

The Protocols for Native American Archival Materials



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Protocols for Native American Archival Materials



- Group of 19 met in 2006 at Northern Arizona University; coordinated by Karen Underhill (Head, Special Collections and Archives) with funding from numerous groups and foundations
- Goal: Identify best professional practices for culturally responsible care and use of American Indian archival material held by non-tribal organizations
- Final Document completed April 2007
- Published Online: <http://www2.nau.edu/libnap-p/index.html>



Reasons For *Protocols*



- Native American collections held in non-tribal repositories
- Improve existing relationships and build new relationships
- Collaboration
- Advocate for our values and perspectives to provide culturally appropriate context and understanding



Protocols: Major Goals



- ❑ Building relationships, balancing different approaches to knowledge management
- ❑ Mutual respect and reciprocity through shared stewardship and consultations
- ❑ Expand the nature of the information professions to include Native American perspectives and knowledge.
- ❑ Challenges western European norms of study and traditions that often privilege the rights of mainstream culture, values, and practices

Protocols: Main Concepts



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

Protocols: Ten Sections



1. Building Relationships of Mutual Respect
2. Striving for Balance in Content and Perspectives
3. Accessibility and Use
4. Culturally Sensitive Materials
5. Providing Context
6. Native American Intellectual Property Issues
7. Copying and Repatriation of Records to Native American Communities
8. Native American Research Protocols
9. Reciprocal Education and Training
10. Awareness of Native American Communities and Issues

Protocols: Endorsement



- American Association for State and Local History
- First Archivists Circle
- Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs
- Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs Resource Centre
- Cline Library, Northern Arizona University
- National Museum of the American Indian



NATIONAL
MUSEUM
OF THE
AMERICAN
INDIAN



AASLH
American Association
for State and Local History



NORTHERN
ARIZONA
UNIVERSITY

Society of American Archivists: Response



- August 2007: Authors, via Native American Archives Roundtable, ask SAA for an endorsement
- Fall 2007: SAA created a Task Force to spearhead process and gather feedback from membership and other interested parties
- November 2007: Feedback submitted from SAA subunits and general membership
- February 2008: SAA Taskforce Report Submitted: <http://www.archivists.org/governance/taskforces/0208-NativeAmProtocols-IIIA.pdf>

Perceptions Outside Indian Country



Main Concerns:

- Tribal Representatives
- Questionable use
- Cultural Sensitivity
- Varying Native perspectives
- Copyright and Traditional Knowledge
- Balance: Access and Privacy
- Broad Potential Impact

Society of American Archivists Response



- ❑ Result: ***Protocols not endorsed***
- ❑ SAA Council created the **Native American Protocols Forum Working Group** to hold three open membership forums at the 2009, 2010, and 2011 annual meetings. Submitted Final Report in 2012.
- ❑ SAA **Cultural Property Working Group** formed in March 2010

Protocols Case Studies

- National Museum of the American Indian
- National Anthropological Archives
- Northern Arizona University
- Washington State University
- American Philosophical Society
- Yale University



Smithsonian



Next Steps: Where Do We Go From Here?



- Revisions Needed:
 - Feedback from groups
 - WIPO: Traditional Knowledge
 - United National Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People
- NAAR has taken lead in next steps
- More Gatherings
- Dissemination
- Ultimate Goal? → Dialog, Education, Implementation, and Endorsement

THANK YOU!



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