Recommendations for the Alaska State Museum Code of Ethics:
On the Rights of Alaska Native Peoples

By
Kaagwéil – Miranda R. Worl
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“Start with your peoples’ strengths. Those are our ancestral traditions and a part of us – not the challenges we face.” [Gatgyedm Hana’ax Karla Booth (Tsimshian)]

The reason Alaska Native peoples are here today and continue to exist within an Alaska state context is because of Native peoples themselves. Native people have pursued higher education knowing that an understanding of institutions and law is paramount for shaping policy and decision making at the state and federal level. Indeed, Native participation in the process of creating the rules that govern Native communities is essential for the survival and enhancement of Native communities, values and priorities. Realizing this, relatives, tribal elders, and tribal organizations have provided spiritual, emotional, and financial support to their Native students, teachers, and learners engaging in the higher education system.

Traditional practices and Native languages exist today because of the love Native relatives hold for their children, grandchildren, and those yet to come. Native youth share a positive relationship with grandparents and Elders, and modern relationships include a network of other Alaska Natives and Native Americans. A common value for tribes is the connection to ancestors and decision making based on what is best for grandchildren. There is hope and pride for future generations.

On the political level, Native leadership continues to advocate in the legislature, courts and in corporate realms to ensure protection of their social and economic priorities and basic human rights. In addition to addressing systemic bias in policy, Alaska Native leaders look after traditional use of fish and game essential for subsistence in remote communities, ensure access for land and water use, and advocate for assistance for health, wellness, housing and education of their people.
At home, parents engage children in their Native languages. Aunties and uncles fill their relatives’ freezers with fish, herring eggs, seal, maktaaq, and other traditional foods by using a network of sharing that exemplifies the continuation of Alaska Native values. Alaska Natives carry a rich history and roots to their land, waters, and environment.

Protecting land, water, and air in perpetuity requires persistent clan, tribal, and communal resiliency. Native people must also fulfill the demands of being productive citizens in American society, which include securing gainful employment, paying taxes, attending public schools, voting and engaging in social and broader community events and institutions.

For these reasons, we know that Alaska Native peoples – the Southeast tribes, Inupiaq, Yupik, Alutiiq/Sugpiaq-Aleut, Athabascan, and Eyak – shall continue to be influential in shaping the state of Alaska and shall continue to perpetuate and pass down their rich cultural heritage for the benefit of future generations.

“Generous Listening”
Written by Marilyn Nelson (2018)

A conversation can be a contest,
or a game of catch with invisible balloons.
They bounce between us,
growing and shrinking,
sometimes floating like cloud of medicine balls,
and sometimes bowling at us
like round anvils.
You toss a phrase and
understanding blooms
like an anemone of colored lights.
My mind fireworks with unasked questions.

Who is this miracle speaking to me?
And who is this miracle listening?
What amazingness are we creating?
Out of gray matter a star spark
of thought
leaps between synapses into the air,
and pours through gray matter, into my heart:
how can I not listen generously?
INTRODUCTION

*Planting Seeds and Setting Trajectories in Ethical Practice*

METHODS

The goal of this thesis project is to provide a “preemptive” Alaska Native needs assessment to enhance administrative preparedness when it comes to engaging Native tribes and authentically portraying their culture and histories. My hope is that this document will both enrich future research and prompt consideration amongst Alaska State Museums staff and administration. The recommendations provide a path for the Alaska State Museum to build trust with Alaska Native and Indigenous peoples, while also supporting the needs and interests of other Alaskans as well as the many visitors from outside the state that frequent the museums. The research is presented as an outline of museum best ethical practices regarding engagement with contemporary Alaska Natives and as a reflection of current conversations and discourse.

Additionally, the document makes recommendations relevant to the ASM’s institutional context. The topics reflect in many ways the discrepancies between the museum’s ethical practices I observed during my fellowship at the Alaska State Museum and the language of the 1997 Code of Ethics.

The aspirational recommendations suggest decolonization and Indigenization strategies for museums, with the goal to “plant seeds” and “adjust the trajectory” in the institutional language and philosophical focus of the museums, rather than dictate policies.¹ All recommendations were considered and guided by asking: *What is the best way to move forward now?*

¹ Which, operating under the ASM, are assumed to be more time-consuming and long-term goals, requiring more procedural and administrative consideration.
For my recommendations, I have pulled from a variety of sources to help inform the recommended changes to the ASM code of ethics text, including institutional code of ethics, collections management policies, museum guidelines, task force reports, and Indigenous knowledge shared publicly and specifically intended for museum contexts. I’ll highlight the following examples as models of museum ‘code of ethics’ language:

- Institutional Code of Ethics, Museum of the North, University of Alaska (2007)
- DRAFT Collections Management Policy, Nanwalek Museum
- Ag’inartuq “that which is important within and deserves respect” The Alutiiq Museum’s Guidelines for the Spiritual Care of Objects, Alutiiq Museum & Archaeological Repository (2004)
- Cultural Awareness Presentation, Inupiaq Studies Program, Ilisagvik College
- Guidelines for Museums, SAR Guidelines for Collaboration (Revised 2019)
- Guidelines for Communities, SAR Guidelines for Collaboration (Revised 2019)
- Task Force Report on Museums and First Peoples, the Assembly of First Nations and the Canadian Museums Association (1994)

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2 Now the San Diego Museum of Us
In accordance with our cultural value of Haa Shuká that binds past, present and future generations of our Peoples, and

In honor of my ancestors, and in love for my nieces, nephew, and those future relatives yet to come,

Let me tell you who I am...

Who am I?

I'd like to share some of my background with you.

My name is Kaagwéil

In English my name is Miranda Worl.
I am of the eagle moiety,  
I am a Yanwaasháa from the Box House.
My father’s people are the Shangukeidi  
My maternal grandfather is Filipino, adopted into T’ągdeintaan.
I live in Juneau.
My mother’s name is X’unyéil 
My maternal grandmother is called Wooshdaax gi tláa 
My maternal great-grandmother was called Kuleičx 
We are from Hoonah.
My father’s name is Gaaachgwéina 
My paternal grandmother is called Ḵaa.háni 
My paternal great-grandmother was called Bessie Quinto. 
They are from Klukwan, in the Chilkat Region.

As an Alaska Native researcher, I recognize that my work will be inherently influenced by my upbringing and Lingít values. In conducting research and composing this report, I aim for awareness of a Native perspective rather than complete objectivity. I acknowledge my Tlingit identity and cultural heritage as an asset.

However, there are many worlds that Kaagwéíl inhabits, and each experience in turn has informed my thesis work. I am a student-scholar (with a background in Anthropology, Linguistics, and now Public Humanities), a researcher and learner who has traditional knowledge of the lands of Southeast Alaska, an educated Alaskan resident, and a relative-newcomer to the world of museums and archives, along with many other things. I not only want to note the multifaceted points of view I have when I approach this work, but also to point out that although these pieces and experience form my collective identity - they are not necessarily experienced

3 English Translation
equally nor are they always expressed in the most convenient way. Balancing my traditional values with the modern values I have been exposed to in 18 years in public and private educational institutions sometimes foments contradictions and more often, chaos as well. Beyond this inherent reality, I must also acknowledge that a majority of my research was pulled together amidst the upheaval of a global pandemic that necessitated that most interviews were conducted virtually. Thus, although I have been fortunate enough for the chance to meet with many Native peoples across the state and to experience working at Alaska museum institutions, I often found it difficult to inhabit a harmonious and intersectional realm when engaging with community members and asking questions. Constantly, I also had to ponder the following interrogative: how should I ask questions that deeply engage with current museum practices and scholarship while also conveying Alaska Native perspectives, often severely critical and wary of the work done in museums?

Why am I here right now?

This project began by fulfilling the internship capstone project requirement for the First Alaskans Institute and the project for my Master’s program summer practicum. Research was conducted between June 14th and August 6th, 2021, for the duration of the eight-week internship program. The capstone project was first discussed and developed over a conversation with Anjuli Grantham, the Curator of Statewide Services at the ASM at the time.

The ASM is currently accredited by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM). From its last re-accreditation assessment, the Accreditation Commission shared a list of recommended changes that should be addressed before the ASM undergoes the process again. The next Self-Study is due in 2024 and required to be re-accredited by the AAM. On the list of re-accreditation
requirements, my capstone project is focused on “a revised Code of Ethics addressing intellectual property rights and rights of [I]ndigenous peoples.” In particular, Ms. Grantham and I discussed focusing on the “rights of [I]ndigenous peoples.” [See AAM Accreditation Commission Letter to the ASM Chief Curator below]. From this, the capstone project had in mind at least two components form the beginning: (1) recommendations to the ASM code of ethics and (2) a research report component, which we brainstormed together to take shape in the form of an annotated bibliography. Over the summer, my research process began with conversations with ASM staff in Juneau, and virtual interviews over Zoom with a variety of Alaska Native museum professionals, with the aid and network of Anjuli Grantham and ASM staff. These meetings were specifically focused on my capstone project goals.

I also had the chance, through the First Alaskans Institute (FAI) SIP program and the CIRI Foundation’s Museum Sovereignty Advisory Circle⁴, to listen to Alaska Native leadership and Elders, on language, subsistence, oratory, ANDORE dialogues⁵, life experiences, tribal governments and political advocacy, and more. This was a unique opportunity not just to listen, but also speak with Native leaders and Elders, in a way that is difficult to achieve on your own, even before pandemic circumstances. Sitting in for some of the monthly meetings with the Museum Sovereignty Advisory Circle allowed me to also hear from the perspective of various Native professions and artists who worked directly with museums and their personal insights. The discourse that emerged from this also was an opportunity to help me center the over-arching goals as I shifted focus to a thesis project, borne from this past summer’s capstone project and research for the ASM and FAI.⁶

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⁶ All interviewees and Alaskan community members listed in “Acknowledgements,” p. 104
Mr. Addison Field  
Chief Curator  
Alaska State Museums  
365 Whittier Street  
Juneau, AK 99801-1718

November 2, 2015

Dear Mr. Field:

On behalf of the Accreditation Commission, it is my great pleasure to tell you that the Alaska State Museums was awarded subsequent accreditation at our October 19-20, 2015 meeting. Reaccreditation means the museum continues to meet National Standards and Best Practices for U.S. Museums and remains a member of a community of institutions that have chosen to hold themselves publicly accountable to excellence. Through a rigorous process of self-assessment and review by its peers, the museum has shown itself to be a good steward of its resources held in the public trust and committed to a philosophy of continual institutional growth.

This fourth accreditation review confirms the Alaska State Museums’ reputation for outstanding cultural and natural heritage collections, excellent collections stewardship, solid educational programming, and service and expertise to museums across the state. We were impressed with the way the ASM continued to do this during a time of major transition at the Juneau facility. The planning and professionalism demonstrated throughout the museum’s transition are commendable and the techniques you employed can serve as a model for the field.

The IMLS-funded project to assemble the impressive corps of handlers from throughout the state provides a national model for an innovative way to get statewide assistance with a major collections move. The museum continued to fulfill its mission and maintained intellectual control of its collections throughout the extensive transition.

The Commission also commends the Sheldon Jackson Museum’s superb ethnographic collection and the unique opportunities provided through the museum’s Native Artist Residency program.

At the time of the next review, the Commission expects to see:

- A new institutional strategic plan which comprehensively addresses the growth, impact, and financial sustainability of the museum in its new facilities
- Financial planning incorporated into this plan, with particular attention to diversification of funding streams to compensate for potential reductions in state funding
- A comprehensive written collections plan (which is required in the ASM state statutes) to help guide acquisitions at each facility
- An interpretive master plan with provisions for formative and summative evaluations of exhibits and programs that take into account ASM’s two very different audiences – local residents and tourists

* accreditation includes the Alaska State Museum in Juneau and the Sheldon Jackson Museum in Sitka.

continued
A revised Code of Ethics addressing intellectual property and the rights of Indigenous peoples.

An updated, comprehensive disaster and emergency plan formulated for the new facility.

Improved environmental conditions in the Sheldon Jackson Museum, where high humidity is a common problem.

To help ensure that accredited museums maintain their level of professional performance they must undergo periodic reaccreditation reviews. The museum’s next Self-Study is due November 1, 2024.

Accredited museums are looked up to as leaders in the field and we encourage you to proactively fulfill this responsibility by serving as a mentor and resource for other museums. Support and encourage museums working towards meeting standards, improving practices, or seeking accreditation by speaking at professional meetings, being an Alliance peer reviewer, and sharing your expertise in other ways.

Congratulations on this achievement. I know everyone at the museum has worked hard to earn this honor. Contact the Accreditation Program staff if you have any questions about the program or maintaining your institution’s accredited status.

Sincerely yours,

Burt Logan
Chair, Accreditation Commission
Executive Director and CEO
Ohio History Connection

Enclosures:
- Award Kit
- Site Visit Report
- What You Need To Know About The Museum’s Site Visit Report

cc: Linda Thibodeau, Director, Alaska State Libraries, Archives, and Museum
Georgiana Contiguglia, Visiting Committee
Bruce Eldredge, Visiting Committee

By accepting accredited status, your institution agrees to abide by the decisions of the Accreditation Commission regarding continuing review, subsequent accreditation and, if necessary, withdrawal of accreditation, and to comply with the administrative requirements of the program. You may display your certificates of accreditation and use the accreditation logo on printed materials as long as your institution meets the program requirements and standards for accreditation as determined by the Accreditation Commission.
Who is this for?

Through one lens, the work we do today “in the present” is a part of the future – in that it heavily impacts and shapes the environment future generations will live in. Knowing our work reaches into the future, we also view what we do today as being part of the historical past – in that it is the ancestral work that future generations look upon for guidance, as a model, or as a cautionary tale. The weaving of generations together is a part of *wooch.yáx* in Lingít, and it is a core value I grew up with and also one shared by Alaska Natives through their love, consideration and planning for their children, grandchildren, and those yet to come.

My thesis project centers Alaska Native perspectives and voices, bearing in mind future generations of Indigenous peoples on the land and waters, to address *What are the current concerns of Alaska Native people, as it relates to code of ethics? What are their hopes, vision, and aspirations?* When changing the language of the code of ethics, I have kept in mind that it must address the needs and values of future generations of museum workers, Native and non-Native.

In this same way, a code of ethics must consider not only the Indigenous lives that inhabit the past and present Alaskan land/waterscapes, but also those that will comprise the future too. This project also calls upon non-Native public and museum staff to collaborate and respect the cultural heritage, values, and knowledge of Alaska Native people. My thesis also considers ethics as a way for Native and non-Native peoples to facilitate productive, respectful, and responsible work structures.

The goal of my thesis is to inform non-Native museum professionals and the public so that they understand the advantages of an inclusive code of ethics. Alaska Native people share
their culture, art and values with non-Natives to educate, to build relationships and to create an understanding of the complexity of Native communities. These relationships are most successful when respect is genuine and mutual.

This work is also for the amazing group of people I had the chance to work with over the course of my Public Humanities summer practicum and internship with First Alaskans Institute in the summer of 2021. My work and experience with ASM staff on a variety of projects at the Juneau museum have made this research project possible. The knowledge I gained from collaborating with staff over the course of a summer provided a strong foundation for my thesis.
THEORIZING ETHICS

“There’s no such thing as perfection. So, we do the next best thing.”

[Natalie Diaz]

A museum’s code of ethics traditionally focuses on an inward-facing form of principles to maintain institutional integrity. Addressing the rights of Alaska Native peoples means shifting to a more outward-facing method of ethics, one focused on service to the public and to communities. In my thesis, I work through a series of difficult theoretical issues - including how to diplomatically decolonize and Indigenize a colonial space, and how to merge Alaska Native values with established institutional values.

However, there still exists the immediate and day-to-day ethical imperatives on museum staff and collaborators. Between now and the time Alaska Native ethics are fully recognized and incorporated into public and non-Native spaces, much work will need to be conducted, and yet between now and then there also exist more immediate possibilities for positive relationships between museums and Alaska Native peoples. So how can this be accomplished?

My research thesis surrounding museum ethics is at constant risk of harming Alaska Native peoples, museum professionals, and groups. In this section, I look at the history and traditions of ethics in a museum, and specifically focus on paradigms for forming an institutional code of ethics. I also look beyond “ethics” in a museum context which help build a more holistic framework for the term “ethics.” Next, I present two barriers to ethics in museum practice that I analyze through interdisciplinary scholarship. First, I contend with how to decolonize (and Indigenize) a colonial space. I also look at how to merge a museum-institutional ethical framework with Alaska Native ethics. Finally, I share several concepts that I utilize in my thesis project as “tools” or intellectual frameworks that help me be mindful of the work that I do.
Traditionally, the policy language embedded into a museum Code of Ethics protects the integrity of the institution. Sections in the Code of Ethics such as the mission statement often address the outward-facing obligations to serving communities and visitors. However, the majority of a Code of Ethics is typically inward-facing, clearly delineating the mission, goals, and philosophical alignment of the museum in the interest of preserving institutional integrity.

The American Alliance of Museums (AAM) describes a code of ethics as “fundamental for professional Museum operations and embody core Museum values and practices.” A code of ethics is a core of set principles and shared values for the Museum and ensures that the interest of the public will be prioritized and that decisions are made systematically rather than based on individual judgment. The AAM further describes a code of ethics as “a single document,” something that is not a compilation or list of references to other documents and is approved by a Museum's governing body. A good code of ethics, in the words of the AAM, effectively describes “a series of values that demonstrate the Museum's public accountability and ethical practices.” Some of the key concerns that a museum-institution should consider according to the AAM include providing for mechanisms for supporting the Museum's mission, maintaining public trust, and ensuring that museum activities support the public good rather than individual or institutional financial gain. In treatment of cultural property, truth and presentation (e.g. the honest and objective presentation of objects) are essential. When it comes to operations and practice, acknowledging and affirming the code is important.

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Current guidelines now begin to express the need to include in a museum’s definition of ethics, responsibilities and obligations outside the preservation of institutional integrity. The guidelines provided by the Association of Registrars and Collections Specialists and Collections Stewardship Professional Network begin to directly address the needs of Natives people and origin communities. These rights are most directly addressed through “Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion” discourse, noting that,

“The responsibilities of diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion (DEAI) fall on every individual within an institution and collections professionals have particular responsibilities to increase DEAI. The collections profession is largely homogenous and does not always represent the communities they serve. Collections professionals should examine their jobs to see where opportunities to expand DEAI exist, such as implicit bias in record keeping, access to objects and collection information, equitable hiring practices, performance reviews, and promotions for paid and unpaid collections positions.”

This section addresses the issues that the “collections profession” often faces within museum institutions. Present in the written language of this section, these ethics are still tied to institutional integrity, even though they are contextualized as ethical practices imperative to maintaining a museum staff-person’s “professional integrity.”

To offer a relevant outside perspective, UNESCO defines a museum code of ethics as “an essential tool for guiding museums and their personnel in their work and conduct, irrespective of position, age or nature of responsibility, inside or outside the museum.” UNESCO maintains

11 Used in a museum context to refer to the cultures/communities to which “objects” in its possession or control (i.e. their collections) belong; and the communities that can consider the museum collections to contain their cultural patrimony.
13 Ibid. p.3
that strong museum ethics emphasize “acquired knowledge and capabilities.” This ideology contrasts with ethical philosophies of museums that assume ethics to be a “naturalized” practice that should be self-evident and inherent to a good museum organization. Instead, guided by the process of acquiring knowledge, this framework for museum ethics calls for more active learning and outside engagement, beyond the scope of the museum institution itself.

The assumption that museums have “inherent good practices” can also be interpreted as evidence for the need for more outward facing forms of ethics, including principles that prioritize community and public engagement and consider ethical practices that happen outside traditional museum spaces. Broadening scope and perspective can also include taking into account practices and theory at the international level, moving beyond nationally-specific AAM guidelines.

The most updated copy of the ASM Code of Ethics that I was given to work with was last fully revised in 1997. This document pre-dates all the different guidelines for museum code of ethics I reviewed. On one hand, this makes my work relatively easy. I can bridge discrepancies, pull from models of cultural heritage museums, and advocate for current ASM practices not previously included in the 1997 document. On the other hand, current museum institutional structures and guidelines remain quite archaic. Indeed, I work within structures not designed for the inclusion of Native people. An ideal organization would allow for freedom and flexibility to build structures that have space for DEAI and acknowledgment of the rights of Native peoples.

In my consideration of “ethics,” I also want to carefully construct a framework that exists outside the concept of ethics as defined by “museum ethics” and a museum’s institutional “code of ethics.” Such established ethics exist in the specific realm of museum policy and legal contexts, which are also important in building an ethical framework for my project. Are there

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15 Ibid.
16 A special note that I was born around the same time this document was last revised.
opportunities for a museum to better address outward-facing ethics i.e. ethics focused on service and ethical responsibilities and obligations to the public, visitors, and the communities from which its collections originate? Here, I invoke scholarship from various academic fields (philosophy, history, anthropology, and public humanities) that explores the inherent complex power dynamics and contradictory practices that clash in attempt to form a holistic “ethical museum practice.”

In “Ethics, Collaboration, and Knowledge Production: Digital Storytelling with Sexually Diverse Farmworkers in California,” scholars Tania Lizarazo, Elisa Oceguera, David Tenorio, Diana Pardo Pedraza and Robert McKee Irwin collaborated on a digital storytelling project that focused on the personal stories and everyday experiences of sexually heterodox farmworkers in California. The project of Lizarazo et al. was based on methods that follow a collaborative production process that acknowledged their facilitative presence in the production but aimed to foreground the voices and creative production of farmworkers in California. Lizarazo et al. also foregrounded the concept of ordinary ethics in their project.

“The level of trust and intimacy that we were able to achieve was not taken for granted; it was not settled once and organically maintained. Rather, it required constant work; like a muscle, it needed to be exercised. This constant performance exemplifies ethics as an everyday practice.”

The term “ordinary ethics” examines ethics through an ongoing temporal lens and considers ethics to be a never-ending process. Ethics are embodied and placed in the “everyday” practices of collaboration.

However, along with ordinary ethics, Lizarazo et al. also emphasize the negative potential that the practice holds:

“But, ordinary ethics is not only the potential to find ethics in daily actions: ‘the sensibility by which we recognize the ethical in the small acts of everyday life also alerts us to the lethal ways in which our capacity to hurt others might also be expressed in completely quotidian ways.’”18

The tension between day-to-day ethical practices and the potential for insidious harm can coalesce in a “capacity to hurt others.” These harmful, hurtful acts are hard to notice when expressed through daily actions that not as grandiose nor as discernable as harmful practices such as exhibitions or written policies.

Their advocacy for continuous change or updates reflects and resonates with many Alaska Native communities, who are working to receive more non-Native acknowledgment of traditional and contemporary forms of oratory and knowledge production that happen outside the gaze of non-Native institutions. The ethics embodied at the Alaska State Museum through the work of the staff also operates as ordinary ethics. That is, relationships between the museum staff, publics, groups and organizations – Native and non-Native – contain examples of ethics in museum practice that are continuously negotiated and ongoing.

By considering written institutional language, the goal of my thesis project is to position relationships between Natives and non-Natives in such a way that the rights and recognition of Alaska Native peoples be better addressed. These relationships are negotiated and constantly readdressed and reshaped on a daily basis. Therefore, in order to properly address Alaska Native peoples in my code of ethics recommendations, I need to address ordinary ethics in a museum context, and the potential harms that come with it.

18 Ibid. p.8
Museums’ past and current best practices have not been conducive to a fruitful relationship with Native peoples. In many ways, the same longstanding museum practices that have ideated broader definitions of museum audiences have simultaneously led to a lack of trust from the perspective of many Native people. The purpose of this section is to provide an explanation of the historical lack of recognition of Alaska Native peoples expertise and perspectives, how decolonization and Indigenization have been defined by Indigenous scholars, and how they offer possible solutions in different ways to addressing Alaska Native issues in museum contexts.

Twentieth-century museum collection and construction practices in Alaska, intimately linked with the academic “ethnographic” practice of the time, exemplify the harmful and pejorative narratives that museum best practices have the potential to uphold. Influential in early academic discourse regarding decolonization, Hurston shines light on false museum representations that to this day continue to harm current Native communities through perpetuation of stereotypical definitions of non-White people.

“It is assumed that all non-Anglo-Saxons are uncomplicated stereotypes. Everybody knows all about them. They are lay figures mounted in the museum where all may take them in at a glance. They are made of bent wires without insides at all.”

Hurston also points out the harm in museums’ visual exhibitions of wired, mounted and dressed (?) figures meant to represent human cultures. Museum definitions and terms related to the

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20 Hurston, Z.N. “What White Publishers Won’t Print”
“ethnographic” practice will be increasingly contested and removed as they place Indigenous peoples in a static past-tense framework, the “ethnographic present.”

These are narratives that perpetuate the idea of inevitable disappearance of Native peoples and their cultures. Phil Deloria, in his article “The New World of the Indigenous Museum,” connects the perpetuity of an Indigenous disappearance ideology with American museum representations similar to Hurston’s description - representations of Indian savagery, exoticism, and cultural heritage as a disappearing history.21

Indigenous scholar Jodi Byrd notes that,

“...the breakaway settler colonialisms that produced the global North, particularly the United States, have created internally contradictory quagmires where human rights, equal rights, and recognitions are predicated on the very systems that propagate and maintain the dispossession of Indigenous peoples for the common good of the world.”

