that would then be available at listening stations where visitors could select an interview and the recording would play on the listening station's computer, much like the mid-twentieth-century coin-operated devices that allowed users to select from among a stash of phonograph records loaded into a player and listen to their favorites.

Nature of the collection: Using selected audio from the more than 15,000 recordings in the oral history collection, more than 60 oral history projects and related materials are available through the Project Jukebox platform. The projects' themes vary widely, documenting experiences of long-haul truckers on the Dalton Highway, pioneer aviators, and mountaineering in Denali National Park. But other projects emerged in collaborations between Indigenous communities and the UAF Oral History Program. The Northern Alaska Sea Ice Project, for example, includes interviews with Iñupiaq subsistence hunters and whalers along the Beaufort Sea coast, where community Elders documented changes in the ice over their decades on the sea. The Tanana Tribal Council sponsored a project to preserve the accessibility of stories, songs, and life histories of Tanana Elders. Another project in the community of Akiak involved a collaboration among the cultural center, sixth- and seventh-grade students in the Yupiit School District, and the UAF Oral History Program to interview community Elders as part of local heritage education efforts.

Methodology: Projects involving Alaska Native communities start with collaborative relationships based on mutual trust, an approach that may involve repeated conversations among community Elders, representatives from school districts and cultural centers, tribal councils, UAF staff, and any others involved in a project. Community discussions determine protocols to be used, decisions about access, and other considerations, in which each community decides what oral information is important for them to document.

Collection management, including technology, funding, and access: Project Jukebox initially was a mechanism to share untranscribed audio interviews and other materials on CDs with the communities from which they came. The initial decision not to transcribe was motivated in part for financial reasons as well as an emphasis on preserving the orality of the information. But transcribing interviews later became standard in keeping with access requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. UAF takes copyright to the recordings and the information as spoken on them, but not to the stories themselves. Donor forms allow narrators lifetime access to and use of the information on the recordings. Sometimes, a family member may have signed a legal release agreement, but the family may not agree with that decision. In such cases, discussions with families sort out questions about how to handle such

situations. For recordings with Indigenous ties, decisions about care and access are handled case-by-case. The emergence of the internet opened up the opportunity for expanded access and sometimes extensive discussions about what material, if any, should be restricted. UAF oral history curator Leslie McCartney said younger narrators are more likely to give permission to make interviews available online, while older people tend to be more concerned about misuse or misunderstanding of the information. Jukebox projects have been funded by a wide variety of sources, including the National Park Service, the National Science Foundation, the Alaska Humanities Forum, the North Slope Borough, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and dozens of other local and national entities. Each of the jukeboxes describes how the project was funded and who was involved as interviewers or other project staff, including notations when students from the communities conducted interviews.

Uses of the collection: For jukeboxes related to particular Indigenous communities, documenting language, culture, and traditional subsistence lifestyles are among key purposes of the projects. Maintaining access to Elders' stories in their Native languages is seen as critical to developing language lessons for younger generations. A number of projects that focus on environmental issues also provide key baseline information for scientists tracking conditions related to global warming, for example, from people who have lived and survived in a region for many generations.

Other highlights: The jukebox projects' inclusion of materials like maps, historical documents, photographs, drawings, video clips, other related materials, and links to other resources, add important context to the interviews, which provides key background information to help future users of the interviews assess interview content. The UAF Project Jukebox approach was innovative in the late 1980s and paved the way for many other digital distribution approaches since then. Such digital outreach tools, McCartney noted, face a collective challenge in dealing with inevitable format changes that require upgrades every 5 years, adding significant costs to maintain such projects.

Thank you to the following for their generosity of time and information about these profiled projects:

Alexander Banks, oral history coordinator, The Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum's Oral History Program, Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation, Clewiston, Florida.

Cecelia Gavinksy, archivist, Western Heritage Center, Bozeman, Montana.

Jon Ille, archivist, Little Big Horn College Library, Crow Agency, Montana.

Robert Alexander Innes, Cowessess First Nation, Associate Professor and Department Head, Indigenous Studies Department, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.

Kevin Kooistra, director, Western Heritage Center, Bozeman, Montana.

Mary A. Larson, Puterbaugh Professor of Library Services and Associate Dean for Distinctive Collections at the Oklahoma State University Library, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, formerly with the University of Alaska Fairbanks Oral History Program, Fairbanks, Alaska.

Leslie McCartney, associate professor and oral history curator, Oral History Collection, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Fairbanks, Alaska.

Timothy McCleary, history department head, Little Big Horn College, Crow Agency, Montana.

National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, National Gathering on Unmarked Burials: Indigenous Data Sovereignty and Community Control over Information and Knowledge Conference. Vancouver, BC, Canada. January 16–18, 2023.

Francine D. Spang-Willis, founder of Appearing Flying Woman Consulting and former director, American Indian Tribal Histories Project, Bozeman, Montana.

5 Interview Preparation

Particularly for novice oral historians engaged with Indigenous community projects, the first step in preparing for an interview is to recognize that every project starts with learning how to learn from the community's knowledge keepers. That includes recognizing that in an Indigenous context, ways of knowing and ways of transmitting knowledge can take many forms in addition to the one-on-one interview, including ceremonies, storytelling, songs and dances, sacred teachings, testimonies, and informal interactions as well as structured settings akin to focus groups and more structured interviews. Community-based oral history projects may entail elements of some or all of these knowledge transmission styles, which challenges an oral historian's listening skills and openness to learning. This is true whether the project focuses on an individual's knowledge based on their personal experiences or whether the goal is to document collective knowledge from Elders or other respected knowledge keepers. It is important to stress that developing relationships with the communities and narrators is critical and that building reciprocal and trusting relationships often takes time and requires more than a few visits before the actual interview takes place.

Interview preparation honors the narrator and is as important for the first-time interviewer as it is for the experienced oral historian. But it is particularly important if interviewers are not part of the Indigenous community with which they will be engaged, which often happens with projects involving undergraduate or graduate students who may have a different Indigenous identity from the community-based project or who may not be Indigenous at all. In such cases, it is particularly important for an outsider to find out how best to approach the community's knowledge keepers. Making connections through someone the interviewer already knows generally works best. Community-born oral history projects often will rely on a community member or members to serve as gatekeepers who can facilitate the process of building relationships that are key to a project's success. Many scholars are now stressing the importance of community-engaged research.

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According to the Canadian Tri-Council Policy, community engagement is a process that promotes a collaborative relationship between researchers and communities that can take many forms but generally involves community involvement at all stages. The Tri-Council Policy is discussed in detail in Chapters 2 and 3.

The information later describes a process that may be applied to circumstances in which an interviewer is working with an individual narrator as well as settings in which interviews might include small groups of narrators. Group interviews, sometimes likened to focus groups, can be more challenging. Unless they are video-recorded, keeping track of who is speaking likely will be one of the interviewer's major tasks and is important to consider at the outset. Correctly identifying narrators will be critical when it comes time to transcribe a group interview session.

Interviewers

Interview preparation is a busy time for an interviewer. It involves a number of tasks, many of which take place simultaneously. A good place to start is with project orientation and interviewer training. The project leaders or manager will want to make sure the interviewer has a thorough understanding of the project and how each interview fits into overall project goals. Decisions made during the planning process become more practical at this point. Will the interviewer be collecting firsthand information or traditional knowledge? Based on this, how should the interviewer prepare for the interview? Is the narrator's information expected to be sensitive, and how should the interviewer handle it? What are the tribal and project protocols? What about unexpected information, especially if it is culturally sensitive? How should the interviewer handle a situation like this? All of these issues can be covered in interviewer training sessions.

Unless the narrator has been part of the community's project planning discussions, the interviewer should be prepared to help the narrator fully understand the project's purpose and the expected uses of the interview. Is the narrator's role essentially a modern adaptation of the role of traditional storytellers or knowledge keepers? What are the protocols for telling and listening to such stories? Will the interview become part of the Indigenous community's archival or cultural collections? Will it be available to researchers, either community members or outsiders? Will it be used primarily for educational purposes? Each of these outcomes can have an effect on the interview and how the narrator chooses to communicate the information. Narrators also will want to know if the information is gathered for commercial use. If so, with possible financial gain in mind, modern protocols and oral history ethics emphasize that narrators should benefit in some tangible way.

Answers to questions like these help the interviewer think about the narrator and the interview. They remind the interviewer that both the narrator as a person and the information given in an interview are important and deserve respect. Also, having an understanding of project protocols helps the interviewer build confidence, which can help build trust with the narrator.

Narrators

When a community is engaged in developing an oral history project, the people to be interviewed likely have been identified through ongoing discussions about the project's purpose and how best to achieve it. Potential narrators may bring particular information to the project, and planners may want to consider whether interviewing those individuals in a particular order would help build a knowledge base that would inform the project as it evolves. Considerations of factors like potential narrators' health, ability to travel, or willingness to engage with outsiders are other practical questions that might affect narrator selection.

Once potential narrators have been identified, project leaders usually contact them in person, unless the narrators are already part of the community engagement process. A personal visit from a project leader or the interviewer provides an opportunity to explain the project to the narrator and family members and gain their trust.

Pairing Narrators and Interviewers

Pairing narrators and interviewers is another important step. Many tribes, such as the Suquamish, use interviewers from the tribe or those who have close ties to the community for their oral history projects. As they say, "Outsiders do not always understand the subjects of the interviews and do not know how to ask necessary questions" (Suquamish Tribal Oral History Project 23).

Other oral history projects, however, may necessarily involve interviewers who are not part of the Indigenous community. In such cases, the following questions can help guide decisions about assigning interviewees to particular narrators. How will interviewers interact with narrators? Are they first-time or experienced interviewers, and what effect can their experience have on the interview? Will the interviewers understand the cultural and social protocols of the interview? Who will the narrator be most comfortable with? Who will work best with the narrator? Will the narrator want someone who is near in age? Should the narrator be the same sex as the interviewer? Will the narrator be more comfortable with a stranger, a relative, or a long-time acquaintance? What are the pros and cons of each

situation, and which will result in the most productive interview? Often these questions have no correct answers. In many cases, the ideal match may not be possible. But thinking through the issues helps keep the project on firm footing when pairing narrators with interviewers.

If projects need to pair outsider interviewers with Indigenous narrators, there are additional questions to answer. Is the narrator willing to work with an outsider? Will the interviewer need an intermediary to act as a go-between and help set up the interview? Does the interviewer understand the person's interests, speech patterns, language, or value systems and the effect these can have on how information is communicated? In what language or languages will the interview be conducted? What are the narrator's and interviewer's skills in this language? And, importantly, even if both are speaking the same language, will they both understand the use of language in the same way? Will they understand the nuances of words or phrases in the same way? If the narrator and interviewer do not share a language and an interpreter will be required, the previous questions also apply. Moreover, who will serve as interpreter? How will that person's relationship, if any, to the narrator or interviewer affect the ability of all of them to communicate effectively? Ideally, interpreters or translators are part of the oral history project team and often serve as a liaison and Elders Helpers. They are invaluable to the interviewers, providing simultaneous translation during the interviews and then working to assure accurate transcription.

Such potentially complicated situations illustrate the importance of including in project files appropriate documentation of how such decisions were made and why.

Missing Children and Unmarked Graves at Indian Residential School (IRS) Sites

In May 2021, the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation reported that 215 unmarked graves were identified on the grounds of the former Kamloops IRS in British Columbia through ground-penetrating radar surveys. The Kamloops IRS operated from 1890 to 1969 when the federal government took over its administration from the Catholic Church. At its peak in the 1950s, it housed 500 students. Kamloops was one of 139 recognized Indian residential schools that operated in Canada from 1831 to 1996. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) estimated that around 150,000 First Nations

children were interned at these schools, where they were subjected to physical, emotional, and sexual abuse, forced labor, contagious disease epidemics, and cultural genocide. It also reported there were at least 4,100 child deaths.

News of the "Kamloops 215" spread quickly across Canada inciting mass public outrage. The public knew little if anything about this aspect of the IRS experience, but First Nations people have known about undocumented deaths and unmarked graves at IRSs for generations. Through Eye-witness accounts, stories whispered and passed down the generations, First Nations people never forgot about the children who never made it home. After years of collecting IRS survivor stories, in 2015 the TRC reported that more research was needed to document student deaths and unmarked graves and to locate missing children. The federal government denied a request for funding. Undeterred, the TRC 2105 Report Calls to Action called upon the federal government to fund the creation of a National Residential School Student Death Register, cemetery registry, and for the ongoing research, identification, documentation, maintenance, commemoration, and protection of IRS cemeteries.

Soon after the "Kamloops 215" findings, many other First Nations initiated searches of local IRS sites and a few have reported their preliminary findings, with the number of potential unmarked graves as high as 751 at the Cowessess First Nation Marievale residential school.

Public outrage combined with the overwhelming numbers of potential unmarked graves on only a few IRS's so far studied prompted a federal commitment to implement several TRC Calls to Action, which included allocating $238.3 million over 3 years to support community research and commemoration initiatives (Government of Canada 2022a).

