



## Native American Archives Section

## Profiles & Scenarios Group Discussion Exercise

### Profiles & Scenarios Group Discussion Exercise 1:

**“After the Return: Digital Repatriation and the Circulation of Indigenous Knowledge”  
workshop keynote address by Jim Enote:**

<https://sustainableheritagenetwork.org/digital-heritage/after-return-digital-repatriation-and-circulation-indigenous-knowledge>

- Profile:
  - Large institution/small institution?
    - Mix: Zuni community and six different museums. Enote did not identify all 6 museums, but the Denver Art Museum.
  - What are the parties' concerns per situation; what did parties do to compromise?
    - Bringing the Zuni material held in six collections-- each originating from disparate systems-- under one system that was located at Zuni for the community. Tribal members were given physical access to the collections at the museum sites, so that they can better identify and describe the material. At times, the original museum record would include misinformation. Other concern is if “digital repatriation” also transfers ownership and copyright to the tribe? Or do the credits have to read “Courtesy of...” or “Gift of...” If ownership is not also transferred, then it’s not true repatriation, but a copy.
  - What was the final outcome?
    - The Zuni Consolidated Collection System (ZCCS), a multi-museum database of Zuni cultural items that provided tribal members the “power” and “control” to describe the items. Information would be harvested from the 6 museum collection management systems into the ZCCS. And the Zuni community chose what information to send back to the museum. Unknown, how the issues of ownership/copyright was addressed.

- Scenario:
  - A tribal group is working to centralize digitized primary source material about their tribe that is held in different institutions across the nation. You are a large natural history museum, with over a 100-year history. Although you have collections pertaining to Native American cultures, this is not a major focus of your current activities. Nonetheless, the tribal group requests that you participate in this digital project because your institution holds a collection of rare photographs pertaining to this group. They are also interested in scheduling a time with your team to help identify people and places captured in your photo collection.
- Discussion Questions:
  - What would be the access concerns for the physical objects?
  - If the tribe provides information that contradicts the museum record, which agency would be considered the “authority”?
  - What characteristics does your institution need to allow for multi-faceted collaboration?
  - In understanding the relation between “repatriation” and “ownership,” how might this project influence activities related to rights and permissions?

## Profiles & Scenarios Group Discussion Exercise 2:

Christen, Kimberly. “Opening Archives: Respectful Repatriation.” *The American Archivist*: Spring/Summer 2011, Vol. 74, No. 1, pp. 185-210.

(<https://americanarchivist.org/doi/abs/10.17723/aarc.74.1.4233nv6nv6428521>)

- Profile:
  - Large institution/small institution?
    - Mix: Plateau Center of American Indian Studies; Washington State University; the Yakima Indian Nation; the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation; the Coeur d’ Alene Tribe; and other regional and national collecting institutions, such as the Smithsonian.
  - What are the parties' concerns per situation; what did parties do to compromise?
    - The collaborators worked on a portal design model that would address the “blind spots” in most collection management systems, that did not account for customization based on cultural parameters. Tribal representatives, librarians, archivists agreed that the goal of the project was not to erase the scholarly voice, but set Native knowledge on equal footing with the scholarly record. Using Mukurtu’s database structure, a more dynamic and interactive back-end admin tool was provided to for tribal administrators. The Portal was designed to include both institutional content, tribal content, and metadata with the potential for divergent management by tribes and institutional affiliates and multiple

access points. The Portal allowed to viewing of institutional record and tribal catalogue record. Expanded metadata went beyond Dublin Core and derived from the tribes as “tribal knowledge.”

- What was the final outcome?
  - The design of the Plateau Peoples’ Web Portal that prioritized the specific needs of tribal nations.
- Scenario:
  - Your institutions has a group of Native sounds recordings of a local tribe, recorded on cylinders in the early 1900s. You know about the collector, general location of recording, date of the recordings, and some information about the “performers” involved with each song. As part of your digitization efforts, you plan to work with the tribe in digitally repatriating the songs as well as work with the tribe in creating enhanced catalog records and contextual information for the recordings.
- Discussion Questions:
  - What are the considerations in managing the workflow and information gathering?
  - If the tribe is interested in using a management system like Murkutu, how will that affect your collection management system (CMS) workflow?
  - What tribal knowledge elements would you like to capture in your institutions CMS?
  - What are the foreseeable stages of this project and who should you bring to the table as workflow is being designed?