Systems of settler colonialism are structures that embody the violence and harms against Native peoples. The ASM too then, is a part of this colonial system that “propagates and maintains” dispossessions of Alaska Native peoples. Perhaps insidiously, it maintains these systems “for the common good of the world” in the very language of the code of ethics that state the museum’s responsibilities to “the public.”

As possible solutions, “decolonization” and “Indigenization” work together or alone in museum spaces to help deconstruct the continual systems of harm that museum institutions place on Natives. In this section, I ask: What are the differences between decolonization and Indigenization? In what ways are decolonization and Indigenization useful to the work I’m doing? In what ways do they hold my work back?

Decolonization as a practice, can be applied as a solution to this issue. The “De-” in decolonization marks an act of deconstructing and an un-doing.22 Ho-Chunk scholar Amy Lonetree’s book decolonizing museums: representing Native America in national and tribal museums offers a good overview of present discourse on decolonization in a museum context.23 The practice of decolonization in a museum often begins with acknowledgement of the concept of “colonization” or “settler colonialism” itself. Historical acknowledgement of past actions and even ongoing harmful practices can begin to fix and establish baseline mutual respect and trust between Native people and museum institutions.

In their critiques, a number of scholars note the pitfalls of decolonization in that acts of dismantling colonial structures are often conditioned with the limitation that the colonial structure itself cannot be dismantled to the point of non-existence; the basic colonial structure must remain. From her work at the Mystic Seaport Museum, Dr. Akeia de Barros-Gomez notes that you cannot successfully “un-do” while simultaneously maintaining the previous practice and systems.24 When museum professionals speak of “decolonization,” it is assumed that they do not mean a complete dismantling or un-doing, to the point that the colonial space no longer exists. The act of un-doing and dismantling in decolonization is ongoing and can never be complete.

By design, museum institutions enact harm and violence even if no longer upholding those same colonial pedagogies (or in extreme cases even in a complete dismantling or destruction of the museum space). That is, through their direct inheritance of collections and possession of Native cultural patrimony, museums are places that will to some degree

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23 For a more general context and definition of decolonization, see Tuck & Wang, “Decolonization is not a metaphor.”
continually perpetuate harm. Although museums and institutions may never completely decolonize their operations and values, the process and effort to incorporate Native values, priorities and traditional knowledge is meaningful and significant for any modern institution.

Especially in the context of ordinary ethics, which emphasize the quotidian museum work that takes place in between Native and non-Native collaborators, ethics exists less in the philosophically possible realm and more in the continual negotiations and discourse that happen over time. For my thesis, the process of decolonization through ordinary ethics, is one that Alaska Native peoples have continuously been utilizing as a means of improving interpersonal understanding and relationships. Therefore, this process is one that I must address and acknowledge as a useful tool in museum ethics.

I shall also introduce and balance decolonizing work with methods and practices of **Indigenization**. If decolonizing work is grounded in acts of “undoing” – then Indigenizing practices and methods aim to build, construct, and add-to museum spaces.\(^{25}\) Indigenization focuses not on taking away but rather on adding to or incorporating another set of values into non-Native systems. In Native and non-Native collaboration at the museum, this type of work emanates from a Native-framed perspective. I will go deeper into methods of Indigenization in Alaska Native contexts and how they provide solutions to intellectual property issues in museum code of ethics later in my paper.\(^{26}\) For now, I want to note that Indigenization, though an antithesis to decolonization, nevertheless strives towards a similar goal. In *Transit of Empire: Indigenous Critiques of Colonialism*, I use Jodi Byrd’s perspective on colonial empire and Indigenous critical theory to help unpack the importance of emphasizing Indigenizing thought.

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\(^{25}\) Lonetree, A. (2012) in the book’s case studies, provides good examples of the different practices of decolonization versus Indigenization methodologies in museums.

\(^{26}\) See case study on p. 36 for an example of an Indigenizing practice, through incorporating a set Lingit intellectual property rights.
and practices and to help frame how I look at the differences in decolonization versus Indigenization in museum ethical practice. Byrd bears in mind the inward versus outward forms of theorizing by taking a Indigenous studies lens. She notes the need for both an outward critique of colonial systems of violence meant to inform non-Natives – which we can think of in terms of decolonizing work in museums – and the simultaneous need for respecting nuances within the field (of Indigenous studies), that provide cultural specificity and context.27

As methodological tools, decolonizing and Indigenizing work can easily be confused. Just as decolonization has its pitfalls in ethical museum practice, Indigenization also holds potential for harm. The risk of harm comes primarily from mistakenly trying to lump all tribal cultures and histories into one category, an error of failing to recognize the wide diversity and complexity of each Native American tribe. Critiques of Indigenizing practices in museums are influenced by the similar critiques of the term “Indigenous” itself. Teves et al. defines Indigenous as a term of political categorization, enabling a form of global and international, intertribal solidarity.28 Also referenced are Native scholars’ warnings for the use of the term to homogenize life experiences and human cultures and groups.29 In this way, an employment of Indigenizing methods must take care to include as much specificity as possible.

... Merging Two Forms of Ethics

Another obstacle lies in merging a museum’s long-established ethics with new forms of Indigenous ethics. In other words, is it possible to merge the ethical philosophies of Alaska Natives into the context of a museum, with its own institutional set of ethical philosophies?

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29 Ibid., p.112
Ho-Chunk scholar Amy Lonetree provides two models that differentiate museum and Indigenous ethics in her article “Missed Opportunities: Reflections on the NMAI.” A **multi-vocal model** prioritizes diversity of perspectives and input in practice.\(^{30}\) Interpretations of history and culture are viewed through a multifaceted lens and cater to a holistic representation. A **community-based model or approach** places “final authority” in communities when it comes to curatorial, artistic, exhibit and production representations.\(^{31}\) Here I note the philosophical differences for the sake of showing just how contradictory these two perspectives are.

Anthropologist and author of *Plundered Skulls and Stolen Spirits: Inside the fight to Reclaim Native America’s Culture*, Chip Colwell-Chanthaphonh, shares a similar ideological framework when looking at Pueblo ritual. The community-based model Lonetree provides, aligns with Colwell-Chanthaphonh’s argument for priority given to the originating community in his article “Sketching knowledge: Quandaries in the mimetic reproduction of Pueblo ritual.”\(^{32}\) Colwell-Chanthaphonh presents the idea, in relation to the 1993 *Mata’atua Declaration on Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, that “…museums must give full consideration to the communities whose knowledge the institution is collecting, storing, sharing, and displaying.”\(^{33}\)

A museum code of ethics that does justice to Alaska Native communities and publics recognizes a need to value Indigenous knowledge, with an understanding that what is exhibited in these spaces represents the historical and cultural heritage of their landscape and homelands. Colwell-Chanthaphonh points out that a central idea of a museum should be to give “full

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consideration to the communities whose knowledge the institution is collecting, storing, sharing, and displaying.”

This ideology calls for prioritization of Native communities, which supersedes but also complicates the ASM policy that base ethics in valuing all publics.

Another potential for conflict occurs with regard to Native and non-Native legal treatment and interpretation of the terms “possession, access, and control.” Merging Native ethics and non-Native ethics into a singular institutional code of ethics is problematic. Proper respect and ethical acknowledgement for Alaska Native peoples are contradicted by the written legal rights surrounding the three terms. Today, the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) often forces Native people to be able to differentiate between the interpretation of or the legal definition (?) of “possession” versus “control” of “objects.” When Indigenous communities and tribes work to repatriate objects in an effort to re-establish spiritual connections to their cultural patrimony and “human remains” of their ancestors, possession or control is a secondary objective. From a decolonizing perspective, the terms “possession, access, and control” need to be revisited and consideration must be made of how conventional concepts of museum collections management can be adjusted to provide Native access to their own cultural patrimony.

Another concern for Native communities is the need to protect their decision to withhold certain knowledge from those outside the tribe, including non-Natives. Returning to Colwell-Chanthaphonh’s article, although there are no legal obligations outlined in federal law, Native tribes recognize their own complex systems, ceremonies and laws that govern the possession, access, and control of tribal knowledge. In this case noted by Colwell-Chanthaphonh, “possession, access, and control” are incorporated into a need for Indigenization, or the need to

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34 Ibid.
recognize Acoma, Hopi, Laguna, and Zuni intellectual property rights and their control not only over what they choose to share, but also what they choose not to share.\textsuperscript{35}

Finally, although Merryman considers the concept of the “conflict of interest” to be uncomplicated in the context of museum ethics, his assumption does not consider the possibility of an alternative interpretation of conflict of interest taken from an Alaska Native or tribal context. In traditional museum practice, conflict of interest definitions and policies are relatively straightforward. Merryman’s Museum Ethics regarding conflict of interest is built around the concept of “duty of loyalty” to an institution. Conflict of interest is defined as,

“the central concern of governance ethics, with self-dealing and misuse of insider information and status as corollaries. Conflict of interests is not a very complicated notion. If you are a board member or the director or a professional staff member of a museum, you have a duty of loyalty to that institution. If your self-interest, or your duty of loyalty to some other institution, is inconsistent with your duty of loyalty to the museum, you are conflicted.”\textsuperscript{36}

The language of harm is often assessed through the lens of a conflict of interest that pertains to the institution itself. Issues with standardizing museum ethics include conflicts between hard and soft ethical concerns and points of view.\textsuperscript{37}

The written policy assumes only the validity of the non-Native perspective. From the Alaska Native ethics and values perspective, the idea that you are not able to do ethical work because of an interest (or connection) or because a vested interest somehow taints your practice is problematic. The very presence of an Alaska Native or tribal member systematically entails a conflict of interest because the Native museum worker or board member inherently has cultural

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{37} Merryman, J.H. (2006)
and spiritual connections and interests to the Indigenous cultural patrimony (tangible and intangible), history, and culture being portrayed by the museum.

These are all examples of issues that arise in trying to merge Alaska Native and museum ethical values. The constant need to step back from or challenge current museum practices as they shift with the tides of the social means that obtaining a complete and purely ethical work policy in museum practice may never be philosophically possible – because this work is never done. However, museum staff and collaborators still need guidance and a code of ethics, whether perfection is philosophically possible or not. Until Alaska Native values, ethics and contributions are incorporated into public and non-Native spaces and positive relationships are built between museum institutions and Native peoples, there remains much work to be done for that goal to be relevant anyhow. *So how can these other goals be met?*

**A Theoretical Toolkit for Alaska Natives in Museum Spaces**

The manifestations of integrated decolonizing practice in my work will likely not be treated as valuable, because of the belief that decolonizing is not conducive to the philosophical goals that the term sets in the first place. Decolonizing practices that I use today are not designed to last. Although it is necessary, it is often ephemeral. We change the trajectory to make a pathway towards a goal. These projects and practices will inevitably evolve, change, and be replaced as the museum moves closer to its ethical goals. To hold on forever would limit and eventually serve as a barrier to continual advocacy for Alaska Native rights. In the context of my thesis project, decolonization (and indigenization?) is an ongoing process.

Still, this does not negate any potential for quotidian harm in the research and work that I share. And similarly, in the Indigenizing practices that I offer as solutions to issues of addressing
the intellectual property rights of Alaska Native peoples, the potential for unethical, Indigenous work remains. Whether it be in research that fails to comprehensively capture all protocol issues missing in code of ethics language, or, as scholarship moves forward, concepts and certain museum practice ideologies once helpful are problematized. However, I believe the best solutions to these ongoing issues will come from the incorporation of Alaska Native values into public spaces. [Author] shares the ideology that public discourse must actually take place in public spaces.38 If solutions to problems are made, the recommended changes to the Code of Ethics should make possible space for those conversations to happen and for Alaska Native perspectives to be inherently valued as generative to better histories and representation of culture and knowledge shared in ASM spaces.

The articles outlined by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples39 were considered and used as a framework in my thesis project. My recommended changes are in part an effort to incorporate language that acknowledges and adheres to the rights outlined in the document’s articles.

Developing my framework for ethics that balance Alaska Native communities and the ASM, I also invoke the current methods and wisdom of several scholars with the goal of connecting their definitions of ethics into my own thesis project and to bring them into the museum realm. My intention is to share ongoing discourse, connect it to Alaskan contexts, and leave room for the forthcoming and generative future scholarship.

By planting seeds, I focus on immediate actions and essential priorities that will ensure future possibilities for working with the “slow change” that happens in museums. This term was first shared with me through the context of political advocacy and Native representation in Alaskan politics. Sigvaana Topkok (Inupiaq), an attorney and currently serving on Nome’s city council, shared her experience in navigating Alaska politics as an Alaska Native voice in a non-Native political space.\(^{40}\)

I also introduce the concept of “adjusting the trajectory” as a museum practice. Adjusting the trajectory is the idea that any small change made today will have an exponential impact on our future generations. This can be seen both as a positive motivator and a cautionary note, taking into account that much like Lizarazo’s ordinary ethics, even the small quotidian, daily acts can shape the museum environments of future generations – for good or bad.

Radical alterity is a concept descended from philosophical thought, applied to person-to-person relationships between strangers that asks people to look to alternative ways of conducting oneself in the presence of a stranger despite knowing virtually nothing about them.\(^{41}\) In other words, it is the idea that we have the capacity to acknowledge experiences of others without a need to actually know what they are.\(^{42}\) For a more in-depth overview of “radical alterity” and its etymology, see Emanuel Meireles Vieira and Francisco Pablo Huascar Aragão Pinheiro’s article “Ethics and the person-centered approach: A dialogue with radical alterity.”\(^{43}\)

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\(^{40}\) Sigvaana Topkok, “Community Building,” Shaping the Knowledge that Informs Alaskans - Break Session, First Alaskans Institute (FAI), June 9 2022.

\(^{41}\) Drawn from the lineage of the “Ethics of Radical Alterity” by French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas (1906-1995), a disciple of Heidegger.


In the context of this thesis project, I use this term to help build a framework for my thesis project that asks: **What is important to carry forward with us? What is enough to hold contemporary lives and thoughts accountable, and to do justice to ancestral peoples and communities?**

Scholar Thelathia Nikki Young, studying Black, queer and family ethics situated within the field of philosophy, places ethics in the context of achieving a goal of “liberating” and countering normative thoughts to create “diverse ways of being… in society.” Liberative concepts of family center around the concepts of “disruption-irruption”, “creative resistance”, and “subversive-generative imagination.” Young defines these terms as they relate to ethics:

- **Disruption-irruption** is a tool of collective and individual moral agency that emotionally, rationally, and practically dismantles normative institutions, behaviors and expectations (along with the discourses that surround them). **Creative resistance** is a mechanism by which marginalized people resist and eschew the internal and external disciplines that make possible their dehumanizing assimilation (which strips them of subjectivity) into those institutions. **Subversive-generative imagination** is a radical praxis (reflective action) of moral imagination in which new actions and possibilities overturn the power of inhibiting and oppressive norms.”

For Alaska Native leadership and stewards involved in museum work across the state, disruption-irruption and creative resistance are incorporated into daily work. Placing Alaska Native voices and life histories in direct conversation with non-Native ones in exhibit contexts can disrupt (for a better purpose) perpetuation of colonial narratives. Similarly, changes to code of ethics language have the ability to rework both assumptions about what communities are involved in the museum institution and decision-making roles at the museum. Incorporating and using Native languages comprises creative resistance to static, colonial narratives about Alaska.

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45 Ibid. p. 9
Native peoples and cultures that are often published by museums. Subversive-generative imagination is realized when these actions are embedded into museum philosophy and practice. When driven by all three concepts, Young notes the ability to critically engage and develop awareness of human experiences and personhood\textsuperscript{46} – an essential element to an ethics of museums that emphasize historical narratives.

Contemporary ethical approaches to academic research require methods that employ diverse, collaborative and local-based ethics. Lizarazo et al. shares that the presence of impossibilities in ethical research does not mean that justice and ethics are unachievable. Similarly, from a philosophical viewpoint, Vieira and Pinheiro (2015) argue that ethics is established through “radical alterity,” or the capacity for acceptance of the “not knowing.” Radical alterity recognizes Native self-determination and casts aside a need for complete knowledge of history.

From The Okanagan Urban Aboriginal Health Research Collective in Canada, the article “Ethics, Hegemonic Whiteness, and the Contested Imagination of ‘Aboriginal Community’ in Social Science Research in Canada” by Berg et al. contends with issues of ethical contradictions and the ironic work of justice that involves inevitable unethical actions. The persistent risk of unethical acts and harm calls for purposeful relationships with Native peoples that enable museums’ ethical practices to sit with “unresolvable” pieces of collaboration while actively working against them at the same time.

“The kind of relationships that we are slowly developing through the Okanagan Urban Aboriginal Health Research Collective are such that they cannot easily be fixed in place in that way, but instead will continue to operate within the tensions of a highly contingent relationship…that is, the complex tensions of the unresolvable – that actually ensure that

\textsuperscript{46} Ibid. p. 23
justice can exist in this relationship, set as it is within a wider context of white hegemony.”\footnote{Berg et al. (2007). “Ethics, Hegemonic Whiteness, and the Contested Imagination of ‘Aboriginal Community’ in Social Science Research in Canada.” \textit{ACME Editorial Collective}, p. 406}

Further, Berg et al. highlights the need for continual and periodic revisitation of a museum’s relationship to communities, especially those historically marginalized in decision-making processes and roles.

\textit{Imaginative ethics} \footnote{Hansson, M.G. (2002). “Imaginative ethics – bringing ethical praxis into sharper relief.” \textit{Medicine, Health Care and Philosophy}, 5: 33-42.} is pulled from a context of clinical ethics, which calls for the imagination of alternative horizons of moral experience, for human life to be taken seriously, and for an acceptance of the idea that some facts are morally relevant while others are not. In “Imaginative ethics – bringing ethical praxis into sharper relief” by M.G. Hansson, the article presents a framework for ethics novel to previous ethics I’ve discussed:

“Imaginative ethics is a kind of moral deliberation whereby one takes human needs, desires and ends, the pleasure and pain of human life seriously. By listening to other perspective son and descriptions of the care of a patient, new images of goods and risks of relevance to a particular situation emerge. Imaginative ethics starts with the moral problem and encourages sensitivity towards particular needs, desires, risks, and benefits.”\footnote{Ibid., p.41}

In this sense, ethics has a capacity to address what cannot be done through a policy framework – the imaginative. It is a solution to lack of knowledge, and a museum’s ability to honor Alaska Native rights to privacy, protection of cultural heritage and sacred knowledge, and refusal for inquiry.

Together, I use the concepts of radical alterity and imaginative ethics as tools for bringing forward new modes of ethical thought and creation, for fostering an understanding of the
“unknowable,” and for beginning cultural values and spirituality of Alaska Natives at the center of human histories, rather than a need for complete narratives. By bringing these two concepts into my work, I obligate museums and publics to hold respect for the presence of (and not in spite of) the unknowable forms of knowledge and histories of Alaska Native communities. With regard to my own process of research, these concepts also allow me to focus on taking only what is essential to carry forward: on the information and knowledge that is sufficient for holding contemporary lives and thoughts accountable to Alaska Native ancestral peoples and their histories.

Changes and developments in decolonizing and Indigenizing practices may in the future problematize the very concepts themselves to a point where they no longer serve a purpose. With this in mind, I will consider a best-case scenario. Similarly, I look forward to the time when museum’s institutional ethics synchronize with and incorporate the ethics of Native peoples. My hope is that the work that Alaska Native learners, teachers, museum professionals and collaborators do today, diminish the impossibilities that characterize present circumstances and render the frameworks I use in my thesis unnecessary.
SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

In consideration of all code of ethics changes to language and ethical practice. The following sections provides a thematic summary and breakdown of my recommendations – which guided my thesis project and served as the foundation for all Alaska State Museums Code of Ethics recommendations. Each section also explains why these concepts are important to incorporate into the code of ethics, ways in which the ASM is already addressing this topic, and how the ASM can further improve museum practice and collaboration with Alaska Native peoples. Included for each recommendation is a list of the direct annotations to the current Alaska State Museums Code of Ethics.

I. INCORPORATE INDIGENOUS EXPERTISE AND KNOWLEDGE

The United Nations defines Indigenous knowledge as:

“the understandings, skills and philosophies developed by societies with long histories of interaction with their natural surroundings. For rural and Indigenous peoples, local knowledge informs decision-making about fundamental aspects of day-to-day life. This knowledge is integral to a cultural complex that also encompasses language, systems of classification, resource use practices, social interactions, ritual, and spirituality.”

Cognitive justice, which seeks to maintain the cultural and social context of traditional knowledge through accepting a diversity of thought, as applied to Alaska Native knowledge systems, directly incorporates knowledges into histories without distancing them from a separate categorization of “scientific fact.” Similar to the citation and use of Western scientific facts, recognizing tribal and cultural knowledge without need to distinguish them as “folklore” or

50 See the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
“traditional tales or stories.” Cognitive justice also calls for museums to balance “stewardship obligations with [their] commitments to engagements with source communities.”

In an Alaska Native context, Elders and leadership (can mean either tribal/clan or political representatives of Native regional corporations or other Native organizations) provide ownership and tribal affiliation information that are often missing in provenance records, especially early museum records. There are already practices at the ASM that make sure Native perspectives are shared in best authenticity exhibition narratives. Traditional “conservation” practices of how to care for regalia or certain materials, such as gut/skin, also provide some in possession of the museum or in the museums’ collections to be cared for in a way that better reflects the traditional care from which they belong/are associated. Conservation work in collaboration with master artists and ongoing groups organized by the museum, such as the Chilkat Dye Working Group, are examples of how Indigenous knowledge is being incorporated into the ASM’s ethical practice.

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**SETTLER COLONIALISM WÉ TLAAGÓO KÁ**

*Case Study: Using Lingít Oratory as History*

This case study informs non-Native audiences and key-in non-Natives into the complex laws and forms of citations that exist within intellectual Alaska Native knowledge sharing, production, ownership, and oratory. Independent from established museum intellectual property rights are ongoing and continually practiced Lingít, Inupiaq, Yupik, Sugpiiaq and Aleut, Haida,

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53 “The collaborative Chilkat Dye Working Group studies both new and historic materials through hands-on activities and open-ended conversations. See more on the ASM webpage: [https://lam.alaska.gov/chilkat-dye-research/chilkat-dye-working-group](https://lam.alaska.gov/chilkat-dye-research/chilkat-dye-working-group)

54 ‘stories of settler colonialism’ [Lingít]
Tsimshian, Athabascan, and Eyak intellectual property rights. These operate as complex protocols for knowledge sharing and citation through an Indigenized, Alaska Native approach.

In written and documented historical literature, the settler colonial time period in Alaska is dominated by the European age of exploration and discovery, the gold rush, and salmon canneries. During that time period, Alaska Native histories continued and were told from one generation to the next, as they have been for thousands of years. In early historical literature on Alaska, oral histories operated outside academic discussions or recognition in the field, rendered invisible as unwritten records. However, rather than being invisible or non-existent prior to written documentations, Native histories were always available to (yet primarily ignored by) historians and scholars writing historical literature on Alaska. For numerous reasons, historians have not always engaged with Alaska Native and, as this case study will focus on, specifically Lingít forms of histories.

Following the publications of Keixwnéi Nora Marks and Richard Dauenhauer at the end of the twentieth century came an outpour of historical works and scholarship that finally engaged with wé tlaagóo - “the stories,” and Lingít oratory in written format. The “Classics of Tlingit Oral Literature Series” has an enduring legacy - both in academia and also on the scholarship, education and work of Lingít students and traditional scholars. Published in 2005, Julia

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55 When it comes to Lingít oratory, historians and anthropologists have referenced both Lingít “oral literature” and “oral histories.” Thus far, their overlap remains undistinguished and tenuously connected. To make strict boundaries destroys a part of them. On the other hand, to make no distinction -- especially within the academic disciplines that have boundaries beyond Lingít Aaní (Tlingit homelands, also referencing Tlingit place of being) and Lingít worldviews -- we lose a distinction between the two that leaves room for misinterpretations, confusion and misunderstandings. This would be counterproductive to the goals of including Lingít oratory in the first place. I use it only here to refer to what historical literature has previously ignored and what is missing from prior historical literature - Lingít perspectives and stories.

56 In Southeast Alaska, “traditional scholars” refer to Native elders, tribal leaders, and political leaders (i.e. of Native entities; corporations and organizations) strongly involved and recognized for their intellectual-cultural work for Southeast Alaska Native communities.
Cruikshank’s *Do Glaciers Listen?*. Sixteen years later, Julia Hu Pegues *Space-Time Colonialism* brings together the intersections of lived histories of Alaska Native peoples and Asian migrants. The two readings’ incorporation of *wé tlaagóo* are based on the groundwork of the Dauenhauers interpretations of Lingit oratory structure.

Oral literature and oral histories provided by Alaska Natives are imperfectly distinguished; however, this incongruity exists only in its translation into the Western view of intellectual thought and discourse. To demystify the concept of *wé tlaagóo* is to shift and place the center where the peoples’ histories are; Lingit history becomes incoherent when positioned into non-Lingit ways of thinking and being.57 Demystifying and understanding *wé tlaagóo* also enables historical analyses to interconnect within a holistic structure and be inclusive of vital protocols.