As this manuscript heads to press, Chief Michael Star of Star Blanket Cree Nation released the preliminary findings of their search of the Qu'Appelle Indian Industrial School at Lebret, Saskatchewan. They identified more than 2,000 anomalies, as well as a 125-year-old jawbone of an unidentified child who died between 4 and 6 years old (Benjoe 2023). Thousands of unmarked graves are sure to be revealed as work continues. Meanwhile, community discussions are underway to decide how far we want to go to identify the remains.

> "The validation of Survivors' claims to their experiences endured at these so-called schools provides space for our community to participate in collective healing,"
>
> Treaty 8 Grand Chief Arthur Noskey (NetNewsLedger 2022).

Background Research

Early in the preparation process, interviewers also will want to become thoroughly familiar with the Indigenous community's research protocols. They may specify particular duties that relate to non-tribal members conducting research in the community. As described in Chapter 2, such protocols generally attempt to redress a history of abuse and exploitation in Indigenous communities, and it is imperative that interviewers familiarize themselves with such protocols in detail and understand how to abide by them.

At this stage, and throughout the interview process, interviewers are wise to remember that no matter how much they can learn ahead of time about the individual or community with which they will be engaged, their narrators are always the experts—the teachers—while they are always the students. Nonetheless, approaching oral history interviews in ignorance of the project's purpose or themes is a sign of disrespect for the community. Written archival materials about a particular Indigenous community may be incomplete, but interviewers working on Indigenous projects may find such collections in tribal cultural centers, libraries, archives, and museums. Maps, land allotment records, boarding school records, church records, Bureau of Indian Affairs records (BIA in the United States) or Indian Affairs Records in Canada, military records, newspapers, archaeological records, ethnology reports, history books, previous oral history projects, and personal and family memorabilia such as photographs and scrapbooks—all are possible sources for interviewer preparation. Written materials can be helpful at this stage. They represent only part of the record of an oral people but sometimes may contain information not found elsewhere. Looking through them can help identify new topics or uncover previously unknown narrators. It may help identify false or misleading information, thus giving narrators an opportunity to set the record straight. Interviewers also may find that after an interview, they will want to return to the archives or cultural center to dig further for information related to what emerged in the interviews, sometimes with an eye toward returning to narrators for more details. Used carefully as part of a support system for collecting

oral information, research can enhance the interview results. When written sources are used, they can support the oral without transcending or overwhelming it.

Background research also may involve contacting local leadership or family members or others who know the narrator. Such conversations can cover everything from the person's background to a recommended time and place for the interview. If the interview will be the recording of traditional knowledge, personal research can help determine what the narrator's wishes are for the interview, such as when and where it should take place. It also can help identify the narrator's beliefs regarding the appropriate protocols for telling the stories. In any case, spending time with a narrator in advance can help lay the foundation for a productive interview.

Interview Themes

In a community-engaged project, members of the community will already have identified the kinds of knowledge the project aims to document, which may determine whether an interview session will involve Q-and-A exchanges or the telling of traditional information in a traditional way or some other format. Narrators and interviewers alike need to be sure they understand the project's purpose and particular themes the community wants to address. While narrators, of course, will choose the knowledge they wish to convey, interviewers can help guide narrators, as appropriate, in a collective effort to address the project's themes and achieve its goals. If a particular narrator has not been part of the community engagement process, it's important to convey the interview themes to the narrator in advance. The interviewer should never surprise the narrator with unexpected questions or with a request for information that is outside the scope of the interview discussion or beyond the narrator's areas of knowledge.

Other basic process questions cover expectations for the number and length of interview sessions. Will this involve one interview or more than one interview? In some cases, one interview will cover the information with the narrator. In others, interviewers will conduct numerous interviews over a longer period of time. Will the interviewer have an initial meeting or a pre-interview? The interviewer can collect biographical information in an initial meeting and discuss the informed consent process. It also can help the narrator get to know the interviewer in the interview setting and provide an opportunity for questions about the interview process.

What about controversial topics that might emerge in an interview or memories that are difficult to talk about? Such discussions can be very important, sometimes setting the record straight or adding a previously unrecognized dimension to the subject at hand. Interviewers need to be aware that narrators sometimes want to bring out difficult memories and

should be prepared to listen respectfully, asking for clarification as appropriate. Narrators also sometimes offer new or previously unanticipated information that isn't particularly controversial or difficult to talk about, but it can surprise an unwary or unprepared interviewer.

Melissa K. Nelson has identified several questions that help with interviewer preparation. What are the limits of someone's ability to know certain things, and what steps should the interviewer take to respect this? As discussed in Chapter 3, do project planners recognize that a narrator has the right not to know something? Will the interviewer need to earn the right to have access to some types of knowledge that may come up in an interview? If so, what does this involve? Nelson relates these questions to an understanding of "cultural privacy," noting that the respect for the narrator's knowledge that the questions represent can help build trust between the narrator and the interviewer (Nelson 2007).

Interviewers also can run into situations where the narrator becomes reluctant to talk in general or about certain things that are pertinent to the interview topic. Although most narrators will want to communicate information, the circumstances of the interview may result in the narrator's decision that the time, place, or people present at the interview are not right for sharing the information. If so, interviewers will want to be prepared to sensitively end the interview and thank the narrator for what they have shared.

At a time when many Indigenous people live in or interact with several cultures, the perceptions of how and why things occurred as they did are as important as recounting the specifics of an event or way of life. These perceptions help people understand their history, their place within it, and the impact of their long history of interacting with settler cultures. This is another area of interviewer preparation that can be important for a project.

An area of increasing importance to Indigenous communities is the relationship of oral information to objects. At the Little Big Horn College in Crow Agency, Montana, for example, support through the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) helped document proper handling of sacred objects like medicine bundles. These and other objects may be owned by the narrator or the narrator's family. Museums and cultural centers, including many that are non-Native, realize the importance of documenting traditional information linked to statues, carvings, and other items of importance to Indigenous communities and individuals. Since NAGPRA's passage in 1990, non-Native cultural institutions in the United States have been required to repatriate such objects as well as human remains. By 2022, more than 84,000 ancestral remains and more than 1.5 million funerary objects had been repatriated (U.S. Department of the Interior). Will documenting information related to objects be part of the oral history project? If so, how will project leaders and interviewers

prepare for such interviews? What about stories linked to places? How will they be handled? Will stories about objects or places be enhanced by the use of visuals? If so, how will they be documented? Things may change during the project but thinking through these questions as part of the interview preparation as well as the earlier planning process helps define overall project needs.

What about the use of memory aids in the interview, either for general content or working with objects? Will you use memory aids like winter counts typically created by Plains tribes? Use of visual aids, such as photographs, may be helpful to some narrators as may a visit to a place of importance. Daniel Anderson, a member of the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, commented, "A 1910 photo of my grandmother at the Vermilion Lake Indian School in Tower, Minnesota, spurred a flood of memories and conversations with her" (Anderson personal communication).

When preparing for an interview, use the interview research to become as thoroughly acquainted with the narrator and the community as possible. If the research has brought up questions or inconsistencies in information, make notes and use them to help guide the narrator when appropriate. For example, if the purpose of an interview is to learn more about land use on the reservation, information on maps, aerial photographs, and federal records can provide basic background. Using this, the interviewer can think about questions related to the specifics of land use and changes known to the narrator. Jotting down the topics to be covered and making notes on questions help the interviewer prepare for the interview. Questions do not have to be written out as full sentences. Notes that are clear and easy to follow allow the interviewer to concentrate on the narrator. Just as photographs and cultural artifacts can serve as memory devices, the land itself is mnemonic. Walking the land with Elders and doing interviews on the land bring out many memories that may not come through in interviews conducted in studios or other buildings.

Some oral history project leaders and interviewers submit lists of themes or questions to tribal authorities for review as part of the community's protocols. Is this a step that is either required or desirable for your project? It also can be helpful to review with narrators the general themes of an interview as developed through community engagement, thus bringing a certain focus to the interview while still respecting the narrator's prerogative of sharing knowledge as he or she wishes.

Using the Recorder

Practicing with the recording equipment is another important element of interview preparation. Nothing is more distracting than an interviewer who is fussing with equipment that won't turn on or doesn't record—or

who can't find a missing cable or microphone. It gets an interview off to an awkward start. Regular practice with the equipment before the interview can pay off with a working recorder and a relaxed interviewer. Setting up the equipment and doing a short practice interview in an interviewer training session and again shortly before an interview can be very helpful. It is also helpful to know the standard settings for the recorder and to become familiar with the equipment manual in case any onsite adjustments need to be made. See Chapter 4 for detailed equipment information.

Many projects assemble recorder kits. These usually include everything needed for an interview: recorder, microphone, cables, headphones, media, extension cord, fresh batteries if electricity is not available, and equipment manual to consult in an emergency. Shortly before an interview, the interviewer should go over the list of items in the kit, making sure everything is on hand. This is a good time to do a preliminary sound check with the equipment, too.

Learning to use the equipment unobtrusively is important. It isn't always easy, but practicing until the equipment can be assembled and operated with confidence in an interview setting is an important part of interviewer preparation.

In addition to the recorder and its accessories, it can be useful to assemble other supplies for the interview and keep them well organized. Supplies can include a notebook and pen to make notes either during or after the interview, extra media, a bottle of water for the narrator, and project forms.

Interviewer Training

Interviewer training is critical for all oral history projects. This usually is done in a workshop as interviewers are preparing for their first interviews. Attendance is required. Training workshops are an opportunity for interviewers to learn about the details of the project as well as a chance to get hands-on practice with the recording equipment they will be using and the project paperwork they will be expected to complete. Projects that skimp on interviewer training are inviting disaster.

Scheduling the Interview

Interviews are scheduled in advance unless circumstances dictate differently. The interviewer or community project manager may set up the interview, scheduling it at a time that is convenient and most comfortable for the narrator or group, if more than one person will be involved.

The place of the interview also is important. Will the person be more comfortable at home or does the narrator want to be interviewed elsewhere, such as at the tribal cultural center or at a public gathering? If the

interview is to take place at a powwow or other community event, are there particular logistics that need to be handled in advance? Wherever the interview takes place, is there appropriate seating for everyone involved? Should family members be present and, if so, what will their roles be? Will there be water for the narrator? A gift for the narrator—such as tobacco, fruit, coffee, sugar, and honorarium depending on local customs and protocols—should go on the list, too. Reviewing each of these needs, many of which are covered during the pre-interview meeting, helps get the interview off to a good start by making sure the narrator or narrators are comfortable.

The interviewer will want to review the interview setting. What is the anticipated sound quality of the interview? What kinds of distractions can be anticipated, such as ringing telephones, ticking clocks, or barking dogs, and what are the best ways to minimize their impact on interview sound quality? Will the recorder be plugged into a wall outlet or be run on batteries? If on batteries, does the interviewer know the length of battery life, and is the interviewer trained to identify signs of dying or failing batteries? What other factors in the setting can affect the interview, and how can the interviewer prepare for them?

The answers to all these questions related to the circumstances of the interview should be documented in detail for the project files to give the interview context. So if, for example, a dog can't entirely be silenced, notes accompanying the recording might note that Bowser, the narrator's German shepherd mix, periodically came in and out of the room where the interview took place. And even if there's no dog, the interview documentation should detail when and where the interview took place, everyone who was in attendance, and why those choices were made.

All of these steps lead to the interview. Sitting down with the narrator for the interview is an exciting—and somewhat intimidating—experience. This is true for both novice interviewers and those who have been interviewing for a long time. Interview guidelines can help; they are covered in the next chapter.

6 The Interview(s)

All the planning and preparation described in the previous chapters leads to the oral history interview. It can be a powerful experience. Often, even after years have gone by, interviewers will be able to remember the words of narrators. Those words and the memories they evoke may be particularly powerful when interviewers have had the chance to engage with Indigenous community members throughout the development of an oral history project.

Because Indigenous communities vary in terms of needs and outcomes they seek from such a project, oral history interviews are not a one size fits all. Some interviews may involve groups of Elders or an individual Elder sharing collective or traditional knowledge; others may involve an individual recounting his or her specific life experiences. The format of an interview likely will vary, depending on the nature of the information being sought and the narrators involved. Often, particularly if the focus is on documenting collective or traditional knowledge, interviewers will spend extended periods of time learning how to listen without interruption as narrators invite them into their worlds. If interviewers are lucky, they will be welcomed back to the community to document even more knowledge, in keeping with the community's oral history goals. Whatever interview format emerges from a particular project's plans, the sections later include some things to keep in mind.

Final Preparation

This is the time to review interview preparations, using the following as a quick mental checklist.

- Are the forms in order and ready to use? Among the forms, the gift or legal release (donor) form is one of the most important documents in an oral history project. Is the interviewer prepared to review the form with the narrators and to have them and everyone else whose voices appear in the recording, such as interpreters, sign the form at the end of the interview?

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- Is the recording equipment tested and ready? Is the interviewer trained to use the equipment? Is a troubleshooting process in place in case it is needed?
- Does everyone involved in the interview fully understand its purpose?
- Has the interviewer reviewed all background materials for the interview? Does the interviewer have materials to help guide the interview as appropriate, keeping in mind that the narrator always determines what to share? Does the interviewer have all other items needed, such as paper and pen or pencil for notes and appropriate gift offering, depending on local protocols?
- Is the interviewer prepared to review the purposes and the legal and ethical background of the interview with the narrator and anyone else participating in the interview and answer any questions they may have.