## Profiles & Scenarios Group Discussion Exercise 3:

**Flahive, Ryan S. (April 27, 2017). “Repatriating History.” Intellectual Freedom Blog: The Office for Intellectual Freedom of the American Library Association.**

<https://www.oif.ala.org/oif/?p=9030>

- Profile:
  - Posted on the Intellectual Freedom Blog, a portal for sharing ideas about intellectual freedom (hosted through the American Library Association’s Office for Intellectual Freedom), Flahive highlights the classic struggle archivists have when balancing cultural/moral rights to archival materials (particularly those created by and about Indigenous communities) with the public’s ‘rights’ for open access to them. Much of this misunderstanding and frustration has come from the formal definition of a ‘public record,’ and how the public has expanded this definition to include other, privately-created records found in public/government repositories. While public records should rightfully be made available to the public as a form of government accountability and transparency, proponents of intellectual and academic freedom argue that privately-created materials collected by these publicly-funded repositories should also be made as

open as possible. Flahive argues that “museums and archives are **stewards** (not owners) of objects and materials that originate from source communities and do so for the public good.” When working with patrons, at the core of the struggle archivists face is what responsible *access* looks like and what rights the original records creator, the source community, as well as the patron have. Flahive calls these competing rights “the right to know vs. the right to privacy.” Flahive talks about visual repatriation as a method of engaging with source communities *prior* to opening up the collections for public access; this engagement can result in powerful counter-narratives and cultural context that ensures community needs are being met. He then briefly touches on digital repatriation as a method whereby digital surrogates are returned to source communities OR are shared in a collaborative web-based system (i.e. Mukurtu) where the communities are given access to create unique and specific layers of restriction. Finally, Flahive recommends that non-Indigenous begin this work by considering revisions to policies that are more inclusive, beginning with the application of responsive nomenclature in the language used in the policy. He then advocates for creating specific repatriation and access policies that inform both communities and patrons about what their repository supports, both practically and ethically.

- There is much more to be fleshed out when speaking with patrons who are fueled by the concept of intellectual freedom and what sort of actions repositories can take to protect the moral rights of Indigenous peoples depicted in the records. For example, what do restrictions look like? How do archivists, who by and large believe in open access, communicate with other archivists and the research community about these restrictions? Flahive does not address this, but instead he asks repositories to take leadership on establishing policies from the get-go that will demonstrate a position in the argument. Preemptively and openly communicating to supporters of intellectual freedom and wide open access is an important step in educating the archival and research community about where responsible boundaries exist for open access.
- Scenario:
  - Fifteen years ago, a donor (and private creator) donated images and associated maps to federally-protected archaeological sites located on public land to your repository, a state-funded educational institution. All rights were transferred through a formal deed of gift. Her wishes were for the materials to be openly accessible to the public; she argued that intellectual freedom should eclipse any concerns about the protection of these sites. A federal agency has just found out this collection exists and has asked that a number of files be restricted to protect the sites.
- Discussion Questions:
  - If policy is created in response to this scenario, are past arrangements or agreements with donors still honored?
  - What does responsible access to these materials look like?
  - Can visual or digital repatriation be utilized in any manner as part of access?
  - How should your repository communicate all of this with the original donor?

## Profiles & Scenarios Group Discussion Exercise 4:

**“Penn’s Timothy Powell: Forging Partnerships to Promote Native Languages, Culture.” *Penn Today*. <https://penntoday.upenn.edu/news/penns-timothy-powell-forging-partnerships-promote-native-languages-culture>**

- Profile:
  - Large institution/small institution?
    - Large: American Philosophical Society (APS), Penn State, Kwakwaka’wakw First Nation
  - What are the parties' concerns per situation; what did parties do to compromise?
    - Powell worked with the Kwakwaka’wakw for several years and was invited by the First Nation’s to several Kwakwaka’wakw gift-giving potlatches. Kwakwaka’wakw scholar, Ryan Nicholson, worked with Powell and APS archivist Brian Carpenter to select material from the archives to be digitized for distribution. Four books, each 300-400 pages long, were created. 250 copies were made and passed out at the and passed at the 2015 Kwakwaka’wakw potlatch.
  - What was the final outcome?
    - This experience and Powell’s digital repatriation efforts, prompted the initiative for the Penn’s newly formed Educational Partnerships with Indigenous Communities (EPIC) housed at the Penn Language Center where language teachers are instructing Penn students in return for digital repatriation. Per Powell, “Reciprocity is a guiding principle in how they [EPIC] govern and do business.”
- Scenario:
  - Your institution has a complete run of a small press tribal newspaper written in their Native language. This newspaper title is only available in a few libraries across the country and has never been digitized. You now have the funds to digitize the complete run and are starting to conceptualize the project.
- Discussion Questions:
  - How would you inform the community about this project?
  - What “reciprocal” elements would you work into the project that would be beneficial for the triband your institution?
  - What face to face activities that you can either coordinate or partake in that would strengthen relations with the tribal community?
  - How can scholars be involved with the digitization process?
  - What considerations need to be made should these items be digitally repatriated?