**Keixwnéi** - Nora Marks Dauenhauer was a L’uknax.ádi58 transcriber, translator, author and poet, and scholar in anthropology. Her husband, Richard Dauenhauer, also did Lingít transcriptions and translations. Pulling together their collective work in the 1970-80s, Nora Marks and Richard Dauenhauer published a four-part series “Classics of Tlingit Oral Literature.” Together, the Dauenhauers published: *Haa Shuká, Our Ancestors: Tlingit Oral Narratives* (1987); *Haa Tuwunáagu Yís, for Healing Our Spirit: Tlingít Oratory* (1990); and *Haa Kusteeyí, Our Culture: Tlingít Life Stories* (1994). In collaboration with Lydia Black, who helped provide audio and video recordings of Lingít oratory, they published the fourth volume of the series: *Anóoshi Lingít Aaní Ká: Russians in Tlingít America, The Battles of Sitka 1802 and 1804* (2008). This final volume, in particular, was among the first Lingít ethnohistorical accounts

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57 In Lingít, this concept is referred to as Haa Kusteeyí, best translated as “our way of living and/or being.” Note this Lingít value is the title within the Dauenhauer series, marking its significance as a part of *wé tlaagóo*.

58 Raven-Sockeye Salmon clan
published. Since their publication, the first three volumes have become foundational works to Lingít scholars, students, elders, clans, communities and villages; and few Lingít scholarship and academic publications have consistently referenced at least one work from the series. Historians and at large have incorporated texts and concepts from their work.

The context of these works is set within an unsettling time period where anthropological work of the Indigenous “Pacific Northwest coast” focused the significance on the idea of language extinction and cultural genocide. Keixwnéi’s “Preface” (1990) uncover the researcher’s vulnerability and fears for the future of wé tlaagóó. The publication of this series was a response by the Dauenhauer’s to address the concerns and issues presented in the oratory they collected in their primary research throughout the 1960s-70s. Referenced in their 1990 publication, is an impending “morbidity” of the Lingít language and expressed reckoning with realities of ongoing settler colonial violence. Public sociopolitical discourse of today may be in a different mindset, however the tlaagóó recorded in the Dauenhauer series came from a temporality in the direct and immediate wake of the physical settler colonial disruption and genocide of their grandparents’ and parents’ generation.

The first three volumes are some of the most comprehensive descriptions of “Tlingit oratory” in published works. What has made the book series so foundational are the “nuanced” descriptions of wé tlaagóó as it traditionally functioned in Lingít society, and the various conversations on what is lost in translation with written transcriptions and translations of oratory. These texts marked a symbolic shift from oral to written Lingít historical accounts. They also laid the path for incorporating essential context and oratory practices and protocol that verify

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Lingít historical accounts and challenge the claims and rhetoric about the accuracy and “truth” of *wé tlaagóo*.

More and more, contemporary scholarship engages with Lingít *tlaagóo* and incorporates them as historical sources to include Lingít perspectives and accounts of settler colonial events. In *Do Glaciers Listen? Local Knowledge, Colonial Encounters & Social Imagination*, J. Cruikshank frames an environmental history around juxtaposing historical accounts of the colonial records and from Lingít peoples. Juliana Hu Pegues’ *Space-Time Colonialism: Alaska’s Indigenous and Asian Entanglements* uses numerous recorded *tlaagóo* to counter the settler colonial, in her work tracing Asian-Indigenous peoples interwoven histories in Alaska in a settler colonial period.

The temporal organization of Hu Pegues book is centered around “specific economies” of the settler colonial period: tourism, gold mining, salmon canning, and the military. Each chapter provides theoretical analyses of the settler colonial tactics employed, and its effects on Asian and Native peoples within each economic period of settler colonialism in Alaska. Notably, the book’s introduction unpacks the “space-time” of settler colonial Alaska to illustrate the self-perpetuating and exclusionary constructions and tactics. Here, a discussion which addressed a wildly differing Lingít space-time would provide context that places the settler colonial histories within a larger history that exists in Alaska. Although Hu Pegues’ book is a historical analysis centered around the effects of settler colonialism, without acknowledging more what working within a settler colonial time period means for analyzing *wé tlaagóo* - we lose a vital contextual aspect.

For settlers in Alaska, the Bering Land Bridge theory was utilized for transforming Indigenous peoples of Alaska into immigrants and diminishing Native identities and land
claims.\textsuperscript{60} For Lingít people, \textit{wé tlaagóo} of their peoples’ migration to their homelands and specific clan origins place settler colonial histories at the tail-end of historical accounts that weave into the present, enduring modern experiences of settler colonialism. Hu Pegues notes the recent temporality of setter colonial histories as a historical period. Recounting Ernestine Hayes life history and a Mt. Saint Elias clan history, Hu Pegues also mentions Lingít oratories “repetitive” and “cyclical” nature.\textsuperscript{61} What is not acknowledged are how much and how different these aspects may be incorporated into settler colonial historical forms of oratory.

Settler colonial history is not just recent history, but also the life histories of elders and traditional scholars still alive today. Lingít histories predate the settler colonial versions. The unprecedented violence of settler colonial history from a Lingít perspective exists as translated dialogues, modeled from ancient oratory practices, and fit into unconventional settings and directed towards non-Native audiences. Lingít-told settler colonial histories are part of \textit{wé tlaagóo}, but they are also forming that innovate and transform the concepts and structure as they are translated out of ceremonial and Lingít group settings. These gatherings or ceremonies emphasize participatory accounting of histories and the essential social balance of \textit{wé tlaagóo} when speaking in front of a Lingít audience of active listeners.

Missing from both Cruikshank’s and Hu Pegues’ works are critical discussions of what is lost in transcription and translation in their Lingít sources, and the intellectual dissonance from \textit{wé tlaagóo}. Issues with written transcriptions and translations extend beyond what are perhaps the more common-sense loss of tone, gestures, and cadence. What cannot be replicated by


\textsuperscript{61} The structure of Lingít oratory is discussed in more detail, in Dauenhauer 1990 “Introduction.” I am assuming from Hu Pegues’ listed resources that she was influenced by Nora’s and Richard’s interpretations, as not many exist in published literature and the Dauenhauer series remains the only reference that digs deep into Lingít oratory.
written and published historical literature is the call-and-response - the components of χ’ayawulishee⁶² (the call) and yoo χ’ayakduldisheek⁶³ (their response).

Julie Cruikshank’s *Do Glaciers Listen? Local Knowledge, Colonial Encounters, & Social Imagination* is an attempt to engage with Native oral histories in a way that is unacknowledged in *Space-Time Colonialism* - as historical documentations with their own “social lives.”⁶⁴ Drawing from the Dauenhauer works, Cruikshank illustrates the innovations of incorporating written transcriptions of the oratory, stating: “I continue to marvel at the social life that transcribed texts gain in the communities where they originated and continue to be told...They use written versions of their stories as points of reference to demonstrate to family members, to other members of their community, and to the larger world the potential of stories to make us re-evaluate situations we think we understand.”⁶⁵ This recognition by Cruikshank informs the Lingít sources used in her text.

In Chapter 4, “Two Centuries of Stories from Lituya Bay: Nature, Culture, and La Pérouse,” Lingít epistemologies and French documentation, along with popular anthropological works map a history of La Pérouse’s exploration of the Alaskan coast, and his first encounter with the Lingít. The Lingít perspective is tied in through a series of interviews and oral histories, including an oratory by Jack Ellis chronicling a story belonging to the people of Yakutat about their first encounter with La Pérouse. It also includes a L’uknaxádi⁶⁶ mourning song, sung for Frederica de Laguna⁶⁷ by Frank Italio. The rest of the chapter is dedicated to a

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⁶² “The Tlingit term...meaning ‘a verbal agreement at the correct moment.’” (Dauenhauer 1990, p.97)
⁶³ “The general Tlingit term for making such responses is yoo x’ayakduldisheek, ‘they respond to [them].’” (Dauenhauer 1990, p.77)
⁶⁵ “Listening for Different Stories” p.79
⁶⁶ Tlingit, Raven-Coho clan.
historiography that compares the two histories that critiques the field’s previous lack of understanding that stems from wé tlaagóo practices and traditions being largely ignored.

Significantly, Cruikshank uses this analysis of historical literature to argue that “their encounter provides not merely a story from the past, but one whose consequences continue to cascade through twenty-first-century debates, such as those now framing environmentalism, biodiversity, and global warming.” Wé tlaagóo are recognized for their extensions into the present, as Cruikshank mainly argues through the embodiment of environmental relationships.

Although aware of the rich living and fluid forms of oratory, Cruikshank’s analysis is an allusion to the importance of wé tlaagóo but not an engagement with its structure completely. Nor is the source used as a chance to recognize Lingít peoples’ way of verifying and authenticating their histories. These pieces are lost in written accounts; and distinct forms of wé tlaagóo that, although still used as historical accounts, cannot replicate the real-time vocal responses and community validation. The written forms, while still utilized by Lingít peoples, are inherently imbalanced, because wé tlaagóo as oratory is never a singular account. Clan histories of customary tlaagóo structure always ask for yoo x’ayakdudlisheek, the response and oratory of their opposites (opposite clans). One element of the book, the framework of wé tlaagóo, attempts to view Lingít perspectives within their own context. Regardless of an imperfect execution, this attempt enriches Cruikshank’s arguments for environmental justice.

Contextualizing each Lingít historical account is important for identifying its validity as Lingít history. Confirming historical accounts in Lingít terms requires more active participation from the audience and a relationship to the speaker. Authenticity, truth, and accuracy of accounts as validation of historical accounts are essential to Cruikshank’s environmental history and Hu

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Pegues’ theoretical analyses of histories in Alaska. Breaking down and analyzing discourse of the un-transcribable forms of retellings and continual validation of their histories through oratory and \( \text{wé tlaagóo} \) practices address how these Lingít histories are authenticated within their communities and clans and would have enriched both Cruikshank’s and Hu Pegues’ research.

Deeper politics into the ownership rights and protocols of the histories add nuance\(^6\) to scholars’ efforts to incorporate Lingít histories. Again, understanding the customary time and place of \( \text{wé tlaagóo} \) becomes crucial to understanding the ownership protocols of these historical records. Histories of migrations, natural disasters, and clan people, which predate the settler colonial narratives, are clan histories, and are tied to a concept of clan ownership and property (both tangible and intangible) - \( \text{at.oow} \). Lingít understandings of ‘histories’ as an intangible form of \( \text{at.oow} \) raise issues of their incorporation into historical conversations. If it is important who is telling \( \text{wé tlaagóo} \), and for whom, then historical literature written outside contexts in which \( \text{wé tlaagóo} \) are customarily practiced will need to self-reflect and evaluate issues of extractive practices in using Lingít sources without proper recognition.

\textit{Anóoshi Lingít Aaní Ká: Russians in Tlingít America}, the fourth volume of the Dauenhauer series and edited by Lydia Black, critically engages with not just Lingít oratory and the Lingít community at large, but the specific Kiks.ádi clan to which this history belongs, in effort to bring forward best practices and accordance with Lingít protocol. Through an ongoing discussion with clan leaders and within conversations of the Lingít community in Southeast Alaska at large, the book engages with the specific clan histories and perspective of the Kiks.ádi as engaging with their \( \text{at.oow} \) or their sacred intellectual property. The preface notes the

\(^6\) Referring to an analytical nuance in historical scholarship and discourse. For Lingít peoples, these ownership, genealogical, rhetorical, and knowledge-base protocols are the bare minimum for granting a person the authority to speak on behalf of their clan or father’s/grandparent’s clan.
importance of considering speaker, audience, and participant politics: “With this book, we enter the realm of ethnohistory, and with this genre come the questions of who owns history and who has the right to share it. The answers are by no means universal.”

Beyond authorship and the historical sourcing and contents of the publication, which is saturated with Lingít transcriptions, the focus of this book reveals its dedication to a historiography applicable to the “subjects,” and peoples whose history it belongs to. The volume includes a transcription by and translation of Lingít and Sitka community leader, Sally Hopkins. This section details the Lingít concept of collective histories and the responsibility of upholding the integrity of oratory that preserves their Native histories for future generations. Further, the orientation of the book’s timeline to the Battles of Sitka in 1802 and 1804, highlights a period of significance in Lingít histories, and histories of the affected clans within their we tlaagóo, rather than a period defined by Russian exploration and occupation. In this book, Dauenhauer et al. are able to analyze interwoven we tlaagóo as clan histories, contextualized by their Kiks.ádi ownership to be bound to the Kiks.ádi and their homelands, and as settler colonial narratives placed in recent history on a temporality that spans multiple ancestral glacial periods of migration and movement throughout Lingít Aaní.

Referring back to Kintoow Cecilia Kunz’s telling of the Juneau murder of the three Kaagwaantaan men, this historical account is validated not just by its formal record and publication, but by the context of who was telling it, and for whom it was being told. Kintoow is not Kaagwaantaan, but L’uknax.ádi (Raven-Coho clan); however, her father is Kaagwaantaan.

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70 p. xiii
71 Although periodization differs when oratory is place-based or from which tribal narrative is being told.
72 Directly translated as “Lingít territory,” but perhaps best translated as “Lingít homelands, ancestral and current; incorporating the past, present, and future spatial manifestations of ‘home’ for Lingít people.”
73 Hu Pegues, p.78-79
making Kintoow “a child of her father’s clan.” What is also significant is her father’s stature not just as a member of the Kaagwaantaan but the clan leader. Children of their father’s clan are traditionally responsible for their father’s people's clan histories - as a caretaker of intangible at.oow. They are expected not simply to know, but to share wé tlaagóo when called upon by the clan, on behalf of their father’s people.74 When told by Kintoow, an emphasized meaning is conveyed in the telling of this history as important that it be shared by someone of authority to match its significance as a clan history of the Kaagwaantaan.

Historical literature on Alaska Natives and Lingít peoples, engaging with Lingít histories through the same place-based knowledge and rigor that the Dauenhauer book series manages, remains elusive. However, to offer no attempt to interpret history is this culturally and accurate manner is to continually peripheralize Lingít people from their own history. “Wading through the weeds” or diving into complex details is sometimes worthwhile to truly understand. A complex oratory structure that takes one Lingít person a lifetime to listen and learn, will not be any easier to learn by historians, anthropologists, and non-Lingít scholars.

The lessons are there and practiced through modern day ceremonies, public events, and even within homes and among family gatherings. How much they are recognized and considered in historical literature in the future depends on how much historians and scholars are willing to sift through the incoherence or incomplete interpretation that comes from translations and transcriptions. Already, as we have seen from the generative discourse of Juliana Hu Pegues and Julie Cruikshank, works that engage and attempt to understand wé tlaagóo are all the more relevant to Lingít people and ongoing research.

74 For more on traditional settings of tlaagóo, Kaal.átk’ Charlie Joseph Sr.’s recorded life history includes descriptions of the context of oratory in daily lives and the importance of genealogy in wé tlaagóo. (Dauenhauer 1987, p.321-324). See an example from 2018, where David Kadashan was called upon by his father’s people the Kaagwaantaan to tell their stories: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oB_yJ3f6fxk.
Incorporating place-based narratives and *wé tlaagóó* in historical literature realign Alaska Native and Indigenous studies to place the center of their discussions where Native histories are situated in “space-time.” Shifting historical coherence of oral histories towards Lingit worldviews opens up engagement with pieces lost in non-Native historical accounts, and to begin to see them as part of a larger whole. The inherent corruption of history by translating these forms of knowledge and even oratory in the museum space, is the translation of traditional oratory and their protocols to shift for non-Native (non-Lingít) audiences.

**Ethical Responsibilities to Recognition & Incorporation of Alaska Native Knowledge**

The incorporation of Native expertise and knowledge is also essential when collaborating with Alaska Native communities. This includes maintain a shared authority of decision-making and leadership roles within collaborative museum spaces, such as programming and exhibit planning processes. Collaborative discussions may include how information will be collected, used, shared, and archived.75 Such forms of collaboration between Alaska Natives and non-Native museum people are important to maintaining accuracy of histories and curatorial narratives – as well as enabling museum staff and professionals to institute well-informed practices in conservation and collections management.76 Collaborative work with tribes and Native expertise can also enrich the museum’s institutional integrity – reflecting traditional knowledge systems with equal validity, acknowledged as a science, and respecting diverse knowledges outside Euro-American and colonial systems of thought.77

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75 SAR Guidelines for Collaboration – Guidelines for Museums, p.5  
76 Ibid., p.2  
In my recommendations, I searched for opportunities for where I could insert a sentence explicitly dedicated to acknowledgment of Indigenous expertise and knowledge. I made changes to either make the code of ethics more open to multiple forms of knowledge and sources and/or to validate these other forms of knowledge in the code of ethics.

**Recommendations**

“Members of the Museums’ administration and governing entities must respect the professional expertise of the staff, each having been engaged because of his or her special knowledge or ability in some aspect of museum activity.” [Museum Management - Professionalism]

Members of the Museums’ administration and governing entities must respect the knowledge and expertise of staff, and all collaborative partners and communities, each having been engaged because of their special insights or ability in some aspect of museum activity.

“Volunteer participation is a strong American tradition, and the Museums could not exist without the contributions of devoted volunteers.” [Museum Management – Volunteers]

Volunteer participation is a strong tradition of the Museums, and they could not exist without the contribution of devoted volunteers.

“If museums intend to contribute to the preservation of humanity’s cultural and scientific heritage and the increase of knowledge, each should respond to any opportunity for cooperative action with a similar organization to further these goals. A museum should welcome such cooperative action even if the short-term advantages are few and it will not significantly increase the individual institution’s own holdings or enhance its image.” [Museum Management – Inter-Institutional Cooperation]

If museums intend to contribute to the preservation of Alaska’s cultural and environmental heritage and the continual dedication to knowledge production, they should seek and respond to opportunities for collaboration with a diverse range of organizations, communities, and individual artists and experts that help further these
goals. A museum should both welcome and facilitate such collaborative action, understanding the value and ethical importance of engaging with Alaskan publics.

ADD:

Of particular concern are collaborations with Alaska Native peoples. The Alaska State Museums have history embedded and aiding in the colonization of Indigenous peoples of Alaska. The State Museum in Juneau is located on and occupies traditional Auk Kwan territory, and the Sheldon Jackson Museum carries legacies of its namesake and institutional establishment that represent harmful actions against Alaska Native peoples and their cultures. Thus, the Museums are obligated and entrusted by the State of Alaska to acknowledge, reconcile and decolonize its institution.

“The Museums must use their best effort to ensure that exhibits are honest, have objective expressions, and do not perpetuate myths or stereotypes. Exhibits must provide with candor and tact an honest and meaningful view of the subject. Sensitive areas such as ethnic or social history are of the most critical concern.” [Museum Management – Truth in Presentation]

ADD: In the display and exhibition of Alaska Native peoples and their cultural patrimony, the Museums recognize that the most honest and accurate representations of these cultures and knowledge systems come from Indigenous peoples themselves.

II. REVISIT MUSEUM FOUNDATIONS & COLLECTIONS

Since the last major revision to the ASM code of ethics, academic fields including anthropology, museum studies, and the political advancements of Alaska Natives have yet to be incorporated into the document. In the language of Museum ethics what is emphasized? What is valued? These answers have shifted in recent years, and the recommendations I make look to bridge the gap between current museum practices, and their lack of acknowledgement in the written text of the code of ethics.
Possession, Access & Control

In recent years, issues of Native communities’ and Native individuals’ access to museum collections has focused on physical accessibility. During the recent pandemic, many museums and institutions with collections have sought ways to open up accessibility to their collections through means of public virtual access. Another effort to increase access to museum collections is the reproduction of certain objects, sometimes using 3-D printing, are made to be repatriated in lieu of the original. These efforts look at solutions to providing physical accessibility. However, other forms of accessibility in museum spaces need to look beyond collections and tangible items, to tackle issues involving Native accessibility to programming, funding, policy development, and institutional employment.\(^78\)

Accessibility can also be viewed in stronger terms that push more towards the concept of control, and the acknowledgement of full self-determination as a right of Native peoples when it comes to the fate and control of cultural objects, recognizing contexts where objects of cultural patrimony “have been stolen from the community or exhumed from gravesites.”\(^79\) In this regard, the ASM has excelled in comparison to many other state museums. [Specific examples of ASM practice and policies addressing procession, access, and control provided in following section. See p.x]

Conflict of Interest

Anticipating the future growth of museum staff diversity, from the ASM’s current trajectory, I include suggested additions to the code of ethics that specifically take regard for


\(^{79}\) Keeler. Indigenous International Repatriation Guide
ethical responsibilities and obligations from an Alaska-Native point of view. [See p. 24-28 for an in-depth discussion on this topic.]

Object Animacy & Spirituality

Museum collections are viewed differently between the institution, non-Native publics and Native communities. In my recommendations I emphasize the recognition of an “objects” spirituality and animacy. Alaska Native peoples believe that objects are living and have spirits and those spirits need to be recognized or acknowledged. Considerations of spiritual elements and care of collections have been neglected in museum spaces. Spiritual care can also extend beyond simply “sacred objects” or objects of “ceremonial use.” The Alutiiq Museum’s Guidelines for the Spiritual Care of Objects is a model for the incorporation of Alaska Native spiritual care that is tribally specific.

Incorporation of Alaska Native ideologies, languages, and terms demonstrate a respect and care for Alaska Native cultural perspectives. The use of Alaska Native terms also ensures direct reference to cultural patrimony and can improve authenticity. To avoid misinterpretation or incomplete interpretation that may occur during language translation of English or non-Native terminology, the use of the Alaska Native term erases any forms of ambiguity in referencing collections. For example, if a researcher or visitor wants to find all qaspeqs through the online catalog – the English words “parka” or “coat” are multiple words researchers look up to search the entire collection at the Alaska State Museum.

81 See section “Appendix III: Definitions and Suggested Resources” p.127 for references to other forms of spiritual care.
82 SAR Guidelines for Collaboration – Guidelines for Museums, p.4
Recommendations

“The sustaining core of the Museums is the collection, to which the greatest portion of the Museum’s fiscal and human resources is devoted in its security, preservation, enhancement, research, interpretation, and public display. The Museums record the present, rather than simply preserve the past, so the collection process never ends. As the collection grows, so does the need for additional facilities in which to properly store and exhibit it. Without human and physical resources to preserve the collections, the citizens of the State of Alaska will lose significant portions of their material heritage.” [Philosophy]

- Considerations to amend philosophy of the “sustaining core” of Museum, to diversify and expand
- Incorporation of intangible forms of heritage, storytelling, and the museum’s key role not as a collector of Alaskan heritage but leading institution for the promotion of unifying and exhibiting Alaska’s rich and diverse history and culture

“The Museums have the responsibility to serve all of Alaska by advancing an understanding and appreciation of the natural and cultural commonwealth through exhibitions, research, scholarship, publications, and educational activities.” [Museum Management – Ownership of Scholarship Material]

The Museums have the responsibility to serve all of Alaska by advancing an understanding and appreciation of Alaska’s rich tangible and intangible heritage through exhibitions, research, scholarship, publications, and educational activities.
“Within the Museums’ primary charge is the responsibility to use their collections for the 
creation and dissemination of knowledge. Intellectual honesty and objectivity in the presentation 
of objects is the duty of every professional.” [Museum Management – Truth in Presentation]

Within the Museums’ primary charge is the responsibility to use material culture and multimedia heritage for the creation and dissemination of knowledge. Intellectual honesty and integrity in the presentation of objects and the cultures & communities they represent is the goal of every museum employee, volunteer, and collaborator.

“The distinctive character of museum ethics derives from the ownership, care and use of its 
collections.” [Museum Collections]

The distinctive character of museum ethics derives from balance between care and use of collections, and the natural & human stories told through physical exhibitions within the museum.

“It is the policy of the Museums to permit public access to Museums’ collections and records 
under controlled conditions. Such conditions include advance notice and proper supervision by 
Museums’ staff.” [Museum Collections]

It is the policy of the Museums to permit public access to Museums’ collections and records. The Museums, in consultation with collaborative parties and entities, will evaluate and develop best practices and procedures for the environmental and ethical conditions requisite for collections visits. Actions regarding documentation and any policy or restriction concerns will be deliberated prior to meeting.
ADD Section on “Treatment and Care” in Museum Collections

**Treatment and Care**

The Museum is dedicated to ensuring to the best of its ability that Indigenous exhibits and objects are treated and cared for within their own cultural contexts.

“Treatment by the Museums of these artifact will be based on their ethnographic context, and each object will be considered a unified whole.” [Museum Collections – Human Remains]

Treatment by the Museums of these artifacts will be based on their contexts within cultural heritage and ties to current tribes. Each object will be considered a unified whole.

“The Museums ensure that the unique and special nature of human remains and funerary and sacred objects is recognized as the basis of all considerations concerning such collections. Disposal of Native American human remains is regulated by the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990.” [Museum Collections – Human Remains]

ADD:

- Human remains are to be treated with respect and dignity, and that degrading treatment in the course of research, collection or exhibition is prohibited.
- The Museums should to the best of their ability be prepared to facilitate dialogues for the return of cultural property to a tribe, or their representative entity, of origin.