Oral history helps revitalize Indigenous languages

Indigenous people in North America once spoke hundreds of different languages, but by some estimates, fewer than 200 are still in use. Of those, only 33 are spoken by adults and children alike. And when children stop learning their Indigenous language, the prospects for its survival dim (Woodbury 2023).

Growing interest in language preservation is not just a matter of nostalgia. It's a matter of preserving and transmitting culture. In declaring the United Nations International Decade of Indigenous Languages in 2022, advocates noted, for example, the link between language and Indigenous knowledge of the environment and the natural world (UNESCO).

So it's no wonder that maintaining and revitalizing Native languages is a leading goal of many community-based oral history projects that record Elders whose Indigenous language is their first language. Such efforts have been further advanced by digital technology that has made hearing those voices more accessible than ever and more popular.

In Igiugig, Alaska, population 68, the award-winning community library sponsors a bilingual Yu'pik-English oral history project to document Yu'pik stories, has produced a bilingual children's storybook, and has created virtual language labs in six communities in

the region (Moncure). Also in Alaska, when the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District inaugurated an Indigenous Language Film Festival for its students, a group of people from Anchorage wanted to know if their kids could submit films, too (Poux).

In Canada, the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network, APTN, has been on the air since 1999, the world's first national Indigenous broadcaster. More than one-fourth of its programming is offered in nearly a dozen Indigenous languages. And from Newfoundland and Labrador to the Yukon, community radio stations serving First Nations offer various musical genres and Native language programs (APTN).

Mohawk language and culture advocate Tiorahkwathe Gilbert of the Kahawake First Nations Reserve in Quebec boiled down the importance of keeping Indigenous languages alive, telling Canadian author Mark Abley: "As a speaker, I envision language as a 1–800 number to my ancestors" (Abley, 272).

Getting the Interview Underway

While interviews with Indigenous narrators may take various forms, whenever interviewers begin recording, it's important to include an introductory statement that specifies the place and time of the interview and the names of everyone who will be participating in it, including an interpreter or family members who might be present. If the community has given a name to the oral history project, that also should be included along with a brief statement of the project's goals. Including all such details at the outset enables future users of an interview to understand the context of the project. Documenting these contextual details at the beginning of the recording also assures that the narrators' identities are not separated from the information they share.

Interviews that emerge from a community-engaged oral history project, particularly those focused on documenting community knowledge or pursuing specific community goals, are unlikely to resemble a Q-and-A format that may be familiar to people accustomed to a Western academic or non-Indigenous style of knowledge-seeking. After recording the time, place, participants, and purpose of an interview session, the interviewer should be prepared to become a listening learner as the Elder or Elders take the learner on a journey to encounter new knowledge. An interviewer-as-listening-learner

should avoid interrupting the narrator's discourse, keeping in mind that the information being conveyed belongs to the narrator and is theirs to tell in their own way. If the interviewer-as-listener hears something confusing or unclear, it may be useful to jot down notes or questions for later follow-up, either after narrators complete their accounts or in a recorded session in subsequent days. If multiple narrators are involved in a recorded session, the listener also could consider jotting down any changes of speakers to facilitate later transcription. In any case, interrupting a narrator likely will be regarded as aggressive or rude and may undo any degree of trust that has been established.

While engaging with a group of Elders may constitute one type of oral history interview setting, oral history projects also may include interview sessions with individuals, with or without interpreters, as needed. Such interviews are likely to focus on unique experiences an individual has had and whose knowledge reflects unique experiences the community seeks to document. Like interviews conducted in a group setting, interviews with individuals should begin with recording specific details, including the time, place, names of all participants, and any other specific characteristics of the project that will document the context of the situation for the benefit of future listeners. A narrator then may be invited in an open-ended fashion to address the topic of the interview and their connection with it. Some interviews may relate to describing certain aspects of the narrator's life or specific experiences—the process for drying salmon or steps in curing caribou hides or factors that led a narrator to enlist in the military or a transition from rural to urban life. In some such cases, an interview may naturally follow sequential descriptions of a process or chain of events. Interviewers may wish to imagine themselves as strangers hearing the information in years to come so they can invite a narrator to elaborate or provide additional details that may help clarify the information. As always, however, narrators ultimately decide what knowledge they wish to share and how they choose to express it. In interviews during which individuals are relating their own experiences, protected cultural information, including traditional names or places sacred to the community, can emerge. If it does, such information should be handled in accordance with community protocols, which might include restricting access to the interview.

In addition to documenting details from individual narrators about their particular life experiences, oral history projects also may endeavor to document narrators' observations about how their understanding of their experiences has evolved over the years. Such reflections, if narrators are willing to share them, can add critical firsthand insights to past times, places, and events that enrich our historical knowledge.

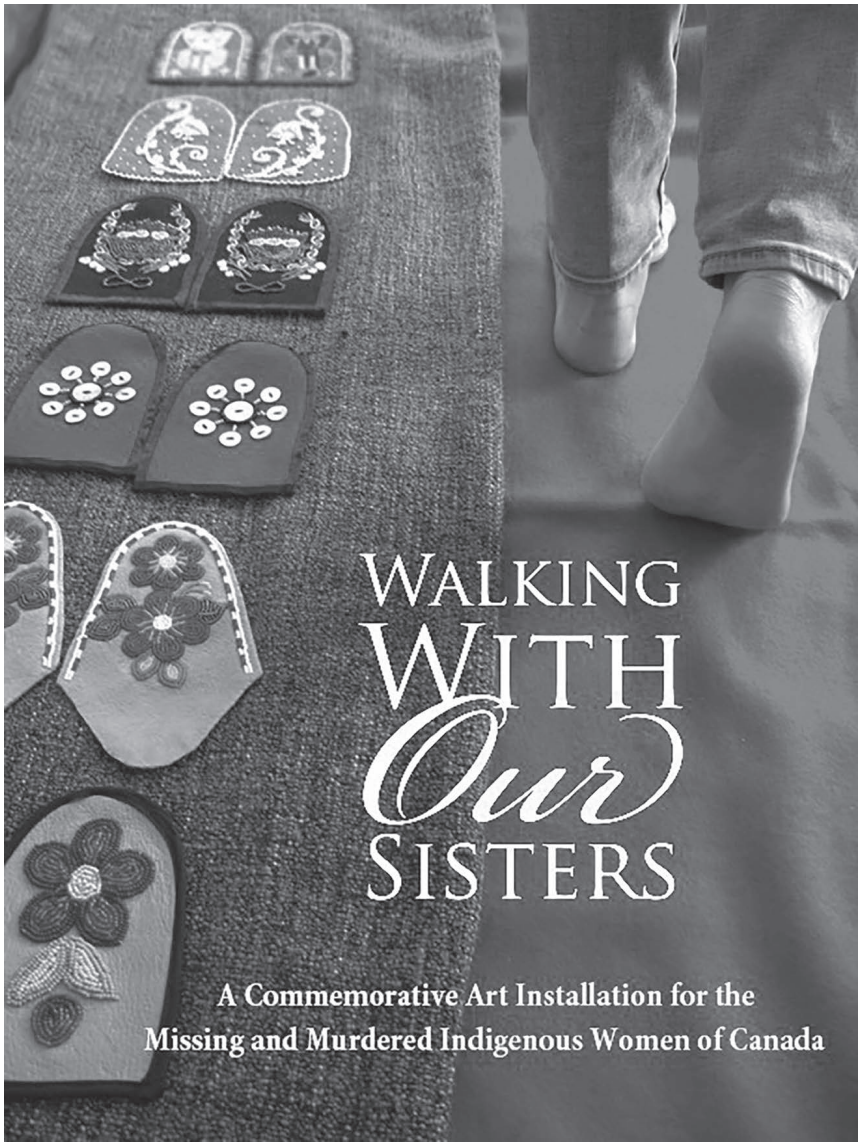

Figure 6.1 Walking With Our Sisters, commemorative art installation poster designed to draw attention to an exhibition and project focusing on missing and murdered women and girls in Canada.

Source: Used with permission.

Walking With Our Sisters, a Commemorative Art Installation

Walking With Our Sisters (WWOS) was a commemorative art installation of over 1,760 pairs of women's moccasin vamps (also called uppers) and 108 pairs of children's vamps made by hundreds of individuals from around the world. The exhibit was created by Métis artist Christi Belcourt to remember and honor the lives of the thousands of missing and murdered Indigenous women in Canada and the USA, to acknowledge the grief of their families, and to raise awareness and create opportunities for community-based dialogue (WWOS 2020). In June 2012, Belcourt put out a call on Facebook inviting people to create moccasin vamps. The original goal to collect 600 more than doubled by July 2013, and when the exhibit went on tour even more vamps were donated. This outpouring demonstrated that "the world is indeed filled with caring souls" but also that the issue was so dire that everyday people wanted to help raise awareness (WWOS 2020).

Each pair of vamps represents one missing or murdered Indigenous woman whose life was cut short. The children's vamps are dedicated to the children who never made it home from residential schools. The vamps are unfinished moccasins that represent the unfinished lives of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.

The project became so large the WWOS Collective, a national organizing committee, was created to support each host committee that sponsored the exhibit. Each exhibit of the vamps was unique as they were created according to local Indigenous protocols and reflected local artistic expressions and traditions. Every community shared stories of their missing and murdered women, girls, and two-spirit peoples.

From 2013–2019, there were 27 WWOS exhibitions across Canada and one in Mt. Pleasant, Michigan. Thousands of volunteers kept the project going. WWOS was a labor of love and was entirely crowd-sourced through a variety of national and local fundraising activities. No government funding was applied for or received.

For well over 30 years, families, advocates and organizations have shared stories about missing and murdered Indigenous women to raise awareness and get some action. When the WWOS project began it was widely believed that more than 1,200 Indigenous women were missing or murdered, but the number likely is considerably higher

because of incomplete data. Other public awareness efforts helped increase the pressure through marches, protests, and vigils that created space for telling their stories. In 2015 the Canadian government finally agreed to launch a national inquiry.

The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls published its final report in June 2019 (National Inquiry 2019). In addition to document research, the Commission hosted numerous statement gatherings across the country, soliciting information from communities, knowledge keepers, government agencies and others on a wide range of concerns, including the criminal justice system, family and child welfare, sexual exploitation, policing practices, human rights, racism and a host of other issues. It also held guided dialogues with two-spirit/LGBTQ1A, Metis, Quebec and Inuit representatives to ensure their unique experiences were shared. The final report made several recommendations to all levels of governments, institutions, and agencies intended to increase protections and supports and ensure justice is fairly meted out.

The public awareness created by Walking With Our Sisters and other advocacy activities was instrumental in ensuring this tragedy is addressed.

Interviewing Tips

Here are some additional tips for interviewers:[1]

- Keep in mind the ethics of the situation. An oral history interview is not a conversation or a debate. Narrators are entitled to respect for their stories and for the manner in which they are told.
- Be on time and remember to dress appropriately.
- Check the interview setting. Is everyone comfortable? Is the recording equipment accessible yet positioned to create the least intrusion on the interview?
- Review sound quality and control it as much as possible. Turn off radios and TVs. Sound quality in a narrator's home will be quite different from that in a group setting or public forum. Do your best to assure that everyone's voices will be audible on the recording.
- Check the equipment to make sure it is working. And keep an eye on it throughout the interview. Recording media can only hold a finite amount of audio or video after which they stop recording.

- Be respectful. Listen carefully without interrupting.
- Follow cultural customs and protocols. This often will involve giving a gift or an offering to the narrator to show respect for the person and his or her story as well as his or her age and standing in the community. If the interviewers are outsiders, they should learn the manner and type of gifts to be given and the customs governing when and how to give them.
- If or when questions are asked, use neutral, open-ended ones. It may suffice, for example, to say: "I'd like to learn more about . . . ."
- Interviewers should remain nonjudgmental, even if the information being discussed is difficult to talk about or is controversial.
- Use *how, what, when, why, where*, and *who* questions to introduce a subject or follow up some information. They can help clarify an answer and elicit further information about a subject being discussed. Make sure your elaboration or clarification does not lead the narrator to a specific answer or confuse the narrator.
- Be aware of the cadence of the conversation. People may speak slowly and thoughtfully and there may be periods of silence that should be respected. A period of silence after hearing a question is often customary, and it may be part of the narrator's way of providing a thoughtful and thorough response. Interviewers should not interrupt periods of silence nor assume they mean the narrator doesn't know the answer.
- Be aware of the narrator's body language and nonverbal signs of communication. For some people, these can include placing arms across the chest or looking away when a question is inappropriate or causes discomfort. Leaning forward and looking more closely at the interviewer can be signs that the narrator is engaged with the topic. Some nonverbal cues may vary with culture; others often are universal. Understanding the narrator's signals is an important part of the interview process.
- Use body language to communicate with the narrator rather than repeated verbal "uh-huhs" that will affect the overall sound quality of the interview. Eye contact may be appropriate in some situations although it can be considered an affront if the interviewer does not know the narrator well.
- Avoid asking for information that is not part of the narrator's area of expertise or things the person is not in a position to know.
- Avoid asking about cultural or sacred information without guidelines from the community about who should share such information, how it should be recorded, cared for, and accessed.
- Be aware of the need for precision in use of Indigenous languages, and take whatever time is necessary to be sure narrators and interpreters are satisfied with all translations.
- When a narrator uses an acronym or other local terminology, ask for explanations, descriptions, or translations as appropriate.