“The Museums will *routinely* analyze their collections and will dispose of items from the collections.” [Museum Collections – Deaccession]

ADD: Recurring time-period specificity.
III. INCORPORATE REFLEXIVITY AND AWARENESS OF INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES

The Alaska State Museum in Juneau was founded by and operates under the State of Alaska, while the Sheldon Jackson Museum in Sitka does not. There are different policy restrictions implicated under state jurisdiction/oversight. There are legal guidelines and restrictions, as well as a complex legacy of colonization and exploitation that both museums – the Alaska State Museum and Sheldon Jackson Museum – have a responsibility to address. The Museums’ Code of Ethics is an opportunity to expand its defined services and reframe its responsibilities to Alaskans and the broader public, particularly in regard to upholding the highest standards of authenticity, diversity, equity, and inclusion.

...Ethical Responsibilities and Publics v. Institution

When addressing Alaska Native peoples, Code of Ethics need to shift language focus to incorporate civic justice of Alaska Native peoples, requires a Code of Ethics language shift that is written to uphold institutional ethical responsibility and obligation to Publics. UNESCO “Ethical Standards in Museums” argues that through ongoing conversations and developments of museum best-practices, “Ethics extends beyond the quantitative limits of the law by enlarging its qualitative scope and reach within the broader spheres of social conduct, promoting wide-ranging standards of respect for diversity and mutual care of heritage.”

For example, part of institutional ethical responsibilities includes an acknowledgement of self-determination for Alaska Native tribes, cultures, communities to define themselves. This

83 UNESCO High Level Forum on Museums. “Ethical Standards in Museums.” From Session 3-A.
means working beyond “state” and “national” designations, categorizations, and knowledges of Native people, their culture and objects to incorporate various other language models into the code of ethics text, to better represent public viewpoints.

**Loans to Native Collective Entities**

At the ASM and through state regulation, there now exist legislation and structures that specifically serve and accommodate regalia and “ceremonial object” loans in an Alaskan context. This includes State Regulations Alaska Administrative Code amendments 4 AAC 58.120., which provide for “a loan for cultural use of an Alaska Native artifact in the permanent collection of the museum,” and 4 AAC 58.130.

**4 AAC 58.130. Agreements regarding Alaska Native artifacts** (a) The Alaska State Museum may enter into an agreement with an Alaska Native tribe or clan regarding an Alaska Native artifact that has a historical connection to the tribe or clan, if the museum finds that the agreement is (1) in the interest of the collection, (2) consistent with the mission of the museum. (b) An agreement under (a) of this section may be for the following purposes: (1) a loan of an artifact in the museum collection to a tribe or clan, including a standing agreement for a loan for cultural or educational use of the artifact; (2) acceptance of shared ownership between the tribe or clan and the museum of an artifact being donated by the tribe or clan; the agreement may provide for display of the artifact by the museum and cultural use of the artifact by the tribe or clan; (3) a loan of an artifact to the museum from a tribe or clan; the agreement may provide for display of the artifact by the museum and cultural use of the artifact by the tribe or clan; (4) other purposes that promote the mission of the museum. (c) An agreement under (a) of this section must include (1) requirements of care for objects in the museum collection that provide for protection of the artifact from damage or loss; (2) clear arrangements for the release and the return of the artifact; and (3) a dispute resolution process that is approved by the Department of Law.85

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84 State Regulation 4 AAC 58.120. Loans of objects in the collection. Eff. Aug 18, 2013, current through December 2, 2021. [https://www.law.cornell.edu/regulations/alaska/4-AAC-58.120](https://www.law.cornell.edu/regulations/alaska/4-AAC-58.120)

In particular, the ASM provides as an example to how to address and shift collection loan policies in action, to more specifically cater to Alaska Native contexts and their political structures used to collaborate with non-Native entities. As a recent example, the ASM’s exhibit “The Spirit Wraps Around You” provided conditions by which at any time needed for ceremonial use, exhibited pieces would be pulled from the exhibit. Continual conversations and ongoing collaboration with Alaska Native peoples will ensure the ASM is able to best service.

The recommended changes to the code of ethics I provide, regarding institutional need for reflexivity, look more towards the sections that provide more specific guidelines rather than broader ethical philosophies of the museum. The sections on museum management, collections, and staff I pay particular attention to, as sections suitable for the explicit language incorporate of dedicated services to Alaska Native peoples and their rights to cultural patrimony and heritage.

Recommendations

“Loyalty to the mission of the Museums and to the public it serves is the essence of museum work, whether volunteer or paid.” [Code of Ethics]

Loyalty to the mission of the Museums and to the diverse publics it serves is the essence of museum work, by all museum staff, volunteers and collaborators.

“The Museums’ programs will be free from bias or stereotype. The Museums’ programs will avoid partisan political, economic, and religious ideologies. The Museums will not accept financial or other support, assistance or contributions which compromise intellectual freedom, honest scholarship and full objectivity in research and presentation.” [Museum Management – Programs]

The Museums’ programs aim for the highest ethical standards, and museum staff will to the best of their abilities avoid all bias or stereotype portrayals in museum operations, programming or exhibitions. The Museum will also avoid institutional expressions or opinions of partisan political, economic, and religious ideologies. The Museums will not accept financial or other support, assistance or contributions which compromise intellectual freedom, honest scholarship and full integrity of current best practices in research and presentation.

“The Museums must use their best effort to ensure that exhibits are honest, have objective expressions, and do not perpetuate myths or stereotypes. Exhibits must provide with candor and tact an honest and meaningful view of the subject. Sensitive areas such as ethnic or social history are of the most critical concern.” [Museum Management – Truth in Presentation]

The Museums must use their best effort to ensure that exhibits are honest, and expressive of Alaska-related content without perpetuating myths or stereotypes. Exhibits must provide with candor and tact an honest and meaningful view of the stories they tell.

“In all activities, Museums’ employees must act with integrity and in accordance with the most stringent ethical principles as well as the highest standards of objectivity.” [Museum Staff]

In all activities, Museums’ employees must act with integrity and, beyond adherence to laws, in accordance with current ethical principles and highest standards of museum practice, recognizing the continually chancing practices within the field.

“But museums enjoy high public visibility and their employees a generous measure of public esteem. To the public, the Museums’ employee is never wholly separable from his/her institution. S/he can never consider him/herself or his/her activities totally independent of his/her museum despite disclaimers that s/he might offer. Any museum-related action by the individual may reflect on the Museums or be attributed to it. S/he must be concerned not only with the true personal motivations as s/he sees them, but also the way in which such actions might be construed by the outside observer.” [Museum Staff]

To the public, the Museums’ employees are never wholly separable from their institution. They can never consider themselves or their activities totally independent of
their museum. Any museum-related action by an individual may reflect on the Museums or be attributed to it. Museum employees must be concerned not only with the true personal motivations as they perceive, but also the various ways in which such actions are perceived by external audiences and publics.

“Although the Museums are dedicated to providing the environment of free and honest inquiry essential to its functioning, the objects in the Museums’ collections, their documentation and all additional documentation developed subsequent to their acquisition are property of the State of Alaska.” [Museum Staff – Teaching, Lecturing, Writing and Other Creative Activities]

*The Museums prioritize dedication to the care and integrity of collections or objects on loan under care of the Museums’ and State of Alaska. However, in accordance with the institution’s outward-focused service to Alaskans and broader publics, the Museums’ aim to provide an open and inclusive environment, and aspire to service honest inquiry essential to its mission and purpose.*

“The Museums ensure that collections in its custody support its mission and public trust responsibilities.” [Museum Collections]

*The Museums ensure that collections housed in their facilities and under their care support the Museums’ mission and public trust responsibilities.*

“Any action must be guided by good judgment, tasteful deportment and current knowledge.” [Museum Collections – Field Study and Collecting]

*Any action must be guided by good judgment, tasteful deportment and current knowledge, and in consideration of possible exploitation and extractive practices of Indigenous cultural patrimony and heritage.*

“…that they discourage by all practical means unethical, illegal and destructive practices associated with acquiring, transporting and importing objects…” [Museum Collections – Field Study and Collecting]

*…that they discourage by all practical means unethical, illegal, culturally inappropriate and destructive practices associated with acquiring, transporting and importing objects…*
IV. TREAT LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT, AS THE FLOOR AND NOT THE CEILING

“Treat our policies and expectations like the floor and not the ceiling.”

Ayyu Qassataq

Land acknowledgement opens a space with gratefulness and respect for the contributions, innovations, and contemporary perspective of Indigenous peoples. Land acknowledgments are temporalized as a pause and reflection in time to reckon with particular histories, and to call them forward. It is a consideration of a lack of acknowledgement – over dark and violent histories that are site-specific and land/place-based. These land acknowledgements are also usually temporalized in majority non-Native, academic or intellectual spaces. Land acknowledgments ask those listening to them, to look at these histories in a very different context that non-Native spaces are used to viewing them. These histories have often not previously been brought into such a place. Land acknowledgement can also be an action – of truth speaking, and beginnings of justice.87

Land acknowledgements are also a first-step and action that can symbolize an institutions movement towards decolonization and equity. Land acknowledgements, as well as the use of Native place-names can also assist non-Native people make the transition to inclusivity and help them understand greater meaning of the relationship between Alaska Native people and their ancestral homeland. Formal recognition of Alaska Native place-names create an intentional process to allow non-Native people to see what their occupation of traditional land as something more and meaningful to the Native people who share the same space. Learning and acquiring

accurate Native place-names will require engagement and communication with Alaska Native peoples, groups, and entities. 88

A Personal Land Acknowledgement for this Thesis


“I am Tlingit-Filipino, and Kaagwaantaan from Glacier Bay and the village of Hoonah, Alaska. My father’s people are from the Chilkat region and village of Klukwan, Alaska. These are my peoples’ ancestral lands - which are very much different from the Indigenous lands I’m standing on and where our event takes place today. I want to respect the Narragansett, the Wampanoag, the peoples of this region that I share a modern ‘Indigenous’ identity with. And I want to very intentionally note that as I give this presentation, I am in their ancestral homelands. Although sharing a sense of solidarity in colonial contexts, their cultural values and histories are distinct from my own comprehensions of ‘Indigeneity’ and being Alaska Native that will be present in the work I’m talking about today.”

Land Acknowledgements in Alaska

The Anchorage Museum:
“This is Dena’ina elnena. Anchorage is Dena’ina homeland. Land Acknowledgement is a formal statement recognizing the Indigenous people of a place. It is a public gesture of appreciation for the past and present Indigenous stewardship of the lands that we now occupy.” 89

The Juneau Assembly:
“We want to take this opportunity to acknowledge the City and Borough of Juneau is on Tlingit land. And to honor the A’akw Kwaan and T’aaku Kwaan, the Indigenous people of this land. For more than 10,000 years, Alaska Native People have been and continue to be integral to the well-

88 Jodi Byrd. Transit of Empire. “subscribing to a minority relinquishes sovereignty” p.xxiv.
89 https://www.anchoragemuseum.org/major-projects/projects/land-acknowledgement/
being of our community. We are grateful to be part of this community, and to honor the culture, tradition and resilience of the Tlingit people. Gualcheesh.”

The University of Alaska Fairbanks:
“We acknowledge the Alaska Native nations upon whose ancestral lands our campuses reside. In Fairbanks, our Troth Yeddha’ Campus is located on the ancestral lands of the Dena people of the lower Tanana River.”

_Beyond Land Acknowledgement_

“We are gathered on the un-ceded land of the Auk peoples. I ask you to join me in acknowledging the Auk community, their elders both past and present, as well as future generations. The Alaska State Libraries Archives and Museums acknowledges that Alaska was founded upon exclusions and erasures of many indigenous peoples, including those on whose land this institution is located. This acknowledgment demonstrates a commitment to the process of working to dismantle the ongoing legacies of colonialism.”

[Addison E. Field, Chief Curator, Alaska State Museum, from The Spirit Wraps Around You: Northern Northwest Coast Native Textiles]

Intertwined in land acknowledgements and inseparable in generative discourse is the concept of **Indigenous sovereignty**. Current sovereignty discourse, although based in Native American and Indigenous Studies (NAIS), is interdisciplinary. In its most locally applicable forms, sovereignty is centered around Native communities, elders, and future generations of Native peoples. “Histories of Indigenous Sovereignty in Action: What is it and Why Does it Matter?” by Christine Delucia, Doug Kiel, Katrina Phillips, and Kiara Vigil provide a good introduction to the concept and overview of its importance to Native communities.

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91 [https://uaf.edu/diversity/land-acknowledgement.php](https://uaf.edu/diversity/land-acknowledgement.php)


McCarty & Lee (2014) also provide a notable critical analysis of sovereignty, looking at revitalization pedagogy and an educational form of sovereignty. This article is especially helpful to Native and Indigenous students, learners, and scholars in traditional Western academic spaces. The best synopsis of sovereignty in NAIS and academic scholarship is provided in Teves, Smith & Raheja’s *Native Studies Keywords*. For a deeper and theoretical analysis of sovereignty in its colonial formation, I’ll refer learners and scholars to Jodi Byrd’s *Transit of Empire*, and in particular the book’s introduction “Indigenous Critical Theory and the Diminishing Returns of Civilization.” “Understanding Tribal Sovereignty: Definitions, Conceptualizations, and Interpretations” is also a good article to start with for a written, Indigenous-centered overview of the etymology of “sovereignty.” Scholar and founding director of the Native Nations Center, Amanda J. Cobb-Greetham (Chickasaw) provides an in-depth, multidimensional overview of *tribal sovereignty* through a legal and political, conceptual, and “ineffable and transformative” lens. In this article, Cobb pieces together key NAIS scholars’ contributions and perspectives on the history and current trajectories of tribal sovereignty. Tribal sovereignty can be thought of less as a concrete definition and more so as a concept – as an ongoing and continuous conversation that will evolve and develop after the publication of this research. Cobb notes the importance of such a flexible “definition,” while also addressing the

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94 Teves et al. (ed.) (2015). *Native Studies Keywords*. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press. This book is also a great source for brief, summarizing references to all essential NAIS terms and concepts.
need to provide some negotiable meaning so that the term does not morph into such an ambiguous word – consequently rendered meaningless and lacking all utility. 97

Many Native corporations and tribal organizations have provided their own specific acknowledgements and declarations addressing land claims, sovereignty, and self-determination. For example, the Board of Sealaska Corporation 98 signed a 2021 resolution “Acknowledging that tribal sovereignty in Alaska has never been extinguished.” 99 The language of the document, and specific to the Southeast Alaskan lands occupied by the Alaska State Museum in Juneau and Sheldon Jackson Museum in Sitka, provides a good language model that addresses: tribal governance systems, history of the U.S. in the formation of Alaska, ANCSA, the sovereignty of Alaska Native communities, and language expressing commitment to considering Alaska Native interests in decision-making.

Recommendations

“The work of the present becomes the heritage of the future. Along with other public and private heritage and arts organizations, the Museums play a significant role in the continuation and development of traditional art forms through supporting new artists, crafts people, and events. In this manner the Museums create documented collections for the future.” [Philosophy]

The work of the present becomes the heritage of the future. Along with other public, private and tribal heritage and arts organizations, the Museums play a significant role in the continuation and development of traditional art forms through supporting new artists and programs that enhance cultural communities and their continuation throughout the State of Alaska.

97 Ibid., p. 116
“The analysis of an object for scholarly purposes usually includes the production of interpretive notes, outlines and illustrative material. It can be held that such material is essentially an extension of the intellect and the memory of the scholar, and that as such it is the property of the individual. An equally persuasive case can be made for institutional ownership of all such interpretive material, especially if a staff member was paid to render scholarly analysis. Either is ethically acceptable if the institutional policy is made known beforehand to the staff member, and if the administrative determination of ownership and access is not the result of vindictive or punitive motivation.” [Museum Management – Ownership of Scholarship Material]

Note: Revisions on this section, a chance for Museum to revise to language that recognizes and delineates differences between legal, nominal, and ethical forms of “ownership” and “belonging” of scholarship materials (as well as material objects/culture)

“It is the policy of the Museums to permit public access to Museums’ collections and records. The Museums, in consultation with collaborative parties and entities, will evaluate and develop best practices and procedures for the environmental and ethical conditions requisite for collections visits. Actions regarding documentation and any policy or restriction concerns will be deliberated prior to meeting.” [Museum Collections – Acquisitions]

Objects that originated outside the present boundaries of Alaska as defined federally and by the state, should be included, provided their connection to Indigenous cultures whose tribal territories overlap present-day boundary designations of the State of Alaska.

V. SUPPORT ALASKA NATIVE FUTURITY

Invoked in different academic contexts related to NAIS studies, including literature, history, and anthropology – Indigenous futurisms is an essential concept to incorporate into museum institutional philosophy and management language. In her previously mentioned article on sovereignty, Amanda J. Cobb further shares that:

“Conflating the exercise of sovereignty with the process of decolonization risks keeping us forever colonized, forever internally oppressed. Perhaps it is time to ‘decolonize’ our
definition of sovereignty and anchor our definition to the sure knowledge of our own continuance.”

This note adds a layer to the concept of “Indigenous sovereignty” to bring forth a temporal element that calls for sovereignty to not just be work in the present, but work to address the Indigenous future.

There are several pieces of scholarship that I want to highlight, that provide a good basis for understanding the term “Indigenous futurisms.” Although museums must share histories of Alaska Native survival and acknowledge colonial pasts and presents - sharing stories of Alaska Natives thriving and of their strengths today, place an emphasis on Native peoples “inherent right to exist as distinct societies…in perpetuity.” Native worldviews are not to be subjugated or controlled, but respected and valued, and understood in all their abundancy. In *Unfolding Futures: Indigenous Ways of Knowing for the Twenty-First Century*, Deloria et al. share that although “Indian people are engaged with history to be sure, but they should not be viewed in terms of the past, but through the lens of futurity.” I would add that Alaska Natives engage with history through terms of better servicing present and future generations.

“Rather, it is to underscore that even though Native communities, our governance structures, the complexities of our social engagement, and the variety of our narrative traditions have always incorporated elements of futurity, prophecy, and responsibility-rooted strategies for bringing forth better futures…”

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101 “Operating Truths and Principles.” First Alaskans Institute

102 Alaska Native Governance & Protocols (8 Jun 2021), Barbara Waahlaal Blake and Kacey Quinnigwu Hopson


Museums, as institutions, can be allies and a resource for Alaska Native peoples, to utilize their history and navigate current systems. Much like tribal museums that document the past, educate the present, while simultaneously keeping in mind an Indigenous future, non-Native institutions can balance public service that reaches out to past, present, and future manifestations.105

At the Alaska State Museums, supporting Native futurity is practiced in the work to recognize master artists and support of living artists through exhibitions and programming. It can also manifest in careful and purposeful language of the Alaska State Museums’ permanent exhibit labels that present artwork and models of Native craftsmanship from a perspective that acknowledges their past, present, and future communities. Museum philosophies that relate to the guidance and growth of the institution and public knowledge can explicitly recognizing future manifestations of Alaska Native cultures and communities, thus committing to an acknowledgement of Alaska Natives as non-static groups and cultures.

Further, embracing the concept of Indigenous futurity also influences past and present, as it allows audiences and publics to connect histories to Alaska Native peoples today, rather than dissociated from each other. As stated by the Assembly of First Nations & the Canadian Museums Association: “The linkage between Aboriginal heritage and the present circumstances of First Peoples should also be represented…”106

Recommendations to change language that support Alaska Native futurity focus on integrating language that better acknowledges Alaska Native peoples and their cultures’ continuation into present day communities, and language that notes the Alaska State Museums’ commitment to ensuring Native futurity. These changes both align with the museums’ recent and

current collaborations for individual Alaska Native artists in exhibits and promote the trajectory of future collaborations based on mutual respect for expertise.

**Recommendations**

“The Museums also assist and advise in the growth, development, and excellence of other museums within Alaska.” [Mission Statement]

The Museums also assist and advise in the growth, development, and excellence of other museums and cultural heritage organizations within Alaska.

“A museum fails when it overlooks its responsibilities to the present.” [Philosophy]

A museum fails when it overlooks its responsibilities to the present and future.

“The work of the present becomes the heritage of the future. Along with other public and private heritage and arts organizations, the Museums play a significant role in the continuation and development of traditional art forms through supporting new artists, crafts people, and events. In this manner the Museums create documented collections for the future.”

The work of the present becomes the heritage of the future. Along with other public, private and tribal heritage and arts organizations, the Museums play a significant role in the continuation and development of traditional art forms through supporting new artists and programs that enhance cultural communities and their continuation throughout the State of Alaska.
CONCLUSION

Alaska Native expertise, traditional knowledge, and cultural values enhance authenticity in all aspects of the museums’ work and practice. This is what I incorporate into my recommendations to help the museum get to where it wants to be in terms of authenticity and inclusivity. And in many ways, the recommendations bridge the gap between what is included in the Alaska State Museum’s code of ethics, and what is not - but already being practiced, on a day-to-day basis by staff at the museum today. Ultimately, I want non-Natives to not only respect and value, but be inspired by Alaska Native peoples and their cultural heritage; to want to learn more about and from the beauty of Alaska Natives.

Returning to who this work is for - in doing this thesis project I have always kept in mind visions for future generations, which include not just those not yet in being, but also those already living; Alaska Native youth, such as my nieces and nephew. The experiences I’ve had in museums in my childhood have not always been positive. I was lucky enough to group up with unconditional love and support from my family, I think that allowed me to grow up where I was never ashamed of my Tlingit heritage, and of my grandparents and Elders. This was not the case for many others while I was growing up. But just because I was not ashamed, does not mean I was able to openly and proudly wear my heritage in school and non-Native spaces. Nor was I given as many opportunities as Native youth are now.

But I see our future generations, my nieces and nephews. I see how proud Alaska Native youth are, how well they speak their Native languages and how much pride they already hold for their connection to their culture and heritage. How much they show off their grandparents. The work I’m doing is for them, because it will show just how much love I hold for them. This code of ethics project is just a small piece, but also a beginning to that work I do in love and respect
for future generations. I look forward to continuing my work in education and advocacy for Alaska Native peoples.
The thesis project I’ll be submitting is commentary and edits for the Alaska State Museum Code of Ethics regarding the rights of Native peoples. These recommendations are meant to "plant seeds" and "adjust the trajectory" in the institutional language and philosophical focus of the museums, in order to fortify relationships between museum staff and Alaska Native peoples, communities, tribes and entities. The emphasis of these recommendations derive directly from the need to incorporate Alaska Native contexts and values into museum operations. Alaska Native expertise, traditional knowledge, and cultural values have the potential to enhance authenticity in all aspects of the museums’ work and practice for future relationships with Alaska Natives. All recommendations were considered and guided by asking: What is the best way to move forward now?
Alaska State Museums
Code of Ethics

Approved October 30, 1997
Alaska State Museums  
Code of Ethics  

Mission Statement  

The Alaska State Museums (Alaska State Museum and Sheldon Jackson Museum) identify, collect, preserve, and exhibit Alaska’s material and natural history and provide public access to services and collections of the Museums. The Alaska State Museums (Museums) interpret and disseminate knowledge of the history of the state, its people, and its resources, and support others in these efforts. The Museums also assist and advise in the growth, development, and excellence of other museums within Alaska.  

Philosophy  

A museum is a social institution created and supported by society to serve educational objectives. Museums, like schools and libraries, provide an opportunity to satisfy educational, artistic, scientific, spiritual, and recreational needs. Museums collect, preserve, research, interpret, and exhibit as educational goals.  

The sustaining core of the Museums is the collection, to which the greatest portion of the Museum’s fiscal and human resources is devoted in its security, preservation, enhancement, research, interpretation, and public display. The Museums record the present, rather than simply preserve the past, so the collection process never ends. As the collection grows, so does the need for additional facilities in which to properly store and exhibit it. Without human and physical resources to preserve the collections, the citizens of the State of Alaska will lose significant portions of their material heritage.  

> The physical presence of a broadly based collection of materials does not in itself constitute a museum. While care and display of objects are an important component of a museum’s mission, no less critical is the influence a museum exerts on modern culture. Museums provide exposure to the diverse history and societies that shaped the present. A museum fails when it overlooks its responsibilities to the present. When the Museums perform their work well they encourage respect and appreciation of Alaska’s diverse human and natural history. The Museums increase self-awareness, pride of heritage, and provide a deeper understanding of the roots of the present and the range of human experience and achievement.  

The work of the present becomes the heritage of the future. Along with other public and private heritage and arts organizations, the Museums play a significant role in the continuation and development of traditional art forms through supporting new artists, crafts people, and events. In this manner the Museums create documented collections for the future.
Code of Ethics

The Museums are grounded in the tradition of public service. They are organized as public trusts, holding their collections and information as a benefit for those they were established to serve. Members of their governing authority, employees, and volunteers are committed to the interests of these beneficiaries. The law provides the basic framework for museum operations. As nonprofit institutions, the Museums comply with applicable local, state, and federal laws and international conventions, as well as with specific legal standards governing trust responsibilities. This Code of Ethics takes that compliance as given. But legal standards are a minimum. The Museums, and those responsible for them, must do more than avoid legal liability; they must take affirmative steps to maintain their integrity so as to warrant public confidence. They must act not only legally, but ethically. This Code of Ethics therefore, outlines ethical standards that frequently exceed legal minimums and is used to guide those who work for the Museums, or on its behalf, to address personal activities and conflict of interests. The Code of Ethics for the Museums are in compliance with AS 39.52 (the Alaska Executive Branch Ethics Act).

Loyalty to the mission of the Museums and to the public it serves is the essence of museum work, whether volunteer or paid. Where conflicts of interest arise - actual, potential, or perceived - the duty of loyalty must never be compromised. No individual may use his or her position for personal gain or to benefit another at the expense of the Museums, its mission, its reputation, and the society it serves.