- Incorporate the use of memory aids to encourage specific memories as appropriate. Carefully identify each memory aid used. For example, when using a photograph, the interviewer can say: the tall man on the left in the dark hat is your father, [name]? It looks as if he is standing in front of your family home [place] in about 1925? as a way of describing the specific details. Video interviews can include a visual record of the item. Whenever possible, copies of memory aids used in an interview should be included with the interview materials in the repository.
- Have a notebook handy but keep its use to a minimum unless the narrator gives permission to do otherwise.
- Take breaks. Being asked to think and talk about a specific topic for an extended period of time takes energy and concentration. Be considerate of narrators and realize they may tire easily.
- Keep an eye on the time to make sure you do not extend beyond a reasonable limit. If you need more time, schedule another interview, but don't exhaust narrators by trying to squeeze too much in at one time.
- Take a photograph of the narrator or the group in the interview setting if possible.
- As soon as the interview is over, sign the gift or legal release (donor) form with the narrator even if more interview sessions are planned.

Sample Interview Excerpt

Following is an excerpt from a structured, first-person archival oral history interview with Wallace Black Elk about his military service. It illustrates the focus of the interview as a part of Mr. Black Elk's life during World War II, his response to a question describing his thoughts about military service, and the opportunity the interviewer gave him to tell the story in his own words.

Wallace Black Elk was asked by Bea Medicine (Garner) to describe his military service:

> We were able to feel very good about ourselves for defending our country. We always had it in our mind, as Indian veterans, that we was at war with another country and so that our parents could sleep well without fear for the younger brother or sisters, or Aunts and Uncles, cousins, relatives. They would not have to fear they could sleep well and they could eat, they could go on living, we were willing to lay down our lives for this cause. So I was very happy about, about my life in the service. When I come back to my father's house and as I returned they put me in a car and took me to my father's home and my dad met me coming on a horse. My brothers and sisters were back home and he was very happy

> to see me and took me home and all my brothers and sisters started crying, they were crying with joy so happy to see me. My father told me, "Son, I didn't think that I would ever see you alive from the great war but you are returned and I am so happy. I want to thank Wakantanka, the great mystery for bringing you back safe." Then my father began weeping. I told my father not to cry anymore, I told him that I was happy and that I was here and that I was alive and happy to be home so he quit his crying. So all my younger brothers and sisters are, most of them are married now and have families of their own but I felt good that I was able to defend my country so that they could live and survive. In 1945, that fall, I got married and in '46 we had our firstborn son. So some of my younger brothers were in Korea during the war and then some of them were even in Vietnam, some of our cousins. So my father was in the first World War, and before that my grandfathers were scouts. So we've been able to retain our warriors society down through the years—my grandfathers were scouts, my father in World War I, myself in World War II, my younger brothers in Korean War, and my cousins in Vietnam. When we talk about peace and making friendship I know firsthand what war is really like. So I, I been able to translate or express how the Indian feel? Especially those of us who believe in the traditional way and pray with the pipe . . . . So before I was to go into the service I prayed with my pipe and asked for wisdom and guidance and strength, and bravery to go into battle and that's the way I prayed and it was done. So I went into the war and returned home safe so this great power in praying with the pipe, its greater power than anything man knows.
>
> (Black Elk, 23–24)

Additional Points to Consider

Oral history projects that emerge from Indigenous communities are developed to meet specific community needs. Some, for example, may focus primarily on Indigenous language preservation, in which case community Elders are likely to be the experts whose knowledge is critical to the project's success. Other projects may focus on Indigenous connections to the land, such as land claims and treaty rights issues. Some oral history projects are part of larger mixed methods research projects. Métis scholar Cheryl Troupe studied the change and continuity in Métis land use and occupancy in the Qu'Appelle Valley of present-day Saskatchewan, Canada, from 1850 to 1950, with a focus on the role and economic contributions of Métis women. She utilized a research methodology called "deep mapping," which merged qualitative sources with digital technologies. Specifically, her work "utilizes Indigenous research methods, oral history interviews,

genealogical reconstruction, and historical geographical information systems . . . within a framework grounded in relationships, cultural protocols, and Métis lived experience and worldview" (Troupe 2019, 2 & 7). Troupe worked closely with members of the Qu'Appelle Valley Métis community to map the continual displacement of Métis families from their lands resulting from settler colonialism and stressed that the research emerged "from personal and professional relationships created and maintained with Métis community members over the past two decades" (Troup, 23).

Other Indigenous oral history projects focus on stories tied to objects. They may have been created by the narrator or family members or they may be objects created by others in museums or cultural centers about which the narrator has knowledge. This involves the collection of clarifying information through use of oral history interviews. Oral historians also often run into a related situation when narrators or their families ask the interviewer for help with personal materials such as scrapbooks or family keepsakes. Interviewers will want to document information about the photographs and other family materials. This can become the subject of another interview session. And whenever the interviewer is faced with a collection of photographs or artifacts, whether it involves photocopying or working with donations of original materials, the interviewer or someone working with the oral history project should inventory them carefully. This provides both narrator and interviewer with a complete list of information about the materials and is helpful in all discussions about the best way to handle them. A sample form is included in the appendix to this book.

Project leaders and interviewers also will want to work carefully with tribal and cultural repositories to make the best possible decisions about how to handle Native American materials and the stories attached to them.

Cross-Cultural Considerations

While community-engaged oral history projects ideally will involve interviewers who are part of the community, that may not always be the case, particularly if students are involved in such projects. Sometimes, of course, the students will be part of the community, but when students or others are outsiders who will be involved in the project, it can be useful to understand some basics about cross-cultural communication. Distinctions in place, tribe, age, gender, social class, institutional affiliation, educational background, language, and other variables all may affect the interview process across cultural boundaries.

Listed here are several suggestions for cross-cultural interviewing adapted for use in oral history interviews. If interviewers are not part of the Indigenous community, interviewer training that specifically emphasizes

information about the community is a must because cultural norms can be diverse, both within and across Indigenous groups.

- Outsiders, for example, might want to be aware that:
  - Sharing food is a common way for many Indigenous communities to welcome visitors.
  - Gentle, rather than firm or brisk handshakes, may be considered a sign of respect, not weakness.
  - Community Elders often open and close group gatherings with prayers or ceremonies.
  - In group settings, younger members of the gathering may be expected to ask Elders for permission to speak.
- Be aware of clues such as facial expressions and other nonverbal methods of communication. They may vary between narrator and interviewer.
- Be aware that sharing a common language is not the same thing as sharing a common culture. People can understand the same language in different ways or hear stories in different ways. Nuances and phrases, though spoken in the shared language, may be understood in different ways.
- Listen carefully to the interview information without making judgments about the use of language, sentence structure, communication patterns, vocabulary, pronunciation, emotional expression, appearance, or other common communication factors. These will be valued differently in different cultures.[2]

After the Interview

After the interview, the interviewer still has a couple of things to do. The first, again, is to ask the narrator to sign the gift or legal release (donor) form. Usually, everyone involved in an interview session will sign the form at the end of the session, even if more interviews are planned. Narrators and interviewers also may wish to discuss options for closing or restricting access to portions of the interviews, depending on the Indigenous community's protocols. Narrators should be given copies of the forms they sign.

Other post-interview responsibilities include:

- Complete all other interview forms.
- Document the interview setting, including specific information about the narrators that may be relevant to the interview information. If the interview was part of a public forum, document the setting and audience

as well as all events related to the telling of the stories. This provides interview context for future listeners and users of the information.
- Thank the narrator, observing appropriate community protocols.
- Immediately label all media.
- Duplicate all media and use the duplicate as a working copy. Store the originals or masters in a safe place.
- Check the spelling of proper names mentioned in the interview. Make a list for use in transcribing the interview.
- Review the contents of the interview to identify gaps and make notes in case subsequent interviews are scheduled.
- And keep in touch with the narrator. Share project updates and make sure to invite the narrator to a project celebration.

Interview stewardship is the final oral history step. This includes transcribing and, depending on the wishes of the interviewees and the nature of the project, making the interview information available to others. It is the subject of the next chapter.

Notes

1 Information in this section is adapted from: Barbara W. Sommer and Mary Kay Quinlan. *The Native American Veterans Oral History Manual*. Lincoln, NE: The Nebraska Foundation for the Preservation of Oral History, 2005; and from Barbara W. Sommer and Mary Kay Quinlan. *The Oral History Manual*, 3rd ed. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2018.

2 Cross-cultural communication is a widely studied field with numerous sources to explore. Sources summarized here include: William Schneider. . . . *So They Understand: Cultural Issues in Oral History*. Logan, UT: Utah State University Press, 2002; Rebecca Marschan-Piekkari and Cristina Reis. "Language and Languages in Cross-Cultural Interviewing," in *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods for International Business*, Rebecca Marschan-Piekkari and Catherine Welch, eds. Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2004; and *Culture Card: A Guide to Build Cultural Awareness—American Indian and Alaska Natives* (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, DHHS, January 2009).

7 Stewardship

In his Introduction to the first edition of this manual, Charles E. "Chuck" Trimble wrote about the concerns that he and others had on the impact of the Digital Age in preserving Indigenous knowledge. As he put it, what would the impact of a "highly technological generation" have on listening to and preserving time-honored culture and traditions. In Canada at about the same time, Cree Métis Elder Maria Campbell mentioned a similar set of questions, noting the challenge of using old and new languages "to express . . . stories without losing the thoughts and images that are culturally unique" and reminding everyone that "all this must be done on paper, for that is the new way" (Wheeler 2005, 204–205).

This step in the practice of oral history, often called stewardship, helps address these concerns. Definitions of stewardship focus on responsible management of materials. The Society of American Archivists (SAA), serving North American archives and archivists, those responsible for care and management of "records of enduring value," defines stewardship as "the responsible management of archival resources" and adds a description of how it works:

> Stewardship often implies the **management of archival resources as a surrogate for another party such as the records creators**. Some writers have pointed to not only the sense of responsibility but also of power and authority that derives from the role of steward.
>
> (Society of American Archivists Dictionary of Archives Terminology 2022)

Francine D. Spang-Willis, former director of the American Indian Tribal Histories Project, has called attention to questions that can be raised about stewardship for Indigenous oral histories. A repository, as she said, "with its ownership of copyright, serves as the gatekeeper to the material. It has a responsibility to protect the material and give access to, and use of, the interviews." The gatekeeper role she identified is critical. It defines power

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and authority over care and management of interviews; for Indigenous oral history, it is a reminder of the importance of documenting information about community engagement and adherence to tribal protocols for repositories. As Spang-Willis put it, care of Indigenous oral histories involves "much more than recording, transcribing, and disseminating the material in a Western way" (Spang-Willis personal communication).

Community Engagement and Protocols

Community choices and Indigenous protocols are critical sources of information for stewardship of Indigenous oral histories. It is through stewardship that project personnel, working with those who will provide ongoing care for the interviews, implement the planning decisions guiding ongoing care, access, and use. The decisions are based on standard archival practices for care of recordings and transcripts and information from community engagement and Indigenous protocols.

When coordinating communication of information for stewardship, several questions come up. Answers to them can help define an archivist's role and determine guidelines for access to the recorded information. The questions include: how to incorporate community engagement choices into stewardship, how to maintain the cultural uniqueness of information, how to handle balance of power questions, and what the repository's views are on transcribing. Where and how do archival policies, community engagement choices, and tribal protocols intersect in determining care, access, and use of the oral histories? How can project managers and archivists protect access and use of this information for the future? Should access to the interviews be open or restricted? What guidelines are necessary for Indigenous access? For non-Indigenous researchers?

Depression era interviews included Native Americans

During the Great Depression of the 1930s, the United States Works Progress Administration (WPA) Federal Writers' Project employed out-of-work writers in each state to compile local histories, interviews, ethnologies, and other works. Several of the WPA projects included interviews with Native Americans; Wisconsin and Oklahoma are two examples (WPA Oneida Ethnological Study/project 9476, WPA project S-149). Interviews were conducted by either tribal members or white interviewers in a question-and-answer format and

documented with extensive written notes that project members developed into transcripts.

The Wisconsin Oneida interviews, done by and with members of the Oneida Nation, document their history in Wisconsin from the 1880s through the beginning of World War II. They include information about reservation life, economic challenges, boarding schools, family histories, the Great Depression, service in World War I and the beginning of World War II, sports, and politics. Approximately, one-third of the more than 500 interviews are in the Oneida language. The book about this long-lost WPA project, *Oneida Lives: Long-Lost Voices of the Wisconsin Oneida*, contains excerpts from more than 50 narrators (Lewis 2005, xviii, xxx, xxxi).