In subscribing to this code, the Museums assume responsibility for the actions of members of their governing authority, employees, and volunteers in the performance of museum-related duties.

Museum Governance

Museum governance is a public trust responsible for the institution’s service to society. The governing authority protects and enhances the Museums’ collections and programs and its physical, human, and financial resources. It ensures that all these resources support the Museums’ mission, respond to the plurality of society, and respect the diversity of the natural and cultural commonwealth.

The Department of Education (DOE) shall manage and have complete charge of all of the property contained in the Museums. The Alaska State Museum shall be maintained in the state capital. Branch museums (such as the Sheldon Jackson Museum in Sitka) may be established and maintained in other localities in the state. The DOE shall acquire artifacts, natural history specimens, art objects, etc., that pertain to the human and natural history of Alaska by purchase and by gift; identify, catalog, preserve and display these acquisitions; acquire and catalog Alaskan photographs and maintain a card catalog of this collection; accept endowments, grants, and gifts in accordance with the Executive Budget Act; collect and maintain books, periodicals, pamphlets, and other materials pertinent to museum administration, techniques, and collections; assist and advise in the development of local museums; collect and keep current information concerning museum activities throughout the state; coordinate the museum activities of the state with those of other agencies; keep the Museums open at reasonable hours for the convenience of visitors and provide museum services and administer state and other grants-in-aid to museums in the state to supplement and improve their services, the grants to be paid from money appropriated for that purpose, or from money available for that purpose. The DOE may establish by regulation, and collect, reasonable user fees and other fees for services provided by the DOE, per AS 14.57 (the State Museum).

Museum Collections Advisory Committee

The appointees shall be broadly representative of the public’s interest in the preservation of the human, cultural, natural, archaeological and anthropological history of Alaska. When possible, some of the Museum Collections Advisory Committee (MCAC) members shall be known for, or possess, special expertise or a culturally relevant background in these aspects of the art and history of the state.
A member of the MCAC may not act on a matter relating to the Museums in which the member's relationship with another person, or with respect to the acquisition or disposition of an item owned by, in custody of, or proposed to be acquired by or for the Museums, creates a conflict of interest. A MCAC member may not have a pecuniary or property interest in an item that is proposed to be acquired or disposed of by, or for the Museums. Notwithstanding this, a MCAC member may bequeath or donate an item to the Museums.

A MCAC member may not have pecuniary or property interest, directly or indirectly, in a contract to which the Museums, or the state on behalf of the Museums, is a party. A MCAC member may not receive compensation for services rendered to the Museums as a consultant, expert, appraiser, or otherwise, except as provided in AS 14.57.040 (Museum Collections Advisory Committee).

**Museum Management**

**Professionalism**

Members of the Museums’ administration and governing entities must respect the professional expertise of the staff, each having been engaged because of his or her special knowledge or ability in some aspect of museum activity. The Museums’ governance must be structured so that the resolution of issues involving professional matters incorporates opinions and professional judgments of relevant members of the Museums’ staff. Responsibility for the final decisions will normally rest with the Museums’ administration and all employees are expected to support these decisions; but no staff member can be required to reverse, alter or suppress his or her professional judgment in order to conform to management decision.

**Personnel Practices and Equal Opportunity**

In all matters related to staffing practices, the standard should be ability in the relevant discipline. In these matters, as well as with MCAC selection, management practices, volunteer opportunity, collection usage and relationship with the public at large, decisions cannot be made on the basis of discriminatory factors such as race, color, creed, sex, personal orientation/age or disability.

It must be remembered that the components of contemporary culture vary by reason of ancestry, experience, education and ability in the extent to which they can share in the museum experience, either as visitors or as paid or volunteer participant. The Museums must recognize that it is a significant force within its own social fabric and that these differences do exist. It should seize and indeed create opportunities whenever possible to encourage employment opportunity and the accessibility of the institution as a resource to all people.

**Volunteers**

Volunteer participation is a strong American tradition, and the Museums could not exist without the contributions of devoted volunteers. Paid staff should be supportive of volunteers, receive them as fellow workers, and willingly provide appropriate training and opportunity for their intellectual enrichment. While volunteers participate in most Museums’ activities, those with access to the Museums’ collections, programs and associated privileged information work in areas that are particularly sensitive. Access to the Museums’ inner activities is a privilege, and the lack of material compensation for effort expended in behalf of the Museums in no way frees the volunteer from adherence to the standards that apply to paid staff.

The volunteer must work toward the betterment of the institution and not for personal gain other than the natural gratification and enrichment inherent in museum participation. Although the Museums may accord special privileges, volunteers should not accept gifts, favors, discounts, loans, other dispensations or things of value that accrue to them from other parties in connection with carrying out duties for the institution. Conflict of interest restrictions placed upon the staff must be explained to volunteers and, where relevant, observed by them. Volunteers must hold confidential matters of program function and administration.
Interpersonal Relationships

The professional museum worker always must be dedicated to the high standards and discipline of his/her profession, but s/he must remain mindful that s/he is an employee as well as an independent expert. While s/he must strive for professional excellence in his/her own specialty, s/he must simultaneously relate productively to his/her colleagues, associates and fellow employees. The wisdom and experience of a professional can be lost to the institution if s/he is not made to act constructively within the total context of the institution.

Members of the museum profession have an obligation, subject to due acknowledgment, to share their knowledge and experience with their colleagues and with scholars and students in relevant fields. They should show their appreciation and respect to those from whom they have learned and should present without thought of personal gain such advancements in techniques and experience which may be of benefit to others. The training of personnel in the specialized activities involved in museum work is of great importance in the development of the profession and all should accept responsibility, where appropriate, in the training of colleagues. Members of the profession who in their official appointment have under their direction trainees, students and assistants undertaking formal or informal professional training, should give these the benefit of their experience and knowledge, and should also treat them with the consideration and respect customary among members of the profession.

Inter-institutional Cooperation

If museums intend to contribute to the preservation of humanity’s cultural and scientific heritage and the increase of knowledge, each should respond to any opportunity for cooperative action with a similar organization to further these goals. A museum should welcome such cooperative action even if the short-term advantages are few and it will not significantly increase the individual institution’s own holdings or enhance its image.

There is a potential for competition or duplication of effort between the Alaska State Museum and the Sheldon Jackson Museum due to overlapping scopes of collections in the area of Alaska Native material culture. When an object becomes available that could be placed in either collection, cooperation is necessary to ensure that a rational decision is made regarding which institution makes the purchase.

Ownership of Scholarship Material

The object, its documentation and all additional documentation accrued or developed subsequent to its acquisition are the property of the institution. The analysis of an object for scholarly purposes usually includes the production of interpretive notes, outlines and illustrative material. It can be held that such material is essentially an extension of the intellect and the memory of the scholar, and that as such it is the property of the individual. An equally persuasive case can be made for institutional ownership of all such interpretive material, especially if a staff member was paid to render scholarly analysis. Either is ethically acceptable if the institutional policy is made known beforehand to the staff member, and if the administrative determination of ownership and access is not the result of vindictive or punitive motivation. The guiding ethical principle must be the most effective and timely dissemination of analytical information derived from the collection.

Beyond land acknowledgement

Colo[red] pathways
Programs

The Museums have the responsibility to serve all of Alaska by advancing an understanding and appreciation of the natural and cultural commonwealth through exhibitions, research, scholarship, publications, and educational activities. The Museums' programs will be free from bias of stereotype. The Museums' programs will avoid partisan political, economic, and religious ideologies. The Museums will not accept financial or other support, assistance or contributions which compromise intellectual freedom, honest scholarship and full objectivity in research and presentation.

Truth in Presentation

Within the Museums' primary charge is the responsibility to use their collections for the creation and dissemination of knowledge. Intellectual honesty and objectivity in the presentation of objects is the duty of every professional. The stated origin of the object or attribution of work must reflect the thorough and honest investigation by the Museums and must yield promptly to change with the advent of new fact or analyses. The Museums must use their best effort to ensure that exhibits are honest, have objective expressions, and do not perpetuate myths or stereotypes. Exhibits must provide with candor and tact an honest and meaningful view of the subject. Sensitive areas such as ethnic or social history are of the most critical concern.

Friends of the Museum

The Friends of the Alaska State Museum and Sheldon Jackson Museum (Friends) are Alaskan non-profit corporations with approved federal tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The primary purpose of the organizations is to enhance and support the effectiveness of the Museums in their task of collecting, preserving, and interpreting Alaska's rich and diverse cultural heritage for present and future generations.

Relationship between Museum and Friends

Friends' Board members must endeavor to conduct all of their activities, including those relating to persons, businesses, and organizations closely associated with them, in such a way that no conflict will arise between the other interests, policies, or operations of the Museums. The appearance of such conflicts should be avoided. The reputation of the Friends' organization, Store, and Museums could be damaged should a Board member continue an inappropriate activity concurrent with his/her service with the organization.

Whenever a matter arises for action by the Board, or the Museums engage in an activity where there is a possible conflict, or the appearance of conflict between the interests of the Museums and an outside or personal interest of a Friends' Board member, or that of a person close to him/her, the outside interest of the member should be made a matter of record.

Board members serve in support of the Museums. They should not attempt to derive any personal material advantages from their connection with the institution. They should use the Museums' property only for official purposes, and make no personal use of the Museums' collection, property or services in a manner not available to the general public.

Museum Store

Since public perception of the Museums' Stores are closely tied to the image of the Museums, it is the responsibility of personnel to be fully aware of the source, quality, authenticity and educational value of merchandise offered for sale. Misrepresentations, intentional or not, reflect upon the reputation of the Store and Friends' organization, and upon the Museums as well. It is unethical for Store personnel to engage in any activity which may compromise the integrity of the institution or undermine the public confidence.
All purchases and developed products will comply with state, federal and international laws and treaties that deal with antiquities and wildlife protection. The Friends acknowledge the Museum Store Association Code of Ethics (1981) and Ethics Policies for Archaeological and Ethnological Resources (1984) and the Store Management will utilize the guidelines contained therein as deemed appropriate. In arranging for the manufacture and sale of replicas, reproductions or other commercial items adapted from an object in a museum’s collection, all aspects of the commercial venture must be carried out in a manner that will not discredit either the integrity of the museum or the intrinsic value of the original object. Great care must be taken to identify permanently such objects for what they are, and to ensure the accuracy and high quality of their manufacture.

**Museum Staff**

Employment by the Museums is a public trust involving great responsibility. In all activities, Museums’ employees must act with integrity and in accordance with the most stringent ethical principles as well as the highest standards of objectivity. Every Museums’ employee is entitled to a measure of personal independence equal to that granted comparable professionals in other disciplines, consistent with his/her professional and staff responsibilities. While loyalty to the Museums is paramount, the employee also has a right to a private life independent of the institution. But museums enjoy high public visibility and their employees a generous measure of public esteem. To the public, the Museums’ employee is never wholly separable from his/her institution. S/he can never consider him/herself or his/her activities totally independent of his/her museum despite disclaimers that s/he might offer. Any museum-related action by the individual may reflect on the Museums or be attributed to it. S/he must be concerned not only with the true personal motivations as s/he sees them, but also the way in which such actions might be construed by the outside observer.

Conflicts of Interest

Museums’ staff should never abuse their official positions or their contacts within the museum community, impair in any way the performance of their official duties, compete with the Museums, or bring discredit or embarrassment to the Museums or to the profession in any activity, museum related or not. They should be prepared to accept as conditions of employment the restrictions that are necessary to maintain public confidence in museums and in the museum profession.

Misuse of Official Position

Public employees may not use their positions for personal gain or to give unwarranted benefit or treatment to any person. Specifically, Museums’ employees may not use their official positions to secure employment or contracts, accept pay from anyone other than the State for performance of official duties, or take or withhold official action on a matter in which they have a personal or financial interest. Employees are also prohibited from using State time, equipment, collections, property or facilities for their own personal or financial benefit. A supervisor may not coerce subordinates for his/her personal or financial benefit. Museums’ employees that are also artists are prohibited from selling their work to the Museums and selling items in the Museums’ Stores. Employees are also prohibited from storing personal collections on Museums’ property.

Gifts

Museums’ employees may not solicit or accept gifts which benefit the employee’s personal or financial interest if it can be reasonably inferred that the gift is intended to influence the employee’s action or judgment. Gifts include money, items of value, services, loans, travel, entertainment, hospitality, and employment. Even if a gift is acceptable, it may have to be reported. When any gift with a value in excess of $50 is received by an employee whose action can affect the giver, the employee must report the gift to his/her designated supervisor within 30 days of receipt. Forms are available from the designated supervisor for this purpose.
Unless rebutted by other evidence, an occasional gift worth $50 or less is presumed not to be given under circumstances in which it could be reasonably inferred that the gift is intended to influence an officer’s performance of official duties, actions, or judgment. Travel and lodging of any value received by a public officer in connection with a trip that the public officer takes as part of the officer’s official duties is not an improper gift if the monetary value of the travel or lodging is comparable to the cost that the State would have had to pay for the travel or lodging and 1) the head of the officer’s agency determines that the gift is to the State, not to the officer; or 2) the travel or lodging is incidental transportation by or hospitality at the residence of an individual, [AAC Chapter 57]. All Museums’ employees must be in compliance not only with AS 39.52 (the Alaska Executive Branch Ethics Act), but also with AS 11.56.110 and AS 11.56.120 (addressing the taking of bribes and unlawful gratuities by a “public servant”).

**Improper Use or Disclosure of Information ✓**

No former or current Museums’ employee may use or disclose any information gained from State employment when that use or disclosure could result in a financial or personal benefit to the employee (or to a family or household member), unless that information has already been disseminated to the public. No former or current employee may use or disclose confidential information acquired during employment.

**Improper Influence in State Grants, Contracts, Leases or Loans ✓**

No Museums’ employee whose action or inaction can affect the award or administration of a State grant, contract, lease or loan may apply for, be a party to, receive, or have an interest in that State grant, contract, lease or loan. The prohibition also applies to the employee’s family or household members. However, employees (or family or household members) may apply for or be a party to a competitively solicited State grant, contract or lease, so long as they do not work for the administrative unit awarding or administering the grant, contract, or lease and so long as they do not take official action with respect to the award or administration of the grant, contract, or lease, (State of Alaska Handbook for Public Employees 1986).

**Improper Representation ✓**

A Museums’ employee may not represent, advise, or assist a person or business in any matter being handled by the employee’s administrative unit if that representation, advice or assistance is for pay or if it benefits a personal or financial interest of the employee, (State of Alaska Handbook for Public Employees 1986).

**Outside Employment ✓**

No Museums’ employee may work for (paid or unpaid) a person or organization other than the employee’s own department, if that work is incompatible or in conflict with the proper discharge of official duties. An employee must report outside employment or service to the designated supervisor. Changes in outside employment should be reported as they occur. A form is available from the designated supervisor for this purpose. Each individual involved in personal activities related to his/her Museums’ employment must complete a disclosure form outlining the details of the activity annually on July 1.

Certain types of outside employment, including self-employment and paid consulting activities, can be of benefit to both the institution and the employee by stimulating personal professional development. Remuneration may be monetary or nonmonetary, direct or indirect. The name of and the employee’s connection with the Museums should be sparingly and respectfully used in connection with outside activities. Museums’ professionals should conduct themselves so that their activities on behalf of community or public service organizations do not reflect adversely on the reputation or integrity of their museum.

Staff members are encouraged to participate in voluntary outside activities with community groups.

**Teaching, Lecturing, Writing and Other Creative Activities**
Museums' staff personnel should be encouraged to teach, lecture and write, as desirable activities that aid professional development. Museums should facilitate such activities so long as there is not interference with performance of regular duties, and employees do not take advantage of their museum positions for personal monetary gain or appear to compromise the integrity of their institution.

The proprietary interest of both Museums and employees in copyrights, royalties and similar properties should be stated through a mutual agreement, to conform to the needs of the specific project. Although the Museums are dedicated to providing the environment of free and honest inquiry essential to its functioning, the objects in the Museums' collections, their documentation and all additional documentation developed subsequent to their acquisition are property of the State of Alaska.

Museums' employees who are creative artists, or pursue similar outside interests, must perform these activities in such a way that their status with the institution is not compromised and the institution not embarrassed. It must be recognized that the exhibition of objects in a museum can enhance their value, and the Museums should display materials created by staff members only under circumstances in which objective in their selection can be clearly demonstrated.

Political Activities and Public Expression of Personal Opinions ✓

The Code of Ethics recognizes that employees have the same personal interests in the decisions and policies of government as do other citizens and that employees retain these rights as individuals to interests of a personal, political or economic nature. However, employees must keep any such activities separate from work and kept on a strictly individual basis. A public employee must report any political service to the designated supervisor. A form is available from the designated supervisor for this purpose. Employees are further restricted from the use of pins, clothing or other means of solicitation while in the work place.

Employees are encouraged to talk with their supervisors about any activities which may be in question.

Employees may, at times, feel inclined to express opinions to people outside the institution about proposals, legislation or other issues. Occasionally these opinions may be expressed on behalf of other organizations to which the employee belongs. It should be clearly expressed that the opinions stated are independent, or personal in nature, and do not necessarily represent the position or policy of the Museums. If the opinions are in writing, they must not be on Museums' letterhead. Preparation of the statements must be on the employees own time, equipment and materials. The operations of the Museums should not be negatively affected. Discretion and the utmost attention to professional ethics should govern these activities.

Restriction of Employment After Leaving State Service ✓

For two years after leaving State service, a former public employee may not work on any matter in which the former employee had personally or substantially participated while employed by the former administrative unit. With the approval of the Attorney General, a Commissioner may waive this prohibition if a determination is made that the public interest is not jeopardized. Former State employees may be paid by a State agency to work on any matter.

Personal Collecting

A conflict of interest may arise when any employee of the Museums personally collects items which are the same or similar to the objects collected by the institution in which they are employed. It must be understood that the employee has a right to a personal life outside the Museums which may include avocational interests and research. While such activities are potentially in conflict with the institution, such activities can also be a benefit to the institution, due to the knowledge and experience gained by the employee while engaging in personal collecting. All Museums' employees are to be treated equally when matters of personal collecting are decided, regardless of the employee's job title. In matters concerning personal collections, it is important that Museums' staff avoid not only "actual" conflict of interest, but the "appearance" of a conflict of interest. The guiding principle is that in acquisitions, no board member,
employee, or volunteer may compete with the Museums and must never purchase, even at public auction, any object deaccessioned from the Museums.

It is the responsibility of the employee to report any instances of possible conflict to the Chief Curator and the Staff Acquisitions Committee immediately. If an object purchased by an employee falls within the scope of collections of that employee’s institution, the Museums will have the right of first refusal option of purchasing it for the permanent collection. If a Museums’ employee lends objects for an exhibition in the Museums, they should lend them anonymously.

**Dealing**

No employee may engage in any dealing in objects similar or related to the objects collected by the Museums. In this context, “dealing” means buying and selling for profit as distinguished from occasional purchase, sale, or exchange from a personal collection.

**Appraisals**

Donations are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law; however, the Museums’ staff cannot appraise items for a private owner. Donors, therefore, are expected to obtain independent appraisals for the objects they are donating. The Museums shall maintain a list of appraisers but shall not provide an endorsement. Exceptions to this are appraisals for internal use, such as for insurance evaluations for loans. Any such appraisal must represent an objective judgment and must indicate how the evaluation was reached.

**Disclosure Procedures**

When a Museums’ employee is involved in a situation which may be in violation of the Code of Ethics, the employee must not take official action related to that situation and must immediately disclose the matter in writing to the designated supervisor. The designated supervisor has forms for this disclosure. The designated supervisor will provide a written determination of whether a violation exists or will exist, and the supervisor may reassign duties to avoid the violation, direct the removal by the employee of the conflicting personal or financial interest, or find another solution.

In making determinations regarding the Code of Ethics, designated supervisors may request a written advisory opinion from the Attorney General. These opinions are confidential. Versions without identifying information are available to the public. Former public employees may request a written opinion directly from the Attorney General on the applicability of the Code of Ethics.

A third party may report a suspected violation of the Code of Ethics by a public officer in writing and under oath to the public officer’s designated supervisor. The supervisor will give a copy to the employee and review the report to determine whether a violation may or does exist. If the supervisor determines a violation exists, the employee’s duties may be reassigned, the employee may be directed to remove the conflicting personal or financial interest, or another solution may be found.

**Internet Resources and Electronic Mail**

It is the policy of the Museum to maintain access for staff to local, national and international sources of information and to provide an atmosphere that encourages access to and sharing of information. Network resources are to be used in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner. All messages are considered to be state records and will be treated like paper files, with the expectation that anything in them is available for review or disclosure. Electronic mail is not private communication and under no circumstance is it appropriate to use state resources to send messages that lobby, at either federal, state, or local levels.

**Museum Collections**

- Access to Collections and Records
- Objects of Sacred Significance, Traditional Knowledge, and Indigenous Cultures
- Restitution and Repatriation
- Adding sections
The distinctive character of museum ethics derives from the ownership, care and use of its collections. This stewardship of collections entails the highest public trust and carries with it the presumption of rightful ownership, permanent care and documentation, accessibility, and responsible disposal. The Museums ensure that collections in its custody support its mission and public trust responsibilities. It is the policy of the Museums to permit public access to Museums' collections and records under controlled conditions. Such conditions include advance notice and proper supervision by Museums' staff.

Acquisition

Whether acquired by gift, exchange, purchase or field collecting, objects and specimens in the collection must relate to Alaska historically, culturally, artistically or scientifically. Generally, this would mean that objects or specimens originated in Alaska. Objects that originated outside the present boundaries of Alaska could be included, if they were used by Alaskans, or used by Native cultures of Alaska whose territories overlapped the present-day boundaries of the state. In addition, the scope of collections may, as in the case of the Sheldon Jackson Museum, be limited to a particular time span.

All acquisitions and donations to the permanent collection must comply with State, Federal and International laws and treaties that deal with antiquities and wildlife protection. Examples include the U.S. Antiquities Act of 1906 (and amendments), the Alaska Historic Preservation Act of 1971, the UNESCO Convention, the American Religious Freedom Act, and the Marine Mammal Protection Act. In the case of Alaska Native material, applicable terms of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 will also be observed.

Archaeological Material

It is the policy of the Museums to discourage the unscientific or illegal recovery and sale of archaeological materials, whether from public or private lands. Therefore, the Museums will not purchase archaeological materials of any kind unless proof is given that they were excavated scientifically and legally, and have accompanying documentation. The Museums may consider donations of archaeological material on a case-by-case basis.

Human Remains

The Museums will not collect human remains in their unmodified form. Human remains, usually in the form of bone, are often used in modified form as an integral part of many Alaska Native Artifacts. Treatment by the Museums of these artifacts will be based on their ethnographic context and each object will be considered a unified whole.

Human remains which have been collected by the Museums in the past, in the form of skeletal and other preserved remains, that are unworked into ethnographic artifacts, will be treated in the same manner as outlined in the General Deaccession Policy, except for the manner of disposal. The Museums ensure that the unique and special nature of human remains and funerary and sacred objects is recognized as the basis of all considerations concerning such collections. Disposal of Native American human remains is regulated by the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990.

Field Study and Collecting

Field exploration, collecting and excavating by museum workers present ethical problems that are both complex and critical. Such efforts, especially in other countries, present situations that can result in difficult interpersonal and international problems. Any action must be guided by good judgment, tasteful deportment and current knowledge.

Any field program must be executed in such a way that all participants act legally and responsibly in acquiring specimens and data; that they discourage by all practical means unethical, illegal and destructive practices associated with acquiring, transporting and importing objects; and that they avoid, insofar as
possible, even the appearance of engaging in clandestine activity, be it museum-related or not. Normally no material should be acquired that cannot be properly cared for or used.

**Deaccession**

The Museums will analyze their collections and will dispose of items from the collections. Clear and complete records must be maintained on all deaccessioned objects. This will include photographs, date of removal, catalogue number, reason for removal, method of disposal and price if sold. The disposal of some objects may result in the generation of moneys, which will be made on a case-by-case basis, to method and acceptance of any financial remuneration gained in the transaction. Any financial remuneration gained in the transaction disposing of the piece will be returned to the museum for future acquisitions only, consistent with state policy regarding disposal of state property.

**Staff Acquisitions Committee**

Each member of the Staff Acquisitions Committee (SAC) is obligated to adhere to the more stringent rules related to the functions of the SAC. If the SAC member is aware of the potential for actual or perceived conflict of interest involving any individual SAC agenda item, she is obligated to remove him/her self from any SAC discussion, vote or action.

> this current definition is practice in many professional museum settings, AR National PPS or thus bound

> will always have a “conflict of interest” w/ many agenda involving ING objects...

> wording: issues \(\rightarrow\) objectives, collection, public, control, knowledge(s) changes, objectivity

Develop separate statement on ING collaborations? ??

**Recommendation**

Most Relevant Sections

Treatment of class (i.e. clan property, intellectual/obj)
Alaska State Museums

Code of Ethics

[2022 Recommended Revisions Copy]

Mission Statement
The Alaska State Museums (Alaska State Museum and Sheldon Jackson Museum) identify, collect, preserve, and exhibit Alaska’s material and natural history and provide public access to services and collections of the Museums. The Alaska State Museums interpret and disseminate knowledge of the history of the state, its people, and its resources, and support others in these efforts. The Museums also assist and advise in the growth, development, and excellence of other museums and cultural heritage organizations within Alaska.