The Indian-Pioneer Papers project in Oklahoma includes approximately 400 interviews documenting Tahlequah, the capital of two federally recognized tribes in the state. The interviews cover the history of this Indigenous community from the Civil War through the Land Runs to Oklahoma statehood and the Great Depression, along with the formation of several area boarding schools. In addition to the interviews, as part of the project, Federal Writers' Project workers compiled histories of Indian missions in the state and developed a dictionary of the Comanche language (Agnew 2018).

The Role of Repositories

The Society of American Archivists describes a repository as a space used to store items of continuing value, particularly records. It states further: "The term repository can refer to any storehouse holding any type of material. Archivists generally use the term to refer to storage venues holding paper or digital records, and even both" (Society of American Archivists 2022). Nancy MacKay, in her book *Curating Oral History: From Interview to Archive*, describes repositories as "physical space and institutional infrastructure for preserving materials that go into public records." She also defines the roles of archives—a term that she notes often is used interchangeably with repository—as implying a "higher level of curation, based on best practices." These are the meanings used in this chapter (MacKay 2016, 20–23; 69–70).

Oral histories are most commonly held in repositories. Repositories provide carefully developed environmental conditions for climate control,

air quality, and temperature controls needed for optimum storage of recordings, transcripts, and other project materials. But it is also helpful to keep the repository role of gatekeeper in mind. For Indigenous oral histories, the role of the gatekeeper, along with statements guiding access, highlights the importance of the interconnecting roles of community engagement, Indigenous protocols, and stewardship. Stewardship defines the steps for long-term care according to archival standards while community engagement choices and Indigenous protocols support informed decisions about access and use that meet Indigenous standards. Even seemingly small details can make a big difference. For example, at the Little Big Horn College (Crow) archive in Montana, interview metadata documents the interviewer–narrator relationship by identifying the narrator/knowledge keeper as the creator of an interview and the interviewer as a contributor (Ille personal communication). This terminology not only helps define the balance of power in the narrator–interviewer relationship for the present but also defines the relationship and provides context for future users of the interviews.

Oral histories now often are held in tribal archives, but this hasn't always been the case. When held in tribal facilities, archivists can help provide answers to stewardship questions. When held in non-tribal facilities, the role of advocating for project planning choices and Indigenous

Figure 7.1 Oral history recordings. Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum Oral History Program, Seminole Tribe of Florida, Clewiston, Florida.

Source: Used with permission.

protocols generally falls to project managers or co-managers. The Society of American Archivists "Protocols for Native American Archival Materials," a guide for non-Indigenous repositories holding Indigenous oral histories and other archival materials, is a helpful resource in this situation (Society of American Archivists 2022).

Stewardship Specifics

This information helps support development of a stewardship framework that can reflect community engagement guidelines and Indigenous protocols.

Oral History Forms

Information on project forms helps document details about the narrator and interviewer, community engagement choices, tribal protocols, and is helpful for project management. Generally, project forms document copyright status of an interview and provide information both about the narrator and the interview content and context. Along with community engagement and protocol information, repository personnel use information on the forms to catalog interviews, entering information about them into repository records and developing access and use guidelines, including whether an interview will have open or restricted access. Completion of the forms usually is done by the narrator and interviewer working with project leaders.

Recordings/Media

Older recordings often are in analog format. In this format, the original recording is called the master or the archival master. For born digital recordings—interviews recorded in a digital format—and digitized analog recordings, the digital master is the primary copy. Always keep archival masters and primary copies intact and store them in a safe place with archival climate controls. Label them thoroughly and make user copies from them. If video is used, keep the raw footage intact as an archival document and, if needed, copy the audio portion for additional access. Ask about recommendations for optimal storage conditions for the various types of recording media that may be in a collection. Archivists and others charged with care of oral history collections also recommend developing ongoing 5-year data migration policies. Such plans help offset technical obsolescence issues but are time-consuming and can be costly; these plans are most useful when they become part of ongoing, regular collections care duties.

Photographs and Manuscripts

When oral history interviewers meet with narrators, the subject of what to do with personal photographs and artifact collections can come up. Using a project form developed for this purpose, make a careful list of each item. Give a copy to the narrator and keep one with information about the narrator's oral history interview. If arrangements have been made to share the information with the archives, request permission from the narrator to do so.

Indigenous Veterans of the United States Armed Forces

In the United States, as a group, American Indians and Alaska Natives have the highest participation rate in the country's Armed Forces, almost 19 percent, about 5 percent more than any other ethnic group (Simkins and Barrett). This statistic is set against the backdrop of centuries of government-sponsored discrimination, removal from homelands, and broken treaties. When asked in oral history interviews about their military service, the veterans, however, speak of patriotism, family traditions, support for the country, support for their families, and continuation of a cultural tradition.

Interviews with World War II Code Talkers, a group of Indigenous servicemen who used their languages as a communication code, comprise one group of these oral histories. After the Code Talker program was declassified, the first interviews were recorded with Navajo veterans; interviews with Code Talkers in other tribes followed. Overall, members of 33 tribes served as Code Talkers in both world wars; in the early 2000s, the tribes were recognized for their service with Congressional Gold Medals, the nation's highest civilian award. Code Talker oral histories are now held in many repositories including, the Marine Corps History Division, the Library of Congress American Folklife Center Veterans History Project, Dine' College in Arizona, and the Smithsonian Institute National Museum of the American Indian. These interviews document the role and commitment of the Code Talkers and their use of Indigenous languages as an unbreakable wartime code.

The Library of Congress American Folklife Center Veterans History Project, established in 2000, holds hundreds of oral histories with American Indian and Alaska Native men and women veterans

from World War I to the present. The result, through its ongoing collecting efforts and Indigenous veterans initiative, is a firsthand record of Indigenous service across all branches of the US Armed Forces.

Transcribing and Transcripts

Transcribing transfers the spoken words in an interview recording to paper. It is a preservation tool for oral historians, but in Indigenous oral histories, it also presents critical questions for discussion. Looking at the practice from an archival point of view, developing transcripts is time-consuming, but it helps ensure ongoing access to interview information. It also can support language revitalization and preservation efforts through use of a standardized writing system and consistency of spelling, helping retain content and context in use of words, phrases, and concepts that may not always easily translate to paper. It offers the advantage of developing a document that can last a long time and be an asset to a project, but is time-consuming to produce. Decisions about transcribing are a topic for project planning discussions with an understanding they will be implemented after interviews are recorded.

Transcribing can be done with computer apps or by individuals trained to listen and type. Either way, when a document has been produced, look to someone with cultural and linguistic knowledge in all languages of the interview to check it for accuracy. Fully transcribe any conversations about translations, identifying them to help document interview ccontext.

Indigenous protocols also are part of the transcribing process. For example, when transcribing interviews recorded by the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe with the last generation to speak the language as a first language, bilingual transcribers followed traditional protocols that guided the telling of the stories. Narrators didn't tell or record the stories out of season and transcribers didn't catalog or transcribe them out of season.

Interview Abstract

Project leaders often ask interviewers to provide information about the contents of an interview. Many projects develop an interview abstract or index to help with this. This is done with a timepiece, recording the time elapsed as each new topic comes up. Doing this allows users to locate particular topics and helps preserve oral access.

Transcribing Guide

When developing a transcript, begin with a transcribing guide. Decide on a page format including title page, heading on the first page of the transcript, use of page numbers, type style, and paragraph format. Additional information can include:

- A guide for consistency of spelling
- A common word-usage guide
- Consistency in identifying speakers
- Consistency in identifying transcribers and others who have worked on the transcript
- Proofreading and audit-editing guidelines

If a translator is used, include a statement on how to handle explanations or comments, the "translation conversations," that take place between a narrator or narrators, an interviewer, and a translator.

Transcribing

When transcribing, for purposes of language preservation and revitalization, follow guidelines for consistency of spelling. If done by hand, transcribing involves typing a word-for-word copy of the spoken interview followed by an audit-check to confirm full accuracy. With advancements in software, speech-to-text apps also can be an option. If using an app, look for one that can be trained to work with the Indigenous language of the narrator and plan time to carefully audit-check the document for full accuracy. Ask the interviewer and narrator to review an audit-edited transcript for additional accuracy. When using translations, draw on the expertise of fluent speakers; involving and empowering Indigenous speakers in language preservation helps the community while providing a source to help others learn from the transcript, including its use of language (Treuer 2020, 95–97).

Asking narrators for their input also gives them an opportunity to help determine how language and speech patterns will be handled. For example, some people, reading their spoken words, ask to edit or rewrite their transcript. Julie Cruikshank, when working with Yukon Elders, asked this question to a group of narrators. Although for some narrators, English was a second language, all commented on the use of language patterns common to their community and unanimously asked that their interviews be transcribed exactly as spoken. They pointed out that this allowed future readers to continue to "hear" them, even if they were no longer living (Cruikshank 1998, 16). After review and acceptance of the transcript, the

interviewer can ask the narrator or narrators to sign a form stating this for repository files. If this seems too formal, ask the narrator if a note indicating approval could be included in their transcript file.

When everyone has signed off on the transcript, it is time to print a final copy on acid-free paper for permanent storage. Keep the master (acid-free copy) in the non-circulating master file and make user copies from it.

This excerpt from the beginning of a transcript in the collections of the Crow Indian Historical and Cultural Collection at the Little Big Horn College Library illustrates the level of written detail that is used to document a spoken story. The heading identifies the speakers and briefly summarizes the story. The transcript is divided into two- to four-minute segments of the recorded interview. Each section begins with the Crow language transcript followed by an English translation. The first section starts at the beginning of the digitized recording 00:01 and ends at 3:35. The transcript for this section is a little under two pages long; the excerpt included here—the introduction and the first two sentences of the interview—is from this section (Pretty Eagle Collection, Crow Indian Historical and Cultural Collection. Little Big Horn College Library, Crow Agency Montana). It illustrates the transcript style used for this interview.

Transcript Excerpt

Among the Willows is beseeched by Takes His Gun to tell May Old Coyote and Susie Child in the Mouth, sisters, to tell her story of being a captive by the Lakota as retold by May Old Coyote Childs.

Pretty Eagle Collection #54 A-51

Transcribed and Translated by Dale Old Horn

Synopsis

Among the Willows travels to her relative and stops at the home of Takes His Gun. While there Takes His Gun gives her much food and material gifts and asks her to tell of her story of when she was taken captive by the Lakota. This is an illustration of the ethical and value system of the Apsáalooke as retold by May Old Coyote

Tags: taken as a captive butcherTakes His Gun light colored cattle Among the Willows

Spotted cattle

Crow Version (first sentence)

May Old Coyote—Hinne chilaáksheesh Bulúx Awuan Nichish bií waá iákoo walashe koók. Koó ií liawaáhik. Hilaakée waláshe kan Alakum Míash huuk.

English Version (first sentence)

This morning I am using my childhood name, Hits in the Ice. My name is now Hair Part Woman.

Care for Oral History Materials

At this point, the work is just beginning for archivists and others who will provide long-term care of the oral histories. Information provided by the project team can help ensure that everything will last as long as possible and that it will be cared for according to agreed-upon project guidelines and protocols. General guidelines include the following steps for project leaders:

- Store oral history project materials in secure areas accessible only to designated staff.
- Make a working copy of all media and store the interview masters apart from the working copies in a restricted area.
- Store media on archival (not metal) shelving away from magnetic fields and sources of vibrations.
- Make a working copy of all transcripts and store the interview masters (printed on acid-free paper) apart from the working copies in a restricted area.
- Store interview masters in acid-free folders and boxes.
- Keep storage areas free of dust, dirt, pests, and exposure to pollutants, including food and cigarettes, or prolonged periods of sunlight.
- Wear clean, lint-free cotton gloves when working with the recording media.

The internet, while it can be a tool for providing access to project information, is not recommended for long-term storage of interviews.

Accessing Oral History Materials

Procedures for providing access to the recordings and transcripts are another important concern for oral historians and oral history collections. The ethics of the oral history process also apply to collections access. For Indigenous oral histories, this will include use of protocols and information about decisions made during project planning.

Collections Access Policy Guidelines

A written collections access policy guides use of the oral history materials. It may be short but can clearly identify policies and protocols for care of and access to the oral history materials. It can identify Indigenous ownership and copyright ownership, determine open or restricted access to interviews, and ensure use of a log to control access and location of the oral histories.

Internet Access Guidelines

Many organizations express interest in posting oral history interviews on the internet. Whether access to interviews is restricted or not, oral historians have identified several considerations about this practice:

- Become familiar with the ethical considerations of broad electronic distribution of interview information
- Realize the internet is not a long-term storage option and that putting interviews on the internet only serves public access purposes
- Indicate the existence of protocols guiding access and use
- Define citation formats

Publicity Plan

After completing a project, what are various ways to let others know about it? This involves a publicity plan. The more people know about a collection and turn to it for information, the more benefits can be derived from it. A publicity plan for a project often includes:

- Press releases for tribal members, news media, and other interested groups.
- Community forums providing information about the project and the interview information.
- Public service announcements for radio stations, especially stations run by or serving tribal communities.
- Brochure describing the project, including the names of contact personnel. Send it to area museums, educational institutions, libraries, and other public arenas, and give interviewers and narrators copies to distribute.