Philosophy
A museum is a social institution created and supported by society to serve educational objectives. Museums, like schools and libraries, provide an opportunity to satisfy educational, artistic, scientific, spiritual, and recreational needs. Museums collect, preserve, research, interpret, and exhibit as educational goals.

The sustaining core of the Museums is the collection, to which the greatest portion of the Museum’s fiscal and human resources is devoted in its security, preservation, enhancement, research, interpretation, and public display. The Museums record the present, rather than simply preserve the past, so the collection process never ends. As the collection grows, so does the need for additional facilities in which to properly store and exhibit it. Without human and physical resources to preserve the collections, the citizens of the State of Alaska will lose significant portions of their material heritage.

The physical presence of a broadly based collection of materials does not in itself constitute a museum. While care and display of objects are an important component of a museum’s mission, no less critical is the influence a museum exerts on modern culture. Museums provide exposure to the diverse history and societies that shaped the present. A museum fails when it overlooks its responsibilities to the present and future. When the Museums perform their work well they encourage respect and appreciation of Alaska’s diverse human and natural history. The Museums increase self-awareness, pride of heritage, and provide a deeper understanding of the roots of the present and the range of human experience and achievement.
The work of the present becomes the heritage of the future. Along with other public, private, and tribal heritage and arts organizations, the Museums play a significant role in the continuation and development of traditional art forms through supporting new artists and programs that enhance cultures & communities of Alaska. In this manner the Museums create documented collections for the future.

Code of Ethics

The Museums are grounded in the tradition of public service. They are organized as public trusts, holding their collections and information as a benefit for those they were established to serve. Members of their governing authority, employees, and volunteers are committed to the interests of these beneficiaries. The law provides the basic framework for museum operations. As nonprofit institutions, the Museums comply with applicable local, state, and federal laws and international conventions, as well as with specific legal standards governing trust responsibilities. This Code of Ethics takes that compliance as given. But legal standards are a minimum. The Museums, and those responsible for them, must do more than avoid legal liability, they must take affirmative steps to maintain their integrity so as to warrant public confidence. They must act not only legally, but ethically. This Code of Ethics therefore, outlines ethical standards that frequently exceed legal minimums and is used to guide those who work for the Museums, or on its behalf, to address personal activities and conflict of interests. The Code of Ethics for the Museums are in compliance with AS39.52 (the Alaska Executive Branch Ethics Act).

Loyalty to the mission of the Museums and to the public it serves is the essence of museum work, by all museum staff, volunteers and collaborators. Where conflicts of interest arise - actual, potential, or perceived - the duty of loyalty must never be compromised. No individual may use his or her position for personal gain or to benefit another at the expense of the Museums, its mission, its reputation, and the society it serves. In subscribing to this code, the Museums assume responsibility for the actions of members of their governing authority, employees, and volunteers in the performance of museum-related duties.

Museum Governance

Museum governance is a public trust responsible for the institution’s service to society. The governing authority protects and enhances the Museums’ collections and programs and its physical, human and financial resources. It ensures that all these resources support the Museums’ mission, respond to the pluralism of society, and respect the diversity of the natural and cultural commonwealth.
The Department of Education (DOE) shall manage and have complete charge of all of the property contained in the Museums. The Alaska State Museum shall be maintained in the state capital. Branch museums (such as the Sheldon Jackson Museum in Sitka) may be established and maintained in other localities in the state. The DOE shall acquire artifacts, natural history specimens, art objects, etc., that pertain to the human and natural history of Alaska by purchase and by gift; identify, catalog, preserve and display these acquisitions; acquire and catalog Alaskan photographs and maintain a card catalog of this collection; accept endowments, grants, and gifts in accordance with the Executive Budget Act; collect and maintain books, periodicals, pamphlets, and other materials pertinent to museum administration, techniques, and collections; assist and advise in the development of local museums; collect and keep current information concerning museum activities throughout the state; coordinate the museum activities of the state with those of other agencies; keep the Museums open at reasonable hours for the convenience of visitors; and provide museum services and administer state and other grants-in-aid to museums in the state to supplement and improve their services, the grants to be paid from money appropriated for that purpose, or from money available for that purpose. The DOE may establish by regulation, and collect, reasonable user fees and other fees for services provided by the DOE, per AS 14.57 (the State Museum).

**Museum Collections Advisory Committee**

The appointees shall be broadly representative of the public’s interest in the preservation of the human, cultural, natural, archeological and anthropological history of Alaska. When possible, some of the Museum Collections Advisory Committee (MCAC) members shall be known for, or possess, special expertise or a culturally relevant background in these aspects of the art and history of the state.

A member of the MCAC may not act on a matter relating to the Museums in which the member’s relationship with another person, or with respect to the acquisition or disposition of an item owned by, in custody of, or proposed to be acquired by or for the Museums, creates a conflict of interest. A MCAC member may not have a pecuniary or property interest in an item that is proposed to be acquired or disposed of by, or for the Museums. Notwithstanding this, a MCAC member may bequeath or donate an item to the Museums.

A MCAC member may not have pecuniary or property interest, directly or indirectly, in a contract to which the Museums, or the state on behalf of the Museums, is a party. A MCAC member may not receive compensation for services rendered to the Museums as a consultant, expert, appraiser, or otherwise, except as provided in AS 14.57.040 (Museum Collections Advisory Committee).
Museum Management

Professionalism

Members of the Museums' administration and governing entities must respect the knowledge and expertise of staff, and all collaborative partners and communities, each having been engaged because of their special knowledge, insight or ability in some aspect of museum activity. The Museums' governance must be structured so that the resolution of issues involving professional matters incorporates opinions and professional judgments of relevant members of the Museums' staff. Responsibility for the final decisions will normally rest with the Museums' administration and all employees are expected to support these decisions; but no staff member can be required to reverse, alter or suppress his or her professional judgment in order to conform to management decision

Personnel Practices and Equal Opportunity

In all matters related to staffing practices, the standard should be ability in the relevant discipline. In these matters, as well as with MCAC selection, management practices, volunteer opportunity, collection usage and relationship with the public at large, decisions cannot be made on the basis of discriminatory factors such as race, color, creed, sex, personal orientation, age or disability.

It must be remembered that the components of contemporary culture vary by reason of ancestry, experience, education and ability in the extent to which they can share in the museum experience, either as visitors or as paid or volunteer participant. The Museums must recognize that it is a significant force within its own social fabric and that these differences do exist. It should seize and indeed create opportunities whenever possible to encourage employment opportunities and the accessibility of the institution as a resource to all people.

Volunteers

Volunteer participation is a strong tradition of the Museums, and they could not exist without the contributions of devoted volunteers. Paid staff should be supportive of volunteers, receive them as fellow workers, and willingly provide appropriate training and opportunity for their intellectual enrichment. While volunteers participate in most Museums' activities, those with access to the Museums' collections, programs and associated privileged information work in areas that are particularly sensitive. Access to the Museums' inner activities is a privilege, and the lack of material compensation for effort expended in behalf of the Museums in no way frees the volunteer from adherence to the standards that apply to paid staff.
The volunteer must work toward the betterment of the institution and not for personal gain other than the natural gratification and enrichment inherent in museum participation. Although the Museums may accord special privileges, volunteers should not accept gifts, favors, discounts, loans, other dispensations or things of value that accrue to them from other parties in connection with carrying out duties for the institution. Conflict of interest restrictions placed upon the staff must be explained to volunteers and, where relevant, observed by them. Volunteers must hold confidential matters of program function and administration.

Interpersonal Relationships

The professional museum worker always must be dedicated to the high standards and discipline of his/her profession, but they must remain mindful that s/he is an employee as well as an independent expert. While they must strive for professional excellence in his/her own specialty, they must simultaneously relate productively to their colleagues, associates and fellow employees. The wisdom and experience of a professional can be lost to the institution if they are not made to act constructively within the total context of the institution.

Members of the museum profession have an obligation, subject to due acknowledgment, to share their knowledge and experience with their colleagues and with scholars and students in relevant fields. They should show their appreciation and respect to those from whom they have learned and should present without thought of personal gain such advancements in techniques and experience which may be of benefit to others. The training of personnel in the specialized activities involved in museum work is of great importance in the development of the profession and all should accept responsibility, where appropriate, in the training of colleagues. Members of the profession who in their official appointment have under their direction trainees, students and assistants undertaking formal or informal professional training, should give these the benefit of their experience and knowledge, and should also treat them with the consideration and respect customary among members of the profession.

Inter-Institutional Cooperation

If museums intend to contribute to the preservation of Alaska's cultural and environmental heritage, and the continual dedication to knowledge production, they should seek and respond to opportunities for collaboration with a diverse range of organizations, communities, and individual artists and experts that help further these goals. A museum should both welcome and facilitate such collaborative action, understanding the value and ethical importance of engaging with Native and non-Native Alaskan publics.
Of particular concern are collaborations with Alaska Native entities. The Alaska State Museums’ histories are inherently linked to colonial worldviews, practices and the misrepresentation of Indigenous peoples of Alaska. The State Museum in Juneau is located on and occupies traditional Aak’w Kwaan territory, and the Sheldon Jackson Museum carries legacies of its namesake and institutional establishment that represent harmful actions against Alaska Native peoples and their cultures. Thus, the Museums are obligated and entrusted by the State of Alaska to acknowledge, reconcile and decolonize its institution.

There is a potential for competition or duplication of effort between the Alaska State Museum and the Sheldon Jackson Museum due to overlapping scopes of collections in the area of Alaska Native material culture. When an object becomes available that could be placed in either collection, cooperation is necessary to insure that a rational decision is made regarding which institution makes the purchase.

Ownership of Scholarship Material

The object, its documentation and all additional documentation accrued or developed subsequent to its acquisition are the property of the institution. The analysis of an object for scholarly purposes usually includes the production of interpretive notes, outlines and illustrative material. It can be held that such material is essentially an extension of the intellect and the memory of the scholar, and that as such it is the property of the individual. An equally persuasive case can be made for institutional ownership of all such interpretive material, especially if a staff member was paid to render scholarly analysis. Either is ethically acceptable if the institutional policy is made known beforehand to the staff member, and if the administrative determination of ownership and access is not the result of vindictive or punitive motivation. [The guiding ethical principle must be the most effective and timely dissemination of analytical information derived from the collection.]

Programs

The Museums have the responsibility to serve all of Alaska by advancing an understanding and appreciation of Alaska’s rich tangible and intangible heritage through exhibitions, research, scholarship, publications, and educational activities. The Museums’ programs aim for the highest ethical standards, and museum staff will to the best of their abilities avoid all bias or stereotype portrayals in museum operations, programming or exhibitions. The Museums will also avoid institutional expressions or opinions of partisan political, economic, and religious ideologies. The Museums will not accept financial or other support, assistance or contributions which compromise intellectual freedom, honest scholarship and full integrity of current best practices in research and presentation.

Truth in Presentation
Within the Museums’ primary charge is the responsibility to use material culture and multimedia heritage for the creation and dissemination of knowledge. Intellectual honesty and integrity in the presentation in museum publications & exhibitions, and the cultures & communities they represent is the goal of every museum employee, volunteer, and collaborator. The stated origin of the object or attribution of work must reflect the thorough and honest investigation by the Museums and must yield promptly to change with the advent of new fact or analyses. The Museums must use their best effort to ensure that exhibits are honest, and expressive of Alaska-related content without perpetuating myths or stereotypes. Exhibits must provide with candor and tact an honest and meaningful view of the stories they tell.

In the display and exhibition of Alaska Native peoples and their cultural patrimony, the Museums recognize that the most honest and accurate representations of these cultures and knowledge systems come from Alaska Native peoples themselves.

**Friends of the Museum**

**Relationship between Museum and Friends**

Friends’ Board members must endeavor to conduct all of their activities, including those relating to persons, businesses, and organizations closely associated with them, in such a way that no conflict will arise between the other interests, policies, or operations of the Museums. The appearance of such conflicts should be avoided. The reputation of the Friends’ organization, Store, and Museums could be damaged should a Board member continue an inappropriate activity concurrent with his/her service with the organization.

Whenever a matter arises for action by the Board, or the Museums engage in an activity where there is a possible conflict, or the appearance of conflict between the interests of the Museums and an outside or personal interest of a Friends’ Board member, or that of a person close to him/her, the outside interest of the member should be made a matter of record.

Board members serve in support of the Museums. They should not attempt to derive any personal material advantages from their connection with the institution. They should use the Museums’ property only for official purposes, and make no personal use of the Museums’ collection, property or services in a manner not available to the general public.

**Museum Store**

Since public perception of the Museums’ Stores are closely tied to the image of the Museums, it is the responsibility of personnel to be fully aware of the source, quality, authenticity and
educational value of merchandise offered for sale. Misrepresentations, intentional or not, reflect upon the reputation of the Store and Friends’ organization, and upon the Museums as well. It is unethical for Store personnel to engage in any activity which may compromise the integrity of the institution or undermine the public confidence.

All purchases and developed products will comply with state, federal and international laws and treaties that deal with antiquities and wildlife protection. The Friends acknowledge the Museum Store Association Code of Ethics (1981) and Ethics Policies for Archaeological and Ethnological Resources (1984) and the Store Management will utilize the guidelines contained therein as deemed appropriate. In arranging for the manufacture and sale of replicas, reproductions or other commercial items adapted from an object in a museum’s collection, all aspects of the commercial venture must be carried out in a manner that will not discredit either the integrity of the museum or the intrinsic value of the original object. Great care must be taken to identify permanently such objects for what they are, and to ensure the accuracy and high quality of their manufacture.

Museum Staff

Employment by the Museums is a public trust involving great responsibility. In all activities, Museums’ employees must act with integrity and, beyond adherence to laws, in accordance with current ethical principles and highest standards of museum practice, recognizing the continually changing practices within the field. Every Museums’ employee is entitled to a measure of personal independence equal to that granted comparable professionals in other disciplines, consistent with his/her professional and staff responsibilities. While loyalty to the Museums is paramount, the employee also has a right to a private life independent of the institution. But museums enjoy high public visibility and their employees a generous measure of public esteem. To the public, the Museums’ employees are never wholly separable from their institution. They can never consider themselves or their activities totally independent of their museum. Any museum-related action by an individual may reflect on the Museums or be attributed to it. Museum employees must be concerned not only with the true personal motivations as they perceive, but also the various ways in which such actions are perceived by diverse audiences and publics.

Conflicts of Interest

Museums’ staff should never abuse their official positions or their contacts within the museum community, impair in any way the performance of their official duties, compete with the Museums, or bring discredit or embarrassment to the Museums or to the profession in any activity, museum related or not. They should be prepared to accept as conditions of employment the restrictions that are necessary to maintain public confidence in museums and in the museum profession.
Misuse of Official Position

Public employees may not use their positions for personal gain or to give unwarranted benefit or treatment to any person. Specifically, Museums' employees may not use their official positions to secure employment or contracts, accept pay from anyone other than the State for performance of official duties, or take or withhold official action on a matter in which they have a personal or financial interest. Employees are also prohibited from using State time, equipment, collections, property or facilities for their own personal or financial benefit. A supervisor may not coerce subordinates for his/her personal or financial benefit. Museums' employees that are also artists are prohibited from selling their work to the Museums and selling items in the Museums' Stores. Employees are also prohibited from storing personal collections on Museums' property.

Gifts

Museums' employees may not solicit or accept gifts which benefit the employee's personal or financial interest if it can be reasonably inferred that the gift is intended to influence the employee's action or judgment. Gifts include money, items of value, services, loans, travel, entertainment, hospitality, and employment. Even if a gift is acceptable, it may have to be reported. When any gift with a value in excess of $50 is received by an employee whose action can affect the giver, the employee must report the gift to his/her designated supervisor within 30 days of receipt. Forms are available from the designated supervisor for this purpose.

Unless rebutted by other evidence, an occasional gift worth $50 or less is presumed not to be given under circumstances in which it could be reasonably inferred that the gift is intended to influence an officer's performance of official duties, actions, or judgment. Travel and lodging of any value received by a public officer in connection with a trip that the public officer takes as part of the officer's official duties is not an improper gift if the monetary value of the travel or lodging is comparable to the cost that the State would have had to pay for the travel or lodging and 1) the head of the officer's agency determines that the gift is to the State, not to the officer; or 2) the travel or lodging is incidental transportation by or hospitality at the residence of an individual. [AAC Chapter 57]. All Museums' employees must be in compliance not only with AS 39.52 (the Alaska Executive Branch Ethics Act), but also with AS 11.56.110 and AS 11.56.120 (addressing the taking of bribes and unlawful gratuities by a "public servant").

Improper Use or Disclosure of Information

No former or current Museums' employee may use or disclose any information gained from State employment when that use or disclosure could result in a financial or personal benefit to the employee (or to a family or household member), unless that information has already been
disseminated to the public. No former or current employee may use or disclose confidential information acquired during employment.

Improper Influence in State Grants, Contracts, Leases or Loans

No Museum's employee whose action or inaction can affect the award or administration of a State grant, contract, lease or loan may apply for, be a party to, receive, or have an interest in that grant, contract, lease or loan. The prohibition also applies to the employee's family or household members. However, employees (or family or household members) may apply for or be a party to a competitively solicited State grant, contract or lease, so long as they do not work for the administrative unit awarding or administering the grant, contract, or lease and so long as they do not take official action with respect to the award or administration of the grant, contract, or lease. (State of Alaska Handbook for Public Employees 1986).

Improper Representation

A Museum's employee may not represent, advise, or assist a person or business in any matter being handled by the employee's administrative unit if that representation, advice or assistance is for pay or if it benefits a personal or financial interest of the employee. (State of Alaska Handbook for Public Employees 1986).

Outside Employment

No Museum's employee may work for (paid or unpaid) a person or organization other than the employee's own department, if that work is incompatible or in conflict with the proper discharge of official duties. An employee must report outside employment or service to the designated supervisor. Changes in outside employment should be reported as they occur. A form is available from the designated supervisor for this purpose. Each individual involved in personal activities related to his/her Museum's employment must complete a disclosure form outlining the details of the activity annually on July 1.

Certain types of outside employment, including self-employment and paid consulting activities, can be of benefit to both the institution and the employee by stimulating personal professional development. Remuneration may be monetary or nonmonetary, direct or indirect. The name of and the employee's connection with the Museums should be sparingly and respectfully used in connection with outside activities. Museum's professionals should conduct themselves so that their activities on behalf of community or public service organizations do not reflect adversely on the reputation or integrity of their museum.
Staff members are encouraged to participate in voluntary outside activities with community groups.

**Teaching, Lecturing, Writing and Other Creative Activities**

Museums' staff personnel should be encouraged to teach, lecture and write, as desirable activities that aid professional development. Museums should facilitate such activities so long as there is not interference with performance of regular duties, and employees do not take advantage of their museum positions for personal monetary gain or appear to compromise the integrity of their institution.

The proprietary interest of both Museums and employees in copyrights, royalties and similar properties should be stated through a mutual agreement, to conform to the needs of the specific project. Although the Museums are dedicated to providing the environment of free and honest inquiry essential to its functioning, the objects in the Museums' collections, their documentation and all additional documentation developed subsequent to their acquisition are property of the State of Alaska. The Museums prioritize dedication to the care and integrity of collections or objects on loan under care of the Museums' and State of Alaska. However, in accordance with the institution's outward-focused service to Alaskans and broader publics, the Museums aim to provide an open and inclusive environment and aspire to respect honest inquiry essential to its mission and purpose.

Museums' employees who are creative artists, or pursue similar outside interests, must perform these activities in such a way that their status with the institution is not compromised and the institution not embarrassed. It must be recognized that the exhibition of objects in a museum can enhance their value, and the Museums should display materials created by staff members only under circumstances in which objectivity in their selection can be clearly demonstrated.

**Political Activities and Public Expression of Personal Opinions**

The Code of Ethics recognizes that employees have the same personal interests in the decisions and policies of government as do other citizens and that employees retain these rights as individuals to interests of a personal, political or economic nature. However, employees must keep any such activities separate from work and kept on a strictly individual basis. A public employee must report any political service to the designated supervisor. A form is available from the designated supervisor for this purpose. Employees are further restricted from the use of pins, clothing or other means of solicitation while in the work place. Employees are encouraged to talk with their supervisors about any activities which may be in question.
Employees may, at times, feel inclined to express opinions to people outside the institution about proposals, legislation or other issues. Occasionally these opinions may be expressed on behalf of other organizations to which the employee belongs. It should be clearly expressed that the opinions stated are independent, or personal in nature, and do not necessarily represent the position or policy of the Museums. If the opinions are in writing, they must not be on Museums’ letterhead. Preparation of the statements must be on the employees own time, equipment and materials. The operations of the Museums should not be negatively affected. Discretion and the utmost attention to professional ethics should govern these activities.

Restriction of Employment After Leaving State Service

For two years after leaving State service, a former public employee may not work on any matter in which the former employee had personally or substantially participated while employed by the former administrative unit. With the approval of the Attorney General, a Commissioner may waive this prohibition if a determination is made that the public interest is not jeopardized. Former State employees may be paid by a State agency to work on any matter.

Personal Collecting

A conflict of interest may arise when any employee of the Museums personally collects items which are the same or similar to the objects collected by the institution in which they are employed. It must be understood that the employee has a right to a personal life outside the Museums which may include avocational interests and research. While such activities are potentially in conflict with the institution, such activities can also be a benefit to the institution, due to the knowledge and experience gained by the employee while engaging in personal collecting. All Museums’ employees are to be treated equally when matters of personal collecting are decided, regardless of the employee’s job title. In matters concerning personal collections, it is important that Museums’ staff avoid not only “actual” conflict of interest, but the “appearance” of conflict of interest. The guiding principle is that in acquisitions, no board member, employee, or volunteer may compete with the Museums and must never purchase, even at public auction, any object deaccessioned from the Museums.

It is the responsibility of the employee to report any instances of possible conflict to the Chief Curator and the Staff Acquisitions Committee immediately. If an object purchased by an employee falls within the scope of collections of that employee’s institution, the Museums will have the right of first refusal option of purchasing it for the permanent collection. If a Museums’ employee lends objects for an exhibition in the Museums, they should lend them anonymously.

Dealing
No employee may engage in any dealing in objects similar or related to the objects collected by the Museums. In this context, “dealing” means buying and selling for profit as distinguished from occasional purchase, sale, or exchange from a personal collection.

Appraisals

Donations are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law; however, the Museums’ staff cannot appraise items for a private owner. Donors, therefore, are expected to obtain independent appraisals for the objects they are donating. The Museums shall maintain a list of appraisers but shall not provide an endorsement. Exceptions to this are appraisals for internal use, such as for insurance evaluations for loans. Any such appraisal must represent an objective judgment and must indicate how the evaluation was reached.

Disclosure Procedures

When a Museums’ employee is involved in a situation which may be in violation of the Code of Ethics, the employee must not take official action related to that situation and must immediately disclose the matter in writing to the designated supervisor. The designated supervisor has forms for this disclosure. The designated supervisor will provide a written determination of whether a violation exists or will exist, and the supervisor may reassign duties to avoid the violation, direct the removal by the employee of the conflicting personal or financial interest, or find another solution.

In making determinations regarding the Code of Ethics, designated supervisors may request a written advisory opinion from the Attorney General. These opinions are confidential. Versions without identifying information are available to the public. Former public employees may request a written opinion directly from the Attorney General on the applicability of the Code of Ethics.

A third party may report a suspected violation of the Code of Ethics by a public officer in writing and under oath to the public officer’s designated supervisor. The supervisor will give a copy to the employee and review the report to determine whether a violation may or does exist. If the supervisor determines a violation exists, the employee’s duties may be reassigned, the employee may be directed to remove the conflicting personal or financial interest, or another solution may be found.

Internet Resources and Electronic Mail
It is the policy of the Museum to maintain access for staff to local, national and international sources of information and to provide an atmosphere that encourages access to and sharing of information. Network resources are to be used in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner. All messages are considered to be state records and will be treated like paper files, with the expectation that anything in them is available for review or disclosure. Electronic mail is not private communication and under no circumstance is it appropriate to use state resources to send messages that lobby, at either federal, state, or local levels.

**Museum Collections**

The distinctive character of museum ethics derives from balance between care and use of collections, and the natural & human stories told through physical exhibitions within the museum. This stewardship of collections entails the highest public trust and carries with it the presumption of rightful ownership, permanence, care and documentation, accessibility, and responsible disposal. The Museums ensure that collections housed in their facilities and under their care support the Museums' mission and public trust responsibilities. It is the policy of the Museums to permit public access to Museums' collections and records. The Museums, in consultation with collaborative parties and entities, will evaluate and develop best practices and procedures for the environmental and ethical conditions requisite for collections visits. Actions regarding documentation and any policy or restriction concerns will be deliberated prior to meeting.

**Acquisitions**

Whether acquired by gift, exchange, purchase or field collecting, objects and specimens in the collection must relate to Alaska historically, culturally, artistically or scientifically. Generally, this would mean that objects or specimens originated in Alaska. Objects that originated outside the present boundaries of Alaska could be included, provided their connection to Indigenous cultures and tribes whose ancestral territories extend across present-day boundary designations between the State of Alaska, Canada and Russia. In addition, the scope of collections may, as in the case of the Sheldon Jackson Museum, be limited to a particular time span.