Celebrate!

What is the final step in an oral history project? A Celebration! Host a meal and invite all participants and family members. Honor narrators/knowledge keepers for their information and generosity. Honor the interviewers, project managers, and all others who worked on the project for their time and commitment. Thank everyone involved for the gift of priceless information.

8 Using Indigenous Oral Information

Retaining information and transmitting it orally through generations is a complex process. The challenges in doing this may be difficult to fully understand. How do the memories, stories, and teachings inform our understanding of the past and enrich our thinking? Accuracy of use, clarity of meaning, and respect for the narrator and the interview information are paramount. The ethics and methodologies in this book can guide the Indigenous oral histories throughout their lifetimes of uses.

First, there are several basic factors to mention. Users of the oral history information carefully and accurately document context and content. Understanding the dynamics of the interview and the way that the story was told is necessary. The threads of commonality and the unique understanding and perspective represented in each Indigenous oral history interview should be respected and accurately presented. Other points include following the guidelines and protocols for use of the interviews and providing an explanatory statement about the use of Indigenous oral history as source material as well as background on the interviews.

Stories about the past are important because they have meaning for what they *say* and what they can *do*, not for chronologies. The tale of a warrior lost at sea who saved his crew and found his way home is an example. It was told by Mrs. Angela Sidney to help others learn the way home and to help inform an understanding of the present. She told it to her son when he returned from service in the Armed Forces and, another time, at the dedication of Yukon College in Whitehorse to celebrate the opening of a place for students to learn while staying close to home (Cruikshank 1998, xv).

There are many other examples. The Lakota have an epic story, sometimes described as similar to Homer's *Odyssey*, about two hunters and the obstacles they encounter on the Great Plains. Throughout the story, the men are followed across the Plains by two entities, who are women. The story, recorded with George LaCaine, a Wood Mountain Sioux from Canada, as part of the Doris Duke Indian Oral History Project at the University

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of South Dakota, helps teach about adversity from men's and women's points of view (Ogle 1968). It contains information outside our normal range of experience that helps define Lakota culture and ongoing response to adversity. The analogy to the *Odyssey* is especially informative when one remembers that the *Odyssey* itself originated as an oral narrative, written down after what was probably many tellings.

The Ojibwe tell stories about Nanabozho, both a trickster and a giver of good, who taught the Ojibwe how to use gifts of nature, such as wild rice, maple sugar, and birch bark, in the northern forests where they live (Coleman et al. 1962, 55–59). These stories contain insight into past and present culture for the Ojibwe people.

Traditional stories can involve music. The Salt Songs of the Southern Paiute and the Salt Song Trail, the sacred path of the songs, were a gift from the Creator to these people who lived in the region now known as California, Utah, Arizona, and Nevada. The songs are sung at funerals and memorials to help the deceased on their journeys (Stringfellow 2020).

Telling and retelling the stories keeps them alive and adds layers of meaning. Mrs. Sidney's use of the story described earlier to welcome her son, a veteran returning from World War II, and then, decades later, to welcome students to a new college, illustrates adaptations that fit modern needs. The Southern Paiute provide another example. They organized a Sing of the Salt Songs in the cemetery of a boarding school at which many Southern Paiute children died. As the organizers said, the children died from neglect and had no one else to sing for them. The traditional songs helped them on their journeys (Stringfellow).

Traditional stories can be about places or events, sometimes quite specific, that hold cultural significance for the tribal nation. The Ojibwe have stories about coming to the place where food (wild rice) grew on the water and about battles with the Dakota as they reached the area. The Oneida oral tradition about the Five Nations Confederacy or Great League is told by the Wisconsin Oneida about an event that preceded their removal from their eastern homes to the state. The Cherokee also have removal stories. The Ho-Chunk of Nebraska have stories about the places and events prior to removal, as do the Ponca of Oklahoma, whose homes were along the Missouri River in what is now Nebraska and Iowa. The Comanche have stories about the legendary hero Sokeweki, the Land Searcher. They also have stories about places where treaties were signed or battles were fought with non-Native settlers prior to removal. Such stories help link people to place and help maintain ties to traditional culture and land areas; they can serve as a bridge in the disruption of knowledge resulting from contact with Europeans. When they date from historic times, they may, to non-Native scholars, be seen as a blend of tradition and history that can be historicized, or viewed as historical sources complete with the insertion of

chronologies. But to Indigenous communities, history is not chronology. The Comanche offer an example. The use of dates is meaningless. The stories about treaties and wars describe how "our ancestors lived up to their expectations as well as provided a road for us" (Seefeldt 2006, 86, 88).

Traditional stories help guide and inform, reinforcing common traditions and culture. Stories such as those from the Comanche also illustrate the idea that traditional stories are not always from the distant past. They represent a continuing commitment to oral transfer of knowledge in Indigenous cultures. And, in all cases, by helping define "[a] value system, they often are vivid reminders of the Elders who used oral tradition as a way to speak to the younger generation" (Schneider 2002, 60).

Examples also include personal experiences of veterans, those with boarding school experiences, or twentieth- to twenty-first-century political histories. Oral histories collected by the Suquamish on several topics fall into this category. The interviews that Mrs. Eva Tulene Watt did with Keith Basso describing White Mountain Apache family life represent first-person information. The description of a Plains Indian veteran's experience recorded as part of the Doris Duke American Indian Oral History Project in the University of South Dakota collections is an example of an individual's story. So are the interviews Patty Loew did with the members of the Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa about how a dam built by the Wisconsin-Minnesota Light & Power Company during the early years of the twentieth century and licensed for 50 years affected their food gathering and burial sites (Loew 2001, 68–69). Several other oral history projects with the band conducted through the Chippewa Valley Museum in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, documented civil disobedience related to license renewal of the dam and court actions filed to protect the long-standing, traditional treaty rights, especially the rights to "hunt, fish and gather" (Pfaff 1993, 75–81).

The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation in Oregon, the Umatilla (Imatallum), Cayuse (Waylatpam) and Walla Walla (Waluulapam), have developed programs such as the Cultural Resource Protection Program for tribal cultural resources management that incorporate the use of oral history. The confederation has worked not only for the founding tribal nations but also with others in the region, including the Nez Perce in Idaho where a 1992 joint project about the construction of the Bonneville Dam included the use of oral history (Stapp and Burney 2002, 72–78).

An interview with Tisha Ulen, an Inupiaq woman from North Central Alaska, is another example. Asked to provide first-person information about the Alaskan Gold Rush years, she described not only her father's work as a hunter but also her mother's responsibilities as the family moved camp to follow her father during those years. In doing so, drawing on personal memory, she provided insight into the role of women in a

pre-twentieth-century subsistence society, providing a window into a previously undocumented past (Schneider 2002, 73–74).

Many tribal nations use oral information in education programs. Its use in documenting and understanding tribal nations and cultural identity is critical. It is a retention tool for vernacular sound, meaning, and use of language. It provides an Indigenous view of history that is often missing. It can be used to help document the context of objects in museums, to document the significance of place to an Indigenous community, or to provide insight into tribal cultural growth and change. It calls attention to another viewpoint that challenges the official storyline and brings out new interpretations of events. The following identifies a few examples.

Kâniyâsihk Culture Camps

Throughout Turtle Island (North America), there are local oral history activities that do not take the form of interview recording projects. Dr. Kevin wâsakâyâsiw Lewis (Plains Cree, paskwâwiyiniw) is the founder and manager of kâniyâsihk Cultural Camp (KCC) on the shores of Ministikwan Lake (Island Lake), Treaty 6 Territory, in Northern Saskatchewan. The camp began almost 21 years ago to give young people the opportunity to train to become oskâpêwisak, helpers who assist Elders in ceremonies. Since then the camp has grown and expanded into a nonprofit organization focused on holistic community well-being through the preservation of nêhiyawêwin (Cree language), traditional knowledge, culture, and land-based skills.

Culture camps run throughout the year for 1 to 7 days each, and the focus of each camp is based on seasonal activities. Fall camps can include moose, elk, deer, and buffalo meat processing and hide tanning. Winter camps can include ice fishing, dog sledding, snaring, and trapper education. Summer and early Fall camps can include gathering and preserving plants, medicines, and berries. Some camps teach how to make traditional clothing like moccasins and gauntlets. Others teach traditional birch bark canoe, snowshoe and dogsled building. Almost everything participants need to live at the camps and to build with is harvested by hand off the land, including the tools. For example, for the birch bark canoe construction, "We used canoes to paddle across the lake to harvest materials from the land: we peeled

birch bark, dug up and split spruce roots, and split cedar wood with hand tools to construct the ribs of the boat" (Cattroll 2020).

Some of the camps offer Cree ceremonies like Sun Dances, Sweat Lodges, and Chicken Dances. More recently, Elders requested a camp for girls' "Rites of Passage" where young women went out on the land paddling, harvesting, hiking, and learning Cree and woman teachings with Cree grandmothers and great-grandmothers. At the end of the day participants share a meal, sit around the fire, and share stories.

One of the most innovative programs is the land-based Cree language immersion school kâ-nêyâsihk mîkiwâhpa (Cree Academy of Excellence) where all lessons are related to the land and taught in nêhiyawêwin (Cree language) by Elders' helpers.

While several YouTube videos show camp activities, there is no repository of collected interviews or recordings of the teachings like one would find in an archive or library. Rather, these are programs modeled after the old way of transmitting knowledge where individuals actively participate by directly learning from Elders and knowledge keepers who share their knowledge in the oral tradition through story, teachings, and by hands-on experience.

Figure 8.1 Kâniyâsihk Culture Camps. Kevin Lewis and Glenda Abbot harvesting birch bark at Ministikwan Lake.

Source: Photo Credit: Melody Wood (2018). Used with permission.

The Lakota Odyssey story described earlier provides an example of language retention. In the interview, the narrator first tells the story from the perspective of men using the male dialect and then tells it from the perspective of women using the female dialect. The recording not only documents the story but also preserves intricacies of dialect spoken by a narrator with a clear mastery of language.

Alexandra Harmon in *Indians in the Making: Ethnic Relations and Indian Identities Around Puget Sound* uses oral history information to help readers understand the history of the concept of being Indian. "A history of Indians . . . could and should chronicle a change over time in Indianness itself. . . . The definitions of Indian and Indian tribe have histories themselves" (Harmon 1998, 3). As she further points out, because the term Indian was applied to Indigenous peoples on the North American continent by European explorers, tribal nations who knew themselves by historic and traditional names were forced to learn that they were now Indians. Drawing from the oral information, she also describes twentieth- and twenty-first-century Indians as a people with a "carefully cultivated consciousness" and with definitions of themselves and their people that their ancestors would not have recognized. "Members of every tribe today think, speak, support and organize themselves in ways the 1820s people would never have dreamed of" (Harmon 1998, 237–238, 248). And yet, as the oral information in her book shows, Pacific Coast Indigenous communities define themselves by the same tribal, ethnic, and cultural identities they always have.

Donna L. Akers, writing about the Choctaw Nation, also illustrates the importance of oral information to Indigenous culture and history. She notes it can help document changes that come almost too rapidly to be understood. The examples she gives of abrupt adaptation of kinship systems and clan structures, gender roles, spiritual beliefs, and political or leadership roles illustrate how oral history can document cultural change while retaining cultural identity among people (Akers 2004).

Written in advance of the bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, the Salish-Pend d'Oreille Culture Committee and Elders Culture Advisory Council of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai tribal communities produced *The Salish People and the Lewis and Clark Expedition*. In this book, they used oral information to look at "the role of the expedition within the history of our tribe—within the history of our tribe's struggle for cultural and political survival" in the years since the expedition ("Salish-Pend d'Oreille . . ." 2005, xii). Oral traditions in the tribal nation document information about members finding a group of people who were lost. Taking pity on the lost group, they gave them horses, food, and other essentials. As they came to realize, the group was the Lewis

and Clark Expedition. Their history of the Lewis and Clark Expedition provides an example of how oral information can provide different ways of looking at the past.

Many other works include traditional information as source material. Selected bibliographies often include William Warren's 1885 *History of the Ojibways: Based Upon Traditions and Oral Statements* (Warren 1885, reprint 1970). New sources are added to the list almost daily. At a time when many Indigenous people live in or interact with several cultures, such sources help illustrate not only the importance of oral information but also how careful, accurate, and respectful use of information can help everyone understand alternative interpretations of history. George Miles wrote:

> We should recognize that Indian voices are not merely relics of the past. Around the country Indian men and women . . . have much to say about themselves, their people, their culture, and their history. The questions they ask about American history may not be the same ones that interest white historians, nor will their answers always be the same. Indigenous historiographic traditions will allow us to see and appreciate more fully the diverse origins of our society.
>
> (Miles 1992, 70)

The Gwich'in Tribal Council is among the many Indigenous communities that illustrate Miles' point. *Our Whole Gwich'in Way of Life Has Changed/Gwich'in K'yuu Gwiidandài' Tthak Ejuk Gòonlih Stories from the People of the Land*, documenting the lives of the people, who live near or above the Arctic Circle in Alaska and northwestern Canada, provides first-person documentation of this community's history. Published by the University of Alberta Press, it won an Oral History Association (OHA) Book Award for outstanding use of oral history (McCartney 2020).