All acquisitions and donations to the permanent collection must comply with State, Federal and International laws and treaties that deal with antiquities and wildlife protection. Examples include the U.S. Antiquities Act of 1906 (amendments), the Alaska Historic Preservation Act of 1971, the UNESCO Convention, the American Religious Freedom Act, and the Marine Mammal Protection Act. In the case of Alaska Native material, applicable terms of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 will also be observed.

**Treatment and Care**
The Museums are dedicated to ensuring to the best of their ability that Alaska Native exhibits and objects are treated and cared for within their own cultural contexts.

Archaeological Material

It is the policy of the Museums to discourage the unscientific or illegal recovery and sale of archaeological materials, whether from public or private lands. Therefore, the Museums will not purchase archaeological materials of any kind unless proof is given that they were excavated scientifically and legally, and have accompanying documentation. The Museums can consider donations of archaeological materials on a case-by-case basis.

Human Remains

The Museums will not collect human remains in their unmodified form. Human remains, usually in the form of hair, are often used in modified form as an integral part of many Alaska Native Artifacts. Treatment by the Museums of these artifacts will be based on their context within cultural heritage and ties to current tribes. Each object will be considered a unified whole.

Human remains which have been collected by the Museums in the past, in the form of skeletal and other preserved remains, that are unworked into ethnographic artifacts, will be treated in the same manner as outlined in the general deaccession policy, except for the manner of disposal. The Museums ensure that the unique and special nature of human remains and funerary and sacred objects is recognized as the basis of all considerations concerning such collections. Disposal of Native American human remains is regulated by the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990. Human remains are to be treated with respect and dignity, and degrading treatment in the course of research, collection or exhibition is prohibited. The Museums should do to the best of their ability, be prepared to facilitate dialogues for the return of cultural property to a tribe, or their representative entity, of origin.

Field Study and Collecting

Field exploration, collecting and excavating by museum workers present ethical problems that are both complex and critical. Such efforts, especially in other countries, present situations that can result in difficult interpersonal and international problems. Any action must be guided by good judgment, tasteful department and current knowledge, and in consideration of possible exploitation and extractive practices of Indigenous cultural patrimony and heritage.

Any field program must be executed in such a way that all participants act legally and responsibly in acquiring specimens and data; that they discourage by all practical means
unethical, illegal, culturally inappropriate, and destructive practices associated with acquiring, transporting and importing objects; and that they avoid, insofar as possible, even the appearance of engaging in clandestine activity, be it museum-related or not. Normally no material should be acquired that cannot be properly cared for or used.

Deaccession
The Museums will [routinely] analyze their collections, and will dispose of items from the collections. Clear and complete records must be maintained on all deaccessioned objects. This will include photographs, date of removal, catalogue number, reason for removal, method of disposal and price if sold. The disposal of some objects may result in the generation of moneys. Review will be made on a case by case basis, as to method and acceptance of any financial remuneration gained in the transaction. Any financial remuneration gained in the transaction disposing of the piece will be returned to the museum for future acquisitions only, consistent with state policy regarding disposal of state property.

Staff Acquisitions Committee
Each member of the Staff Acquisitions Committee (SAC) is obligated to adhere to the more stringent rules related to the functions of the SAC. If a SAC member is aware of the potential for actual or perceived conflict of interest involving any individual SAC agenda item, they are obligated to remove themselves from any SAC discussion, vote or action.
POSTSCRIPT
Resilience, Revisited - What is important to carry forward?

Written By Kaagwéil Miranda Worl
Story Shared By Hannah Bissett, & Yeenahjyaa Ahtr’aii Shani Fisher-Salmon

Split the cedar for the first time;  Where does your body go?
Pull strands tightly through each-other.
Maybe on our first, second, third try -  So for the first time
Tleix’, deix, or nas’k  We pick up scraps of fur
Ts’el-qi, nutiha, or tuq’i  To wrap into rose
Chiluk, neekwaii, or tik -  But the hairs get trapped in our mouths;
We will be able to carry  Gets caught in our throats.
And unburden our Elders things
Without spilling a drop.  And now where does your body go,

It has taken our Elders many attempts  But to let the mind wander -
Before their stories no longer live  From cedar and salmon,
Like a pine needle in their mouth,  To fur, fat, and berries
Swallowed and  We’re picking on a dew-leafed day,
Getting caught in their throat.  Crouched down among the brush,
Now are we ready to listen  Among moss and muskeg
To their practiced words?  Or holding a little one -
But seated,  Most precious child of this earth -
And transported together but not together,  And counting “one, two, three”
There’s nowhere to go.  “Tleix’, deix, nas’k”

How do you pace?

“Ts’el-qi, nutiha, tuq’i”
“Chiluk, neekwaii, tik”
At the time I am writing this, national news and media outlets have increased coverage and reporting on the history of boarding schools for Native American children in the United States and Canada. The atrocities of genocide and human rights violations are literally being unearthed with the discovery of graveyards of Native children who went missing and never returned from these schools. While the news may be a surprise for many people around the country and in Canada, Native communities who bear the scars of trauma and elders who were themselves victims of boarding schools receive the news with a mixture of sorrow, pain and relief. For centuries, our grandparents carried the heavy burden of truth and history on their shoulders. Native people have been aware of the history of violence and terrorism on children that occurred without consequence or accountability, whether they are spoke about it or not. As more of the truth is finally revealed, Native America looks for relief and closure.

Over this past summer, I spoke with people I worked with at the Alaska State Museum about opportunities for the museum to be involved (with learning more about Native boarding schools?). ASM staff have pointed out to me, this is a chance to advocate for restitution for Alaska Native peoples. Although members of the non-Native community are anxious to know what they can do for our ancestors and our unearthed relatives, Native people require more time to process this moment in our history and more time to consider the meaning and also what may be next. While Alaska Natives are resilient and have managed to retain traditional values and what remains of their culture, the elements of institutional bias and oppression that allowed Native boarding and missionary schools to carry out their mission of assimilation still remain.

In my introduction, I spoke about how my different identities manifest in my life and the work I do but they do not always come into my life with convenience in mind. So when I think about the history of boarding schools in Alaska, I am torn. There is the call to action that I think
Alaskan museums are well equipped to handle. However, I hesitate as I think about the health and wellbeing of Native communities, Elders, and youth.

There are numerous ethical barriers to properly address the conversation and coverage of Alaska Native boarding schools and unmarked graves within a museum space. There is a general and historical lack of public understanding of who buried these children. There is a need to de-emphasize the need to know a cause of death. There's a need to focus less on the missing information related to acts of violence but still convey the message of accountability and the roles played by the US Government and missionaries. The narratives should be centered on and told by Alaska Native elders who have survived through boarding school experiences. And here lies another ethical impossibility; justice in this context would require an unethical endeavor.

For example, Alaska Native communities and Native youth continue to endure collective and ongoing trauma. Alaska Native communities continue to teach cultural values and responsibilities but also must protect the health and well-being of our children and future generations. While bringing up the history of boarding schools we must also careful and mindful to avoid the cycles of violence in these conversations.

There are implications for non-Native and ASM involvement that need to be considered. As we gather and collect narratives and dig deeper into the history, we will encounter Alaska Native people and Elders who may not be ready to face or talk about their personal experiences or traumatic history. Elders are each on different journeys in their self-healing. Not all Elders will be ready to discuss and face these histories; and their interpretations and understanding of their experiences will each be different. There are different forms of knowing and thinking about their own life histories.
More knowledge and information is not always better. There can be power to wait in the silence in absence of certain narratives and certain life histories. Alaska Native values include avoidance or great diplomacy in matters of conflict and focus more on balance, respect and reciprocity, an element that has its basis in survival. Moving forward, we must learn how to accept incomplete histories as enough. To center less on the knowing of history, and place at the core of Alaskan histories, knowledge rich in culture and spirituality tied to the landscape, environment, waters that such history occupies. The key question that should be centered is what is important to carry forward with us?

For Native peoples in Alaska, that calls for constant resilience. But, how much more can our people take? Advocacy for Alaska Native reconciliation, justice & restitution, decolonial work of museums, and state-wide support of Indigenizing processes aim to create a future where resilience is no longer needed and required of Alaska Native peoples.

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APPENDIX I: ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Gunalcheesh, AwA’ahdah, quayanaqpak, and nt’oyaxsn. And although you have recently past axtlein gunalcheesh, grandfather, Kingeestí David Katzeek, and Albert Kookesh. Thank you for your knowledge, guidance and ultimate love and devotion you’ve shared with your people – especially the future generations.
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A good summary of the cultural and environmental landscape in the Arctic Region of Alaska, created for the purpose of educating newcomers and providing them with a look into Inupiat worldviews and culture. Akpik covers the following topics: transportation, time & planning, hospitality, facts about the Inupiaq language, family & cultural ties, teaching & learning styles, and non-verbal communication. The information is all in bullet-pointed format, easy to skim and quickly read.


This document reports on a process of consultation between First Peoples and Museums and the resulting recommendations for an ongoing working partnership. It has been prepared and endorsed by the Task Force on Museums and First Peoples, a national body made up of over 25 individuals from the Aboriginal and museum communities. Jointly organized by the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) and Canadian Museums Association (CMA), the Task Force has been conducting consultations and deliberations for the past year.


The goal of this document is to be as broad and inclusive as possible while offering needed ethical guidance for collections professionals regardless of association with a professional organization. This Code of Ethics and Professional Practices for Collections Professionals was endorsed by ARCS on 18 February 2021 and by CS-AAM on 24 February 2021. The task force members acknowledge that the Code of Ethics and Professional Practices for Collections Professionals will need periodic review and revision and recommend a group of collections professionals review it every ten years.


This paper examines bureaucratic structures and the interplay of race, place and institutional ethics involved in a process of establishing a multi-cultural research project with Aboriginal peoples in a Canadian urban context. The paper focuses on the way that one of Canada’s national research councils (SSHRC) has attempted to respond positively to contest the marginalization of Aboriginal people in research settings. In revisiting its research ethics policies to better protect Aboriginal peoples involved in research projects that it funds, SSHRC policy has had the somewhat contradictory effect of further
marginalizing urban Aboriginal people. The paper is thus an attempt to illustrate empirically some of the power laden character of the ethics of ‘participation’. A key point we wish to illustrate is that especially in Participatory Action Research, the who and the how of participation is never innocent or purely process driven, but rather always already powerful. These power relations have significant implications for the way that we should understand ethics as relations have significant implications for the way that we should understand ethics as relational processes in research with Aboriginal and other Indigenous peoples.


Collections management, exhibitions, and research are areas in which collaboration will help the museum as well as provide a role for Native American people in the preservation and interpretation of their cultural heritage. Using the repatriation work of the Museum of New Mexico as a case study, the author suggests that the repatriation process benefits a museum by resulting in better programming and preservation.


According to the French-Jewish thinker Levinas (1905-1995), ethics begins with the appearing of the other person, or, as he calls it in his first major work, Totality and Infinity (1961), with his or her “face.” Let us follow Levinas in his attempt to describe this central ethical phenomenon. In this way, we will be led to pay special attention to the problem of violence, hate, and murder, since every ethics is ultimately concerned with the difference between moral good and evil. Through this analysis – which of course can explain only some aspects of Levinas’s many-sided and at the same time single-minded thinking – we still hope to make clear the power and importance of his ethics for, among other things, the contemporary discussion on racism.


Jodi A. Byrd explores how indigeneity functions as transit, a trajectory of movement serving as precedent within U.S. imperial history. Byrd contends that the colonization of American Indian and indigenous nations is the necessary ground to reimagine a future where the losses of indigenous peoples are visible, but they have agency to transform life on their lands and on their terms.


On this thirty year anniversary of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, Alaska Natives are more than ever subject to a dizzying array of laws, statutes, and regulations. Case and Voluck have provided the most rigorous and comprehensive description of the major concepts and developments in Alaska Native law and policy to date. In addition to its thorough discussion of ANCSA, the new edition provides updated analyses of policy
regarding subsistence, land, human services, and self-government, and of the development of the Alaska Native organizations working to influence and change these policies. Like the first edition, *Alaska Natives and American Laws* is the essential reference for anyone working in Native law, policy, or social services, and for scholars and students in law, public policy, environmental studies, and Native American studies.


“Museums housing collections from indigenous peoples are changing their role and direction vis-à-vis the communities that originated their collections. Such changes mean new ways of working in museums and new demands placed on the collections. The author analyzes why these new directions represent challenges to conservation ethics, practice, and values and situates these challenges in the context of current realities in museum practice. The author concludes that the challenges have influenced the role and outlook of ethnographic conservators as well as their views on what is significant to preserve, who is involved in preservation, and how it is done.”

Clavir, M. and Moses, J. *Caring for sacred and culturally sensitive objects.*

This section describes sacred and sensitive objects and collections and the cultural and ethical frameworks surrounding their care. Caring for sacred and culturally sensitive objects is part of the CCI’s Preventive conservation guidelines for collections online resource. This section presents key considerations related to sacred and culturally sensitive objects in heritage collections.


“Understanding Tribal Sovereignty: Definitions, Conceptualizations, and Interpretations” is a good article to start with for a written, Indigenous-centered overview of the etymology of “sovereignty.” Scholar and founding director of the Native Nations Center, Amanda J. Cobb-Greetham (Chickasaw) provides an in-depth, multidimensional overview of tribal sovereignty through a legal and political, conceptual, and “ineffable and transformative” lens. In this article, Cobb pieces together key NAIS scholars’ contributions and perspectives on the history and current trajectories of tribal sovereignty. Tribal sovereignty can be thought of less as a concrete definition and more so as a concept – as an ongoing and continuous conversation that will evolve and develop after the publication of this research. Cobb notes the importance of such a flexible “definition,” while also addressing the need to provide some negotiable meaning so that the term does not morph into such an ambiguous word – consequently rendered meaningless and lacking all utility.


Researchers have a responsibility to cause no harm, but research has been a source of distress for Indigenous people because of inappropriate methods and practices. The way researchers acquire knowledge in Indigenous communities may be as critical for
eliminating health disparities as the actual knowledge that is gained about a particular health problem. Researchers working with Indigenous communities must continue to resolve conflict between the values of the academic setting and those of the community. It is important to consider the ways of knowing that exist in Indigenous communities when developing research methods. Challenges to research partnerships include how to distribute the benefits of the research finding when academic or external needs contrast with the need to protect Indigenous knowledge.


The heyday of anthropological collecting on the Northwest Coast took place between 1875 and the Great Depression, when public and private funds largely collapsed. The scramble for skulls and skeletons, poles, canoes, baskets, feast bowls, and masks, pursued sometimes with respect, but often with rapacity, went on until it seemed that almost everything not nailed down or hidden was gone. This period of intense collecting coincided with the growth of anthropological museums, such as the Smithsonian Institution, the American Museum of Natural History, and Chicago’s Field Museum of Natural History. Field collectors, including James Swan, Franz Boas, and George Dorsey, were intense rivals both in the race against time to preserve material culture and in the race to collect, sometimes unscrupulously, more artifacts than a rival museum could. A new preface by the author, Douglas Cole, addresses repatriation rights and will be of particular interest to those seeking to understand museum collecting in light of current issues regarding repatriation of grave goods and artifacts.


https://royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/sites/default/files/indigenous_repatriation_handbook_v01_screen_jw_20190327.pdf

Informed by Indigenous people, the 1992 Task Force on Museums and First Peoples, the 1996 royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, the 2007 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples, and the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s 94 Calls to Action, the handbook also helps to outline the important steps the Royal BC Museum is taking to honour these policy frameworks through the new Indigenous Collections and Repatriation Policy and the museum’s 2019-2022 strategic plan.

With 34 unique Indigenous language and cultural groups in BC, this handbook seeks to provide practical information that will enable each group to carry out the process of repatriation in ways that align with the cultural traditions of each respective community, while also providing information that will be helpful to museums.


In this article, I examine the quandaries of knowledge reproduction and preservation raised by the Henry C. Toll Collection of sketches, curated at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, depicting the religious ceremonies of 18 Pueblo tribes. The collection provides unique insight into the interrelationships between power and image
making, intellectual property and secrecy, and museum practices in an age of ethical engagement with descendant communities. I explore these themes in the context of the Pubelos’ historical struggle to control images, the Toll Collection’s formation, and ethnographic interviews with Acoma, Hopi, Laguna, and Zuni cultural leaders.


Museums have long offered simplistic representations of American Indians, even as they served as repositories for Indigenous human remains and cultural patrimony. Two critical interventions – the founding of the National Museum of the American Indian (1989) and the passage of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (1990) – helped transform museum practice. The decades following this legislation saw an explosion of excellent tribal museums and an increase in tribal capacity in both repatriation and cultural affairs. As the National Museums of the American Indian refreshes its permanent galleries over the next five years, it will explicitly argue for Native people’s centrality in the American story, and insist not only on survival narratives, but also on Indigenous futurity.


Indigenous peoples are crafting a new environmental-social-political alliance and new strategies for political action, while simultaneously being written out of much of contemporary life. Begun at the height of the protests at Standing Rock, this issue of *Dædalus* aims to understand the contemporary dynamics of this modern racism; to create positive change in academia, the legal system, among government and nonprofit actors, and the intellectual and cultural life of the nation; to make “unknown unknowns” visible to non-Native audiences; and to speak to the unique status, honest challenges, and achievements of contemporary Indian people.


These Guidelines are a practical aid for all German museums on the care of collections from colonial contexts. They additionally provide an information base for international professional colleagues, political decision makers, as well as representatives of post-colonial initiatives and diaspora communities. The Guidelines do not represent a position paper or legally binding instructions, however.


These recommendations are intended for the individuals directly responsible for collections and the funding bodies of the establishments concerned both as guidance for
the day-to-day handling of human remains, including those originating from outside Europe, and to address questions relating to claims for return. The German Museums Association is primarily focusing on museums. The working group is of the view that the recommendations made below may also be applied equally to other collections, in particular university collections.


Dillon’s introduction to her compilation of Indigenous science-fiction literature asks the genre of sci-fi to re-contextualize in order to make room for diversity in not just authorship, but diversity of worldviews and definitions of science, environment and space-time. Traditionally, science fiction literature deals with linear timelines and tales that exploit themes of conquest (often painted as “discovery”). Dillon brings to light Indigenous peoples unique perspectives and notes the parallels between alien invasions in traditional sci-fi literature and the realities of Indigenous history with the western world – from contact, to colonization, and the Native Apocalypse.

Findings and Main Arguments:

“It is almost commonplace to think that the Native Apocalypse, if contemplated seriously, has already taken place.” (8)

“In the end, Walking the Clouds returns us to ourselves by encouraging Native writers to write about Native conditions in Native centered worlds liberated by the imagination.” (11)


“…the practice of mapping abundance is a radical act in the face of settler capital's fear of an abundance that feeds. Cartographies of capital enable the seizure of abundant lands by enclosing "wastelands" claimed to be underdeveloped. By contrast, Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiian) cartographies map the continuities of abundant worlds. Vital to restoration movements is the art of kilo, intergenerational observation of elemental forms encoded in storied histories, chants, and songs. As a participant in these movements, I map the ecological lessons of these elemental forms: reptilian deities who protect the waterways, sharks who swim into the mountains, the navigator Māui who fishes up the islands, the deities of snow and mists on Mauna Kea. The laws of these elements are now being violated by toxic waste dumping, leaking military jet fuel tanks, and astronomical industrial complexes. As Kānaka Maoli and their allies stand as land and water protectors, I call for a profound attunement to the elemental forms in order to transform climate events into renewed possibilities for planetary abundance.”

Findings and Main Arguments:

“…cartography as methodology is critical to growing intimate relationships with ‘āina (lands and waters who feed) in ways necessary to our planetary future. In this way,
mapping abundance is a refusal to succumb to capital’s logical that we have passed an apocalyptic threshold of no return.” (4)

“…Kanaka Maoli cartographies fore-ground practices of ea – translated as life, breath, political sovereignty, and the rising of the people.” (4)

“…Indigenous peoples contest late liberal geontopower by speaking to the ways that we must listen to the laws of lands, seas, and skies in ways that will enable these elemental forms to recognize us in the reciprocal cultivation of abundance.” (8)

“In tracing an epistemological shift to Indigenous economies of abundance, I am also addressing the ontological turn in new materialist work that asks fruitful questions about the imagined distinctions between life and nonlife.” (21)

“I want to press against the limitations of heteronormative conceptions of desire that privilege cisgender and heteronormative imaginaries.” (25)


This sourcebook presents a collection of papers focusing on the intellectual property rights (IPR) of indigenous peoples--their rights to protect and control their cultural knowledge. Subsidiary IPR goals are to manage the degree and process by which cultural knowledge is shared with outsiders and, in some instances, to be justly compensated for it.


Sacred Objects, Sacred Places combines native oral histories, photographs, drawings, and case studies to present current issues of cultural preservation vital to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians. Complete with commentaries by native peoples, non-native curators, and archaeologists, this book discusses the repatriation of human remains, the curation and exhibition of sacred masks and medicine bundles, and key cultural compromises for preservation successes in protecting sacred places on private, state, and federal lands.


This outlines the guiding philosophies and principles of the Alutiiq Museum. The museum highlights the need to treat objects as sacred and animate beings. It also states that collections care and management should strive for balance between physical and spiritual forms of care of an object.


The entire notion of museums and the collection of artefacts is fundamentally alien to the partly nomad culture of Native Alaska. How then, should a museum such as the Alaska State Museum go about catering for its client population? In this article, Steve Henrikson
outlines some of the museum’s responses to this challenge. The keyword?
Communication. The author is Curator of Collections at the Alaska State Museum and
specializes in Northwest Coast Indian art. His Tlingit name is Ch’eekt’.

Howell, J. and Dorbin, L. (2021). Inside the Ethics Query Process: A Case Study from the

As the Ethics Seats on MPAAC, we thought it would be helpful to give an example of
what happens when anthropologists submit to the AAA an inquiry about an ethical issue
they are grappling with. We provide below a recent inquiry, with all identifiers removed,
to illustrate the steps that occur once we receive a query. This case also speaks to the
reality that similar concerns arise whether one is conducting research in the private sector
or a public university.

https://pages.ucsd.edu/~bgoldfarb/cogn150s12/reading/Hurston-What-White-Publishers-Wont-
Print.pdf

Although this paper is not centered around Indigenous nor Alaska Native issues, it
explores American Indian representations in the Smithsonian’s National Museum of
Natural History (NMNH). Zora Neale Hurston points out the lack of curiosity about the
internal lives and emotions of “non-Anglo-Saxon” people.

as a Classic of Political Philosophy.” British Journal for the History of Philosophy, 21(3), 421-
442.

This article is an introduction to an ancient Egyptian text called The Tale of the Eloquent
Peasant and an argument that it ought to be seen as a classic of political philosophy.
After contextualizing the tale as part of a tradition of moral and political philosophy in
ancient Egypt, I explore the methods by which the text defines the proper roles of
political authority and contrast its approach to justifying political authority with the
argument from the state of nature so common in modern Western political philosophy. I
claim that the tale’s argument from dysfunction anticipates the move in contemporary
Western political philosophy towards privileging non-ideal over ideal theory. I discuss
challenges in translating the key term in the tale – ma’at – in light of the fact that it can
be taken to mean ‘justice’ and/or ‘truth.’ Finally, I discuss how the irony at the heart of
its narrative can lead us to interpret the tale as having either conservative or revolutionary
implications for the political system it depicts.


To protect the Museum and provide guidance to those working on its behalf, this
Institutional Code of Ethics was written to address personal and institutional activities
and conflicts of interest.

Coast. National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian; National Geographic. ISBN 0-
7922-4190-8.
The Native nations of the Pacific Northwest are renowned for the beauty and complexity of their artistic traditions. In this lavishly illustrated book, writers from eleven Northwest Coast communities describe the importance of carvings, weavings, and other treasures from the collections to the National Museum of the American Indian to their cultures. In words and images, these writers offer a series of unique perspectives on the art of Native life, and on the living meaning of their cultural inheritance.


The 21st century has ushered in new debates and social movements that aim to structure how culture is produced, owned, and distributed. At one side, “open knowledge” advocates seek greater freedom for finding, distributing, using, and reusing information. On the other hand, “traditional knowledge” rights advocates seek to protect certain forms of knowledge from appropriation and exploitation and seek recognition for communal and culturally situated notions of heritage and intellectual property.

Understanding and bridging the tension between these movements represents a vital and significant challenge. This paper explores possible areas of where these seemingly divergent goals may converge, centered on the Creative Commons concept of “some rights reserved.” Kansa et al. argue that this concept can be extended into areas where scientific disciplines intersect with traditional knowledge. This model can help build a voluntary framework for negotiating more equitable and open communication between field researchers and diverse stakeholding communities.


“The argument for the betterment of humanity, however, robs indigenous communities of their self-determinative rights and is a reflection of paternalism and colonialism still present in Western society….In addition, it makes little sense why researcher cannot contact indigenous communities, provide their reasoning for studies, and request approval from indigenous communities on studies they would like to perform on indigenous ancestral remains and cultural objects.” (795)


The Association on American Indian Affairs has composed the following International Repatriation Guide to assist communities seeking to start their own international repatriation efforts. Because international repatriations have often been long, difficult, emotionally trying and expensive endeavors, AAIA is attempting to respond with several initiatives, including this one, to assist Native communities. Our aspirational goals include continuing to research international collections to provide information to Native communities, to assist with the international repatriation process when requested, and to make inroads towards...
addressing this human rights issue nationally and internationally, as long as we are able.