These examples of the work of Indigenous oral historians in Canada and the United States represent ongoing work across both countries. They illustrate the wide diversity of the practice and use of oral history among Indigenous communities.

And let there be no doubt about the value of such work.

In the award-winning book recounting her life story, *Don't Let the Sun Step Over You,* White Mountain Apache Elder Eva Tulene Watt sums up why preserving such oral information matters:

> [I]t's not for me I am doing it—it's not for me myself. It's for those younger generations that come along here in later years. See, they're not gonna know how we used to live. They're not gonna know all the

> places we went to, or how we got food, or all the things we done. They won't know hardly nothing from long years ago. But it's good for them to know. White people, too. They make up lots of stuff about us Indians that's not true. I don't know why they do that. They should hear our stories first,'cause then they can make better stories for themselves. It's better that way.
>
> (Watt 2004, xiv)

Appendix A

Indigenous Oral History Consent and Release Forms

The forms included in Appendix A are samples provided by several of the oral history projects profiled in this book. They illustrate the various ways in which the sponsors of oral history projects document participant consent to participate, gift or release forms for interviews, transfer of project-related materials to archives, and descriptions of the provenance of archival materials.

These forms offer useful examples from which project planners may learn. But they are not intended to provide legal advice. Indigenous oral history projects should follow protocols and other related guidelines appropriate to their own community and consult legal counsel as necessary.

SEMINOLE TRIBE OF FLORIDA
AH-TAH-THI-KI
MUSEUM
A PLACE TO LEARN. A PLACE TO REMEMBER.

Oral History Program Agreement

Seminole Tribe of Florida
Ah♦Tah♦Thi♦Ki Museum
30290 Josie Billie Highway PMB 1003
Clewiston, Florida 33440
Ph: (863) 902-1113/Fax: (863) 902-1117

In consideration of the recording and preservation of my oral history memoir by the Seminole Tribe of Florida Ah♦Tah♦Thi♦Ki Museum, I the narrator, _____, hereby grant, assign, and transfer to the Seminole Tribe of Florida Ah♦Tah♦Thi♦Ki Museum the rights, including all literary and property rights unless restricted as noted below, to publish, duplicate, or otherwise use and dispose of the recording(s) and/or transcribed interview(s) recorded on _____ concerning _____ and related subjects, and any videotaped footage and still photographs taken during the interview. This includes the rights of publication in print and in electronic form, such as placement on the Internet/Web for access by that medium, the right to rebroadcast the interview or portions thereof on the Internet and in other electronic formats, and permission to transfer the interview to future technological mediums. I (the narrator) hereby give the Seminole Tribe of Florida Ah♦Tah♦Thi♦Ki Museum the right to distribute the recording(s) and/or transcription(s) to any other museums, libraries and/or educational institutions for scholarly and educational uses and purposes.

Similarly and for the same considerations noted preceding, I the interviewer _____ hereby grant, assign, and transfer to the Seminole Tribe of Florida Ah♦Tah♦Thi♦Ki Museum the rights, including all literary and property rights unless restricted as noted below, to publish, duplicate, or otherwise use and dispose of the above described recording(s) and/or transcription(s) and any videotaped footage and still photographs taken during the interview. This includes the rights of publication in print and in electronic form, such as placement on the Internet/Web for access by that medium, the right to rebroadcast the interview or portions thereof on the Internet and in other electronic formats, and permission to transfer the interview to future technological mediums.

Likewise, I the Director of the Seminole Tribe of Florida Ah♦Tah♦Thi♦Ki Museum hereby agree to preserve the products of this oral history interview according to accepted professional standards of responsible custody and agree to provide the narrator and interviewer (the oral authors) with access to the taped interview(s).

C:\Users\alexanderbanks\Desktop\TrishannaStorm Consent.doc

Figure A1.1 Oral History Program Agreement, Seminole Tribe of Florida.
Source: Used with permission.

SEMINOLE TRIBE OF FLORIDA
AH-TAH-THI-KI
MUSEUM
A PLACE TO LEARN. A PLACE TO REMEMBER.

Dated:_____ **Signature of Narrator:** _____
Narrator's name as he/she wishes it to be used: _____
Narrator's address:_____
(street or P.O. Box) (city) (state) (zip code)
Narrator's phone number: (____) _____- _____Narrator's email address:_____

Dated: _____ Signature of Interviewer:
_____
Interviewer's address: _____
(street or P.O. Box) (city) (state) (zip code)
Interviewer's phone number:
Interviewer's email address:

Dated: _____ Signature of Interviewer: _____
Interviewer's address:_____
(street or P.O. Box) (city) (state) (zip code)
Interviewer's phone number: (____) _____- _____ Interviewer's email address:
_____

Seminole Tribe of Florida Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum Director: _____
Print Name:_____
Date:_____

Seminole Tribe of Florida Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Collections Officer: _____
Print Name:_____
Date:_____

Note any restrictions:

I wish to place the following restrictions on the use of the recorded interviews: Please check and initial those restrictions you wish to place on the use of your interview(s):
_____ I wish to be identified by the pseudonym _____
_____ I wish to restrict access to the materials until (date): _____
_____ I wish to close specified portions of the interview, as noted on the attached document
_____ I wish to restrict access to the materials to on-site use (i.e. exclude electronic distribution)
_____ Other (specify):

The Seminole Tribe of Florida Ah□Tah□Thi□Ki Museum agrees to abide by these restrictions:
Initials of Museum Director: _____

Figure A1.1 (Continued)

LITTLE BIG HORN COLLEGE ARCHIVES

PO Box 370

Crow Agency, Montana 59022

ORAL HISTORY RELEASE FORM

I hereby give, convey, and consign to the Little Big Horn College Archives as a donation for such scholarly, educational, academic, and historical purposes as Little Big Horn College shall determine, according to the governing regulations of the College, all legal title and interest in copyright in this specific recorded interview and most particularly the exclusive rights of reproduction, distribution, preparation of derivative works, public performance and display, except for those restrictions as stated below. This interview will be placed online via the Content Management System, Mukurtu, which allows material to be presented in a culturally sensitive manner.

Date of Interview/Presentation_____

Date of Agreement _____

Topic/Subject_____

Signature of Interviewee _____

(Printed) Interviewee's Name _____

(Printed) Mailing Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Signature of Interviewer _____

(Printed) Interviewer's Name _____

Comments/Restrictions:

_____

_____

_____

Figure A1.2 Little Big Horn College Archives Oral History Release Form.
Source: Used with permission.

Little Big Horn College Archives
Provenance Statement

Accession No. _____

Collection Name: _____

Donor Name: _____

Describe with as much detail as possible how the collection came to exist.
(Attach extra sheets if necessary.)

Please write a scope and history of the collection giving at the minimum the starting and ending dates of the historical periods covered by the collection.

Draft, 11/09/07

Figure A1.3 Little Big Horn College Archives Provenance Statement.
Source: Used with permission.

Little Big Horn College Archives
Archives and Records Transfer Agreement
(Deed of Gift)

The Little Big Horn College Archives, Crow Agency, Montana acknowledges receipt from

_____

(Name of Individual/Organization)

_____

(Address & Phone)

of the following property:

_____

_____

_____

_____

(Attach extra sheets if needed)

_____ _____

(Date) (Little Big Horn College Archives representative)

I give this property to Little Big Horn College, a non-profit organization, to become its permanent property. The property is to be placed in the Little Big Horn College Archives, as administered by the College Library in accordance with their established professional archival policies. I agree that this material may be made available for research on an unrestricted basis, subject only to those restrictions which may be specified below:

Access:_____

_____

Copyright/Literary Rights: _____

_____

Other: _____

_____

(Attach extra sheets if needed)

Hereafter, if for any reason the College becomes unable or unwilling to maintain and preserve this property, the materials may be disposed of, provided that prior to any such disposal and during the lifetime of the Donor, the Donor shall be notified thereof, and at the Donor's request, the materials proposed for disposal shall be returned to the Donor.

_____ _____

(Date) (Signature of Donor/Donor Representative)

Draft, 11/09/07

Figure A1.4 Little Big Horn College Archives and Records Transfer Agreement (Deed of Gift).

Source: Used with permission.

(907) 474-6773
FAX (907) 474-6365
fyapr@uaf.edu
www.library.uaf.edu

Elmer E. Rasmuson Library
Alaska and Polar Regions Collections & Archives
310 Tanana Loop Room 211, P.O. Box 756808, Fairbanks, Alaska 99775-6808

Oral History Gift and Release Agreement

Thank you for your generous contribution of knowledge to the Oral History Archives. We welcome the opportunity to have the audio/video recording made with _____ on _____. The Oral History Archives agrees to preserve your recording and make it available to the public.

In consideration of the role of the Archives in preserving and making your recording available, we ask you to agree to the following:

I, _____, transfer and convey to the University of Alaska Fairbanks' Rasmuson Library my title, interest, and copyright, if any, to the recording.

I also agree to hold the University of Alaska Fairbanks harmless for how it makes the recordings available and how it preserves them. I further acknowledge that I have been informed of the following:

- The Oral History Program makes recordings available to researchers, writers, scholars, students, and the interested public.
- The Library may make this recording electronically accessible via local area networks, the Internet, or other electronic means for access and preservation purposes.
- While the Library only intends to make the recordings available for educational and/or non-commercial purposes, by signing this form I release the Library and the University from liability in cases where individuals who access a recording might violate these conditions.

Figure A1.5 Oral History Gift and Release Agreement, Elmer E. Rasmuson Library, Alaska and Polar Regions, Collection & Archives.

Source: Used with permission.

(907) 474-6773
FAX (907) 474-6365
fyapr@uaf.edu
www.library.uaf.edu

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS
Elmer E. Rasmuson Library
Alaska and Polar Regions Collections & Archives
310 Tanana Loop Room 211, P.O. Box 756808, Fairbanks, Alaska 99775-6808

None of the above mentioned conditions restricts you from re-telling and/or recording again any of the information you gave on this recording.

I have read and accept both the terms of the Oral History Gift and Release agreement as well as the Interview Restrictions provided.

_____ _____
(Narrator's printed name) (Narrator's signature& date)

_____ _____
(Narrator's mailing address) (Interviewer's signature & date)

_____
(Collection manager's signature & date)

Names of other institutions where copies of this recording (s) are deposited:

_____

Figure A1.5 (Continued)

Consent Form Template and Guidelines for Individual Participation (e.g., Interview, Observation)

This template includes guidelines identified by blue text. Please remove the guidelines as you complete each section. Some sections may not apply to your research and should be modified or deleted to suit your project.

This template is intended to provide an overview of the information normally included in a consent form. The goal is to communicate the essential elements of free and informed consent and to ensure that individuals can understand and agree to what will happen to them as a participant. You do not have to use this template or maintain its formatting. It is only a guidance document.

Please use non-technical language that participants can easily understand. Appropriate reading level and format needs to be considered for specific populations such as children, the elderly, populations with compromised literacy or unique cultural considerations.

The consent form should be written in the second person. Use "you" not "I". However, first person or "I" should be used on the last page in "Signed Consent" and "Oral Consent".

The consent form should be a minimum of 12-point font for clarity and ease of reading.

All information in the consent form must match/be congruent with your application form.

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

Participant Consent Form

You are invited to participate in a research study entitled: *Insert title of the research project*

Student Researcher(s): *Insert Name, Position (e.g., faculty, graduate or undergraduate student, post doc), Department, Institution, Institutional phone number and institutional email address. Do not include personal contact information (e.g., personal cell number, Gmail address).*

Researcher(s): *Insert Name, Position (e.g., faculty, graduate or undergraduate student, post doc), Department, Institution, Institutional phone number and institutional email address. Do not include personal contact information (e.g., personal cell number, Gmail address).*

Figure A1.6 Consent Form Template and Guidelines for Individual Participation, University of Saskatchewan.

Source: Copyright © University of Saskatchewan, Research Ethics Office, Saskatoon, SK Canada, used with permission.

Principal Investigator/Supervisor: *(If Applicable) Insert Name, Position, Department, Institution, Institutional phone number and institutional email address. Do not include personal contact information (e.g., personal cell number, Gmail address).*

Purpose and Objective of the Research:

- *Describe in simple lay terms the purpose and objective of the research.*

Procedures:

- *Describe the research activities and details of any data collection events.*
- *Describe any audio or video recording devices to be used; include a statement to indicate that participants may request that the recorder be turned off at any time without giving a reason.*
- *Describe the location of the research.*
- *Provide an estimate of the time commitment of the participant.*
- *Describe if a transcript review is part of your procedure; e.g.:* After your interview, and prior to the data being included in the final report, you will be given the opportunity to review the transcript of your interview, and to add, alter, or delete information from the transcript as you see fit. *Be sure to include a deadline for the return of revisions to you and a description of what will happen if the deadline is missed.*
- *Identify who will transcribe any recordings of the interview and state that they will sign a confidentiality agreement, if a third party.*
- Please feel free to ask any questions regarding the procedures and goals of the study or your role.

Funded by: *(If Applicable)*

- *Include the name of any industry sponsor or granting agency. This should include a statement of any actual or potential conflict of interest on the part of the researchers or sponsors.*

Potential Risks:

- *All foreseeable risks, side effects and discomforts must be stated. Risks might include social harms such as a breach of confidentiality, social stigmatization, threats to reputation, economic repercussions, physical harms, damage to relationships, and/or psychological harms, e.g., anxiety, regret, guilt, emotional, etc.*
- Risk(s) will be addressed by: *describe the strategies to minimize or manage the risks for participants.*
- *If potential risks or discomforts are anticipated or the research project is of a sensitive nature, include information on the arrangements/availability of counselling or other such services.*
- *If the research has the potential to reveal information that is required by law to be communicated to a law enforcement or other agency, (e.g. child abuse), inform your participant of your legal obligations.*

Figure A1.6 (Continued)

- *Describe any debriefing procedures that will take place. In cases where the research entails greater than minimum risk to the participants, where deception is used, where the participant may reveal culturally sensitive or personally identifying information, or where there is a possibility that participants may become stressed or upset because of participation in the study, the consent form should describe the debriefing and feedback procedures.*
- *If appropriate, describe the circumstances under which you would respectfully ask someone to leave the study.*
- *If there are no foreseeable risks, please use the following statement:* There are no known or anticipated risks to you by participating in this research.

Potential Benefits:

- *State the benefits of this research both to the participant and to others, stressing that these benefits are not guaranteed. In cases where the objectives of the research project are purely scientific, refer to any societal benefits.*

Compensation*: (If Applicable)*

- *Describe any compensation that will be offered to participants. If a course credit is available to University students, explain the process. The payment should not be such that participants may base their decision to participate on the potential material rewards. Be sure to include a statement that compensation will not be dependent on completion of the project.*
- *Please include the following statement, if compensation is being offered: "Any personal information collected as a record of honorarium payment will be stored separately from the data by the PI and may be kept for 7 years in case the University of Saskatchewan is subjected to a financial audit."*
- *If payments to participants will total over $100 (even if provided in smaller installments), please include a statement that they may need to provide their Social Insurance Number (SIN) to USask Financial Services for taxation audit purposes.*

Confidentiality:

- *Describe where the data collected will be disseminated, (e.g., thesis, articles, report to an agency or community).*
- *Describe how the data will be reported in publications. For example, if direct quotations will be reported, or if personally identifying information will be included in the report, this needs to be clearly stated; if the data will be reported anonymously in an aggregated or summarized form, this should also be stated.*
- *If participation and/or the data will be anonymous, include a simple statement advising the participant of this.* ***(Note: To assure a participant of anonymity means that the research participant's identity will not be known to anyone, including the researcher).***
- *Describe the precautions that will be taken to protect the confidentiality of the participant, or explain limits to or waiving of confidentiality. See below for explicit*

Figure A1.6 (Continued)

permission to use a participant's name. ***(Note: To assure a participant of confidentiality means that the researcher will ensure that they do not disclose identifiable information about the participant in the reporting or dissemination of the research findings).***

Examples:

a) "Although the data from this research project will be published and presented at conferences, the data will be reported in aggregate form so that it will not be possible to identify individuals. Moreover, the consent forms will be stored separately from the data so that it will not be possible to associate a name with any given set of responses."
b) "The data from this research project will be published and presented at conferences; however, your identity will be kept confidential. Although direct quotations may be reported from the interview, you will be given a pseudonym, and all identifying information (list relevant possibilities such as the name of the institution, the participant's position, etc.) will be removed from the report."
c) "Because the participants for this research project have been selected from a small group of people, all of whom are known to each other, it is possible that you may be identifiable to other people on the basis of what you have said."

- *If Applicable, describe options available to the participant. To do so, it may be useful to create check boxes to help enumerate a participant's choices, such as:*

Please put a check mark on the corresponding line(s) to grant or deny your permission:

I grant permission to be audio recorded	
I grant permission to be video recorded	

Please only select one option below:

I wish for my identity to be confidential	
I wish for my identity to be confidential but you may refer to me by a pseudonym	
You may quote me and use my name	
I would like to be acknowledged for contributing to the research	

Storage of Data:

- *Describe how and with whom physical and electronic data will be securely stored. (Physical data must be stored behind two locks, e.g., locked cabinet in locked office. Electronic data may be stored on a password-protected computer during analyses, but moved to a USask system for long-term storage, e.g. OneDrive, Cabinet, or DataStore).*

Figure A1.6 (Continued)

- *Describe the storage period, e.g., the minimum required storage period is five years post-publication.*
- *If applicable, i.e., you intend to destroy the data following the required storage period, explain that once the data is no longer required and following the required storage period, the data will be destroyed beyond recovery.*
- *If applicable, explain that identifying information, (e.g., Consent Forms, Master Lists) will be stored separately from the data collected. If there is a master list, explain when it will be destroyed (e.g., when data collection is complete and it is no longer required).*

Right to Withdraw:

- Your participation is voluntary and you can answer only those questions that you are comfortable with. You may withdraw from the research project for any reason, at any time without explanation or penalty of any sort.
- Should you wish to withdraw, *describe how participants may withdraw from the project and describe what will happen to their data, (e.g., data will be deleted from the research project and destroyed).*
- *(If Applicable):* Whether you choose to participate or not will have no effect on your position (e.g., employment, academic status, access to services) or how you will be treated.
- *In the case where the participants constitute a captive or dependent population, or where the researcher has, or has had, a relationship of power over the participants, or where participation is solicited as part of a person's employment or educational role, describe the steps that will be taken to ensure that a person's decision to withdraw will not jeopardize their standing within the institution or their relationship with the researcher. For example, when participants are solicited from a classroom for which the teacher is acting in the role of researcher, a clause such as the following may be included:* The teacher will not know until after the grades have been submitted who has decided to participate and who has not, so that your decision to participate or withdraw cannot have any impact on your standing in the class or on your final grade.
- *(If Applicable):* Your right to withdraw data from the study will apply until ____ *(explain when data withdrawal may no longer be possible, using a deadline that the participant can easily keep track of (e.g., within one month of the interview or on a specific date).* After this, it is possible that some form of research dissemination will have already occurred and it may not be possible to withdraw your data. *Note that this information is only relevant when the data for individual participants can be identified.*

Follow up:

- To obtain results from the study, please: *describe how participants may find out about the research results. A summary of the results should be offered with a mechanism to provide the summary, (e.g. a website location or email address to request a copy of the results, paper, etc.). The summary should be readily accessible and understandable. A summary of the results is preferable to a copy of the thesis.*

Figure A1.6 (Continued)

Questions or Concerns:

- Contact the researcher(s) using the information at the top of page 1.
- This research project has been approved on ethical grounds by the University of Saskatchewan Behavioural Research Ethics Board. Any questions regarding your rights as a participant may be addressed to that committee through the Research Ethics Office: ethics.office@usask.ca; 306-966-2975; out of town participants may call toll free 1-888-966-2975.

Consent: *Select the appropriate options from below:*

Continued or On-going Consent: *(If Applicable):*

- *Explain how you will handle ongoing consent when the research involves follow-up interactions, occurs over multiple occasions or an extended period of time.*

Signed Consent:

Your signature below indicates that you have read and understand the description provided. I have had an opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered. I consent to participate in the research project. A copy of this consent form has been given to me for my records.

_____	_____	_____
Name of Participant	*Signature*	*Date*

_____	_____
Researcher's Signature	*Date*

A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.

Oral Consent: *(If Applicable):*

- *If consent is obtained orally, this must be documented. For example, the consent form is dated and signed by the researcher:*

I read and explained this consent form to the participant before receiving the participant's consent, and the participant had knowledge of its contents and appeared to understand it.

_____	_____	_____
Name of Participant	*Researcher's Signature*	*Date*

Figure A1.6 (Continued)

Appendix B

Indigenous Oral History Project Management Forms

The three forms included here are modified versions of sample forms from the *Community Oral History Toolkit* (MacKay et al. 2013). They are designed to document interview content and context. As examples, they offer suggestions for the types of information that can be useful in helping document community engagement decisions guiding access and use of Indigenous interviews.

Each form has its purpose:

The Biography Form documents who the narrator is. This information defines context in terms of who is talking, why this person is being interviewed, and what their connection is to the information being discussed. It helps introduce the interview and the narrator to its users, now and in the future.

The Interview Information Form documents the particulars of the interview. It is useful for both providing basic background on the interview and for archival cataloging purposes. Its information is detailed but serves as a reference for how the information was recorded and what the interview covers.

The Photograph and Archival Form documents information about materials, such as photographs, letters, drawings, and diaries, that a narrator may have. Questions about disposition of materials like this can come up during interviews. The form helps document the materials and lays the groundwork for contact between the repository and the owner of the materials.

Together these forms document content and context of oral history interviews.

(PROJECT NAME) BIOGRAPHY FORM	
PROJECT NAME	
NAME	CONTACT
OTHER NAMES KNOWN BY	DATE/PLACE OF BIRTH
TRIBAL ENROLLMENT	TRIBAL and NON-TRIBAL DESCENT
PLACE OF RESIDENCE	YEARS IN THE COMMUNITY
OCCUPATION	EDUCATION
RELEVANCE OR TIES TO THE PROJECT	
BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION (AS IT RELATES TO THE GOALS OF THE PROJECT)	
FAMILY (full name, date of birth, relationship to interviewee)	
FRIENDS AND ASSOCIATES (full name, date of birth, relationship to interviewee)	
PLACES TRAVELED OR LIVED	
COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES (Include activity, date, and significance to the project)	
INTERESTS	
INFLUENCES	
LIFE MILESTONES	
Completed by	Date

Figure A2.1 Biography Form, adapted from MacKay, Quinlan, and Sommer, *Community Oral History Toolkit* (2013).

Source: Used with permission.

(PROJECT NAME) **INTERVIEW INFORMATION FORM**	
PROJECT NAME	**INTERVIEW ID# (entered by repository)**
INTERVIEWEE	**INTERVIEWER**
NAME (as it will appear in the public record)	**NAME**
CONTACT	**CONTACT**
OTHER NAMES KNOWN BY	
TRIBAL ENROLLMENT	**INDIGENOUS AND NON-INDIGENOUS DESCENT**
INTERVIEW DATE	**INTERVIEW LENGTH**
RECORDING MEDIUM ____digital audio ____digital video	
DELIVERY MEDIUM ____sound file ____sound card ____ CD ____DVD	
TECHNICAL NOTES (make/model of recorder, format recorded, microphone notes)	
INTERVIEW NOTES (physical environment, interviewee's mood, background noises or distractions, interruptions)	
DATE LEGAL RELEASE AGREEMENT SIGNED _____	
PROPER NAMES (personal and place names with proper spelling, dates, and list of keywords)	
KEYWORDS	
SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW CONTENT	
COMPLETED BY	**DATE**

Figure A2.2 Interview Information Form, adapted from MacKay, Quinlan, and Sommer, *Community Oral History Toolkit* (2013).

Source: Used with permission.

(PROJECT NAME) **PHOTOGRAPH AND MANUSCRIPT FORM**	
PROJECT NAME	
OWNER	
Name	
Address	**Phone/Email**
ITEM	
Type	**Quantity**
Detailed Description (Describe item)	
Associated Dates	
Physical Condition	
Instructions for Contact:	
RETURNED (if loaned for content review)	
Items returned by (name):	
OWNER	**INTERVIEWER**
Name (print)	**Name (print)**
Signature	**Signature**
Date	**Date**

Figure A2.3 Photograph & Manuscript Form, adapted from MacKay, Quinlan, and Sommer, *Community Oral History Toolkit* (2013).

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Winona Wheeler, PhD, is an associate professor of Indigenous Studies at the University of Saskatchewan. A lifelong student of Indigenous knowledge and history, she has been teaching, researching, and publishing in Indigenous Studies since 1988. Her areas of research include Indigenous oral histories, local histories, land claims and Treaty Rights, First Nations education, settler colonialism, Indigenous research methodologies, and anti-colonial theory. She served as Lead Researcher in the Manitoba Treaties Oral History Research Project and as the Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba Research Strategist. She also served on the Aboriginal Advisory Committee of the National Museum of Canada and the Walking With Our Sisters (Saskatoon) organizing committee. Her most recent historical research projects are focused on Treaty 5 provisions, and missing children and unmarked graves at four Roman Catholic Indian Residential Schools in Saskatchewan.

Charles E. Trimble (1935–2020) was an inspiration for this book. Although he died as work began on this second edition, his thoughts, his commitment to Indigenous rights and stories, and his support for sovereignty and self-determination are all woven into its pages. A native of the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota, he was a national and international leader, both through his leadership of the National Congress of American Indians, his founding of the Native American Press Association, and his presidency of the board of the Nebraska State Historical Society, where he helped develop the model for the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). He held a degree from the University of South Dakota, was awarded many state and national honors, and held four Honorary Doctorates.

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