Kreps, C. *Non-Western Models of Museums and Curation in Cross-cultural Perspective.*

“The study of non-Western models of museums and curatorial practices offers alternative perspectives on museological behavior, or, how people in various cultural settings perceive, value, care for, and preserve their cultural heritage in tangible and intangible forms. Such studies broaden our scope of inquiry, revealing new sites for exploration and explication. They show us that there is not one universal museology, but a world full of museologies and spaces for the convergence of diverse museological forms and practices.”

Based in “comparative museology,” this article explores Western museology and its intersections and conflicts with non-Western models, such as sacred storage houses, Indigenous conservation and preservation and Oceanic Indigenous museums. Kreps et al. examine interactions between collections and audiences at the museum, to challenge prior foundations of Western ideologies and misconceptions underscored in “ethnographic collections” – pushing forward discourse on the value and agency of objects and notions of storytelling. They also look at oppositions between Western missions towards increased public access and Indigenous traditional laws of ownership and property rights that often call for public access restrictions. Finally, the article tackles issues with curation and cultural representations in museum exhibitions and heritage management.

“The challenge is to reconcile our respect and need for cultural diversity with the need to acknowledge and respect the principles of human rights and cultural democracy.”


The hospitality has been discussed only in the model of social, private and commercial domain. It has been argued that there are two schools of thoughts: one sees the host-guest relationship entirely based on the commercial transaction between them and another sees hospitality as a social phenomenon. This paper highlights the correlation between hospitality, peace and tourism with context to the behaviors of nation-states as political actors towards migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in terms of ethics, human rights and citizenship with special focus on the difference in approach of hospitality between the rich and poor countries. However, it is also evident that peace can only be achieved through the acceptance of the outsiders without prejudices, although this ahas been rejected by the thinkers who believe that it is impossible for any nation to fully welcome the guests which will require them to compromise their national sovereignty. Attention has been given to the concept of hospitality with special reference to Kant’s thought of universal hospitality, Levinas’s concept of the ethics and politics of hospitality, and Derrida’s notion of absolute or unconditional and conditional hospitality. The issues thus discussed are the various forms of discrimination in terms of the hospitable behaviours by the hosts (nations) towards the guests (migrants) by analyzing the host-guest relationship and further reflecting it upon the current global political scenario.

Beginning in 1990, the American Museum of Natural History pulled together an exhibition – “Chiefly Feasts” – of Kwakiutl artwork. The pieces were collected by Franz Boas in collaboration with George Hunt, (Tlingit, raised among the Kwakiutl), and the exhibition was curated by Aldona Jonaitis in partnership with Kwakiutl elders and leaders. In their article, Levinson and Nieuwenhuizen provide a first-hand case study on the AMNH’s “Chiefly Feasts” exhibition, documenting their experience in collaborative conservation. Although this paper shows some of conservators’ first efforts to collaborate and include Northwest Coast Indigenous perspectives and voices, it is also an example of the enduring reluctance for conservators to relinquish western cultural precedence over. Levinson & Nieuwenhuizen critique Boas and his “ahistoric approach” to Indigenous cultures and collections, rooted in the idea of museums as “storehouses” for dying cultures, and further push the discourse on reviewing the motives of western conservators’ practices and their incongruences with Indigenous ones. However, their documentation on their collaborative restoration of a few masks and performance Although Kwakiutl voices were brought in and considered, conservators still draw upon anthropological definitions of a piece’s significance rather than Indigenous interpretations of their own heritage. They also display an orientation that “view[s] the time of collection as paramount,” in conflict with traditional and current Kwakiutl cultural practices.

“The collaborative process and the ensuring discussions made it apparent that many of the decisions we make as conservators, such as the extent and type of compensation, are deeply embedded in our own cultural context. Prior to this project, treatments, albeit often inventive, tended to be made to satisfy curators’ or conservators’ personal aesthetic, or were derived from a set of accepted ‘traditional’ western conservation solutions.” (11)  

“…present day conservation is very much a part of our artistic legacy and our own culture’s view of the meaning of the arts of other cultures.” (11)


The University of Alaska Museum of the North (UAMN) a non-profit entity, contributes to the public by collecting, preserving, interpreting, and exhibiting natural and cultural history objects of Alaska. To protect the Museum and provide guidance to those working on its behalf, this Institutional Code of Ethics has been drafted to address personal and institutional activities and conflicts of interest.

This manual is intended to be used as a practical guide for any tribe or individual interested in repatriation under NAGPRA and for museums and federal agencies to have a better understanding of the tribal aspect of NAGPRA. All the information gathered for this project is based on the first hand experiences of people who have had success in NAGPRA.


Amy Lonetree (Ho-Chunk) is associate professor of American Studies at the University of California, Santa Cruz, and co-editor, with Amanda J. Cobb, of *The National Museum of the American Indian: Critical Conversations*. She is co-author of *People of the Big Voice: Photographs of Ho-Chunk Families by Charles Van Schaick, 1879-1942*. 

Museum exhibitions focusing on Native American history have long been curator controlled. However, a shift is occurring, giving Indigenous people a larger role in determining exhibition content. In *Decolonizing Museums*, Amy Lonetree examines the complexities of these new relationships with an eye toward exploring how museums can grapple with centuries of unresolved trauma as they tell the stories of Native peoples. She investigates how museums can honor an Indigenous worldview and way of knowing, challenge stereotypical representations, and speak the hard truths of colonization within exhibition spaces to address the persistent legacies of historical unresolved grief in Native communities.

Lonetree focuses on the representation of Native Americans in exhibitions at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian, the Mille Lacs Indian Museum in Minnesota, and the Ziibiwing Center of Anishinabe Culture & Lifeways in Michigan. Drawing on her experiences as an Indigenous scholar and museum professional, Lonetree analyzes exhibition texts and images, records of exhibition development, and interviews with staff members. She addresses historical and contemporary museum practices and charts possible paths for the future curation and presentation of Native lifeways.


The topic of this book is the ethics of memory, with a question mark: *Is there an ethics of memory?* I consider ethos topic distinct from the closely related subjects of the psychology of memory, the politics of memory, and even the theology of memory. I believe that it is an important question to ask and not merely a futile administrative exercise in channeling issues to this or to that intellectual department. My question…is both about microethics (the ethics of individuals) and about macroethics (the ethics of collectives). What I want to address can be rendered by a series of questions: *Are we obligated to remember people and events from the past?* If we are, what is the nature of this obligation? Are remembering and forgetting proper subjects of moral praise or blame? Who are the “we” who may be obligated to remember: the collective “we,” or some distributive sense of “we” that puts the obligation to remember on each and every member of the collective? In the course of these chapters, I reach the conclusion that while there is an ethics of memory, there is a very little morality of memory. An ethics of memory is as much an ethics of forgetting as it is an ethics of memory. The crucial question, *Are there things that we ought to remember?* Has its parallel, *Are there things that we ought to forget?* Should we, for example, forget for the sake of “forgiving”?
The ethical treatment of corporeal materials is confounded by the dual cultural and scientific values ascribed to human bones. The cultural concerns for the sacred significance of human remains often come into direct conflict with scientific investigation. The authors have been involved in a number of difficult situations between the professional communities who have responsibility for the scientific investigation of human remains and the lay communities who have been concerned for the sacred and spiritual aspects of these materials. This paper addresses a variety of professional approaches to the treatment of human skeletal material and the need for interdisciplinary cooperation among the professionals that study and care for these materials. It also addresses the need for AIC to recognize human remains as a discrete material deserving of considerations that are distinct from any other materials we treat as conservators.


Repatriation is the process whereby certain types of Native American cultural items are returned to lineal descendants, culturally affiliated Indian tribes, Alaska Native villages and corporations, and Native Hawaiian organizations. Human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony are legally defined categories of items that may be considered for repatriation. Additionally, in accordance with longstanding Smithsonian policy, the NMAI may return any objects acquired by or transferred to the NMAI illegally. This manual will guide you step-by-step through the repatriation process, from gathering the information needed to make a formal request to the successful repatriation of your cultural items.


In developing the NMAI Repatriation Policy, the Board of Trustees affirms NMAI’s commitment to (a) support the continuation of ceremonial and ritual life of Indigenous Peoples, (b) foster the study by Indigenous Peoples of their own traditions, and (c) forge an understanding through open and consistent dialog between the NMAI and Indigenous Peoples.
Peoples so that the interests of each are understood and respected. Further, the NMAI Repatriation Policy has been designed so that Indigenous Peoples have broad access to information pertaining to the collections in order to ensure that informed decisions are made regarding the care and disposition of materials to be repatriated.


The exchange of anthropological objects by museums in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries involved circulation of Indigenous material culture and human remains beyond the institution in which collections were originally accessioned. This paper traces the biography of a Hopi sacred object collected by the Bureau of American Ethnology in 1879 from the Smithsonian Institution to the Musée d’Ethnographie du Trocadero in 1885 in order to highlight the ethical implications of how historical practices of specimen exchange affect knowledge about and contemporary access to museum objects. Analysis of specimen exchange emphasizes how the aims and actions of curators contribute to the dynamic nature of museum collections.


American Indian cultural objects, like most objects, deteriorate over time. Precious and irreplaceable pieces of a people's heritage can turn to dust, either slowly or rapidly, depending upon their composition and the ways in which they are stored and handled. This practical guide offers Indian and non-Indian caregivers, conservators, and collectors helpful information on standard museum practice to aid them in making decisions to slow deterioration.


Since 2012, the Anchorage Museum and Smithsonian Arctic Studies Center have hosted week-long artists residencies, titled Material Traditions. During the program accomplished Alaska Native artists are invited to demonstrate their work in important cultural forms and materials. These often combine traditional with innovate and experimental techniques that are shared with museum visitors and participants in the programs.

*Material Traditions* programs have focused on fish skin, porcupine quill, gut skin, walrus ivory, cedar wood, cedar bark, and most recently moose hide. Most of these materials are either difficult to source, process, or the knowledge is struggling to survive. The programs are unique in that we create film documentaries of the material processing and use, the artists selected are teachers in their own communities, and an environment is provide that enables conservators and artists to share their expertise.

The program’s evolution, changes in relationships and interactions with indigenous communities, approaches taken, challenges arising from each program, how they have helped inform our work in conservation, and benefits of the program for artists, communities, museums, and the preservation of collections will be discussed in this paper.
The conservation of an ethnographic object must be based on knowledge of the original materials, methods of manufacture and use of the object, the reason for its collection and also its use in a museum context. The traditional approaches employed for art objects often are not appropriate for ethnographic objects as they may remove important anthropological evidence. Using examples of Native North American objects, this paper discusses in detail the particular problems of conserving ethnographic collections.

The San Diego Museum of Man (SDMoM/The Museum) is decolonizing its practices in line with its vision of becoming a place where people learn from each other and equip themselves to build better communities. For the greater part of its history, SDMoM harmed Indigenous communities by participating in the extraction of their belongings, cultural practices, and bodies in service to the Museum’s goals of preservation and education. Understanding the full impact of colonization is ongoing work that requires ongoing reflection and truth-telling. SDMoM seeks to inspire human connections by exploring the human experience and recognizes that this can only authentically occur in a context of truthfulness and transparency about the way that it participated in colonization.

This article explores cognitively just, reliable subject access to indigenous knowledge through knowledge organization systems (KOSs). Cognitive justice requires that indigenous people be able to access materials in a way that respects their worldview, yet dominant KOSs are based on positivist, Western approaches that are fundamentally incompatible. Alternatives to universal systems include the creation of new KOSs and the adaptation of universal ones. Going forward, emerging web technologies are presented as key to moving away from universalist schemes and towards specialized access.

Just as object meanings are defined by people, so too can identities of individuals, groups and communities be implicit in their relationships with particular objects. The transformative quality of the museum environment and display of formats, with regard to objects and object relationships, is fundamental to the socio-cultural responsibilities of these institutions and their ability to affect social issues. To understand the potential utility of heritage conservation in this respect, it is necessary to explore the complexity of the relationships that can form between objects and people and so establish some key issues and implications of conservation activities.
can have great significance concerning identity and that the subjectivity of object values is a key issue in the conservation of material heritage. It will be seen that though the management of heritage can be problematic, the resonance of heritage status gives museums a unique capacity for addressing both intangible and tangible social needs.


The following guidelines were developed over a three-year period of collaboration between Native and non-Native museum professionals, cultural leaders, and artists. The Guidelines for Communities are intended as a resource for community members who are working in collaboration with museums. This document is not presented as a set of rules; instead, it offers ideas to consider when working with museums. Although the guidelines may be useful for many kinds of engagement with museums, they are not specifically intended as a resource for NAGPRA consultations.


The following guidelines were developed over a three-year period of collaboration between Native and non-Native museum professionals, cultural leaders, and artists. The guidelines are intended as a resource for museums who are working in collaboration with communities. This document does not present a set of rules; instead, it offers principles and considerations for building successful collaboration. Although the guidelines may be useful for many kinds of engagement with museums, they are not specifically intended as a resource for NAGPRA consultations.


Land Acknowledgment opens a space with gratefulness. It allows us to publicly recognize the Indigenous people whose traditional lands we stand upon. Land Acknowledgment honors the past and present Indigenous stewardship of the natural world. It also offers respect and visibility for the histories, contributions, innovations, and contemporary perspective of the Indigenous people. As we gather in our institutions, businesses and communities we can acknowledge that we all stand upon generations of their work, in each and every place we move within. It is only Indigenous ways of being that will ensure a sustainable future.


“Heritage preservation and interpretation are central functions of museums and constitute the most public dimensions of museum practice. However, [I]nigenous peoples frequently refer to the limitations of museum display as a means of expressing and preserving culture, emphasizing that culture is a living process that incorporates both continuity and change. As Kalpana Nand, Education Officer of Fiji Museum, states: ‘Culture is a living, dynamic, ever-changing and yet ever-constant thing - it is a story, a
.song, a dance performance, never a ‘dead thing’ to be represented in the form of an artefact to be looked at through glass.”


*Native Studies Keywords* explores selected concepts in Native studies and the words commonly used to describe them, words whose meanings have been insufficiently examined. This edited volume focuses on the following eight concepts: sovereignty, land, indigeneity, nation, blood, tradition, colonialism, and indigenous epistemologies/knowledge. Each section includes essays and provides definitions, meanings, and significance to the concept, lending a historical, social, and political context. *Native Studies Keywords* is a genealogical project that looks at the history of words that claim to have no history. The end goal is not the determine which words are appropriate but to critically examine words that are crucial to Native studies, in hopes of promoting debate and critical interrogation.


The Conference met over six days to consider a range of significant issues, including; the value of indigenous knowledge, biodiversity and biotechnology, customary environmental management, arts, music, language and other physical and spiritual cultural forms. On the final day, the following Declaration was passed by the Plenary. This document includes: recommendations to Indigenous peoples, recommendations to states & national and international agencies – regarding biodiversity & customary environmental management and cultural objects – and recommendations to the United Nations.


“Today, there are a variety of museums across America that implicate Native American interests in cultural sovereignty. Primary among these museums are the National Museum of the American Indian and the various tribal museums that are being developed by Indian nations themselves. This essay describes the movement toward “cultural sovereignty” and then engages the role of the museums in fostering cultural sovereignty through their participation in the processes of repatriation and reconciliation.”


‘This book is a counter-story to Western ideas about the benefits of the pursuit of knowledge. Looking through the eyes of the colonized, cautionary tales are told from an indigenous perspective, tales designed not just to voice the voiceless but to prevent the
dying - of people, of culture, of ecosystems. The book is particularly strong in situating the development of counterpractices of research within both Western critiques of Western knowledge and global indigenous movements. Informed by critical and feminist evaluations of positivism, Tuhiwai Smith urges researching back and disrupting the rules of the research game toward practices that are more respectful, ethical, sympathetic and useful vs racist practices and attitudes, ethnocentric assumptions and exploitative research. Using Kaupapa Maori, a fledgling approach toward culturally appropriate research protocols and methodologies, the book is designed primarily to develop indigenous peoples as researchers. In short, Tuhiwai Smith begins to articulate research practices that arise out of the specificities of epistemology and methodology rooted in survival struggles, a kind of research that is something other than a dirty word to those on the suffering side of history.


The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) was adopted by the General Assembly on Thursday, 13 September 2007, by a majority of 144 states in favour, 4 votes against (Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States). Years later the four countries that voted against have reversed their position and now support the UN Declaration. Today the Declaration is the most comprehensive international instrument on the rights of indigenous peoples. It establishes a universal framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the indigenous peoples of the world and it elaborates on existing human rights standards and fundamental freedoms as they apply to the specific situation of indigenous peoples.


This brief guide to borrowing conditions and loans procedures is intended to provide potential borrowers with information on current practices at the Museum of Anthropology at UBC (MOA) to enable them to plan for loans more effectively. The Museum’s internal process is complex and can take more time than one might expect.


This article examines the relationship between ethics and the Person-Centered Approach (PCA). It discusses the ideas of authors who question the perspective established by Carl Rogers, itself based on Emmanuel Levinas’s Ethics of Radical Alterity. Using the work of Luiz Claudio Figueiredo, this article acknowledges that questions about ethics, which are understood as the human abode, precede epistemological inquiries. Also, according to Figueiredo, the PCA is assumed to be closer to romantic and liberal positions. Using these discussions, this article seeks possibilities for the PCA being open to difference.
Based on Levinas, it considers Alterity as a radical difference that establishes the subject and with which it establishes a relationship of insurmountable asymmetry. In light of the Levinasian proposal, notions such as “person,” as well as the conditions that facilitate the therapeutic process, are discussed. The article concludes that the PCA’s concepts are not completely averse to Alterity and that Rogers did encounter it in his practice, despite never recognizing it in his theoretical formulations.


Art can be, and as Vujanovic argues, should be a ‘bad’ public good in the same way that we recognize that ‘the public’ includes both a ‘bad’ (e.g., a rebellious activist) group of citizens and a so-called ‘good’ public – a complacent, silent, obedient group of citizens that support their passive idea(l) of public order. “The public good cannot be curated,” because curating public good means that we are still running in circles, according to static and unexamined terms of discussion. What the public good is, and what ‘breaking bad’ means, can only be brought to the table as an open issue to be discussed, imagined, and experienced in public. There must be an in-between space, a space that belongs neither to the state nor to the private – that is, the space of the public.


Recognizing an urgent need for Indigenous liberation strategies, Indigenous intellectuals met to create a book with hands-on suggestions and activities to enable Indigenous communities to decolonize themselves. The authors begin with the belief that Indigenous Peoples have the power, strength, and intelligence to develop culturally specific decolonization strategies for their own communities and thereby systematically pursue their own liberation. These scholars and writers demystify the language of colonization and decolonization to help Indigenous communities identify useful concepts, terms, and intellectual frameworks in their struggles toward liberation and self-determination. This handbook covers a wide range of topics, including Indigenous governance, education, language, oral tradition, repatriation, images and stereotypes, and truth-telling. It aims to facilitate critical thinking while offering recommendations for fostering community discussions and plans for meaningful community action.


Young argues that “Black queer people are moral agents who enact family in ways that are simultaneously disruptive to current familial norms in our society, creatively resistant to the disciplinary power at work in those norms, and subversively generative and imaginative in relation to establishing new ways of being in relationship.” The book advocates for and employs an ethics that builds on the symbiotic relationship between theory/theology and praxis, noting that their necessary union suggests certain ethical responsibilities to be engaged in both scholarly discourse and general moral behavior. Young uses narrative and critical analysis to further the overall normative claim that family ought to (a) recognize, attend to, and show care for the diverse subjectivities
within familial relationships; (b) acknowledge and deconstruct the institutional structural, social, and interpersonal disciplines that inhibit a from happening; (c) deconstruct and creatively resist the institutions, structures, and relational behaviors that establish inequality and oppression as normative, and (d) imagine new possibilities for relationality based on a commitment to preserving potentialities and relational interdependence.
APPENDIX IV: DEFINITIONS AND SUGGESTED RESOURCES

INCORPORATING INDIGENOUS EXPERTISE AND KNOWLEDGES

Definitions

**Cognitive Justice**: “a concept developed by Shiv Visvanathan in 1997 that says different concepts of knowledge can co-exist, and that Western knowledge can and should treat non-Western knowledge equally…It does not reject scientific approaches to knowledge, but seeks to maintain the cultural and social context of folk or traditional knowledge, recognizing that solutions to problems might be found by mining a wide diversity of solutions.”

“**Indigenous Environmental Science Studies (IESS)**…seeks to take seriously the relationality, spirituality, and **Traditional Environmental Knowledge (TEK)**. The dialectical partnership between TEK and mainstream science offers the most potential for Native and non-Native futures…”
[Deloria et al., *Unfolding Futures: Indigenous Ways of Knowing for the Twenty-First Century* (2018)]

**Indigenous Knowledge**: “the understandings, skills and philosophies developed by societies with long histories of interaction with their natural surroundings. For rural and indigenous peoples, local knowledge informs decision-making about fundamental aspects of day-to-day life. This knowledge is integral to a cultural complex that also encompasses language, systems of classification, resource use practices, social interactions, ritual, and spirituality.”
[UN Declaration of Indigenous Rights]

**Intellectual Property**: Creations of the human mind for which a set of exclusive rights are recognized under the corresponding field of law. Under intellectual property law, creators and/or owners of a variety of intangible assets such as musical, literary, and artistic works (copyrights), certain discoveries and inventions (patents), commercially valuable information that remains
secret (trade secrets), and certain words, phrases, symbols, and designs (trademarks) are granted certain exclusive rights. The intangible assets themselves are referred to as “intellectual property” and the rights recognized by law are referred to as “intellectual property rights.” [Code of Ethics and Profession Practices for Collections Professionals 2021]

**Intellectual Property**: A group of intangible rights that protect creative works, including copyright, trademarks, patents, publicity rights, which include patents, trademarks, industrial designs, and geographical indications, and copyright and related rights, which include the rights of reproduction, adaptation, distribution, exhibition, and performance, and moral rights. [Society of American Archivists 2016]

**Stewardship**: the activity of monitoring, supervising or managing of something, especially the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one’s care; for example, the stewardship of cultural heritage resources. [Community + Museums – Guidelines for Collaboration, Indian Arts Research Center School for Advanced Research]

**Traditional Knowledge**: knowledge, know-how, skills, and practices that are developed, sustained, and passed on from generation to generation within a community, often forming part of its cultural or spiritual identity. [Code of Ethics and Profession Practices for Collections Professionals 2021]

**Language Models**

“Recognizing also the urgent need to respect and promote the rights of indigenous peoples affirmed in treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements with States” [from the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, p.2]

“States shall take effective measures to ensure that this right is protected and also to ensure that indigenous peoples can understand and be understood in political, legal and administrative proceedings, where necessary through the provision of interpretation or by other appropriate means.”
“Nothing about us, without us.”
[Canada’s proposed Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada]¹⁰⁸

“…Indigenous knowledge is science and has functioned as such in both past and present.”
[Deloria et al., Unfolding Futures: Indigenous Ways of Knowing for the Twenty-First Century (2018)]

“Traditional knowledge systems possess equal integrity and validity.”
“Determine the types of resources and services Native communities want.”
[from Protocols for Native American Archival Materials]

“Cross-cultural training and exchange will enrich collecting institutions, communities, and academia. Organizations should strive to build off staff and governing structure that reflect the composition of communities served.”
[from Protocols for Native American Archival Materials]

“…encourage museums to pen dialogues with tribes to find workable solutions that balance a museum’s stewardship obligations with its commitments to engagements with source communities.”
[Chip Colwell-Chanthaphonh, (2011). Sketching knowledge: Quandaries in the mimetic reproduction of Pueblo ritual]

Resources

Museums Association, Ottawa.


Kreps, C. “Non-Western Models of Museums and Curation in Cross-cultural Perspective.”


https://guidelinesforcollaboration.info

https://guidelinesforcollaboration.info

MUSEUM FOUNDATIONS & COLLECTIONS REVISITED

Definitions

**Informed Consent:** permission granted in the knowledge of the possible consequences, risks and benefits. [San Diego Museum of US, Colonial Pathways]

**The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act:** is a Federal law passed in 1990. NAGPRA provides a process for museums and Federal agencies to return certain Native American cultural items -- human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony -- to lineal descendants, Indian tribes, and Native Hawaiian organizations. NAGPRA authorizes Federal grants to Indian tribes, Native Hawaiian organizations, and museums to assist
with the documentation and repatriation of Native American cultural items. NAGPRA establishes the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Review Committee to monitor the NAGPRA process and facilitate the resolution of disputes that may arise concerning repatriation under NAGPRA. Violations of NAGPRA are addressed through criminal and civil enforcement. [From the official NPS website. See more information on NAGPRA and the Smithsonian at the Peabody Essex here: https://www.peabody.harvard.edu/node/310]

**Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA):** NAGPRA is a Federal law that provides for the repatriation and disposition of certain Native American human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony.

[Code of Ethics and Profession Practices for Collections Professionals 2021]

**Repatriation:** used to refer to human remains and objects that are determined to be sacred, ceremonial, or cultural patrimony; objects culturally affiliated with an Indigenous community outside the United States that are not subject to the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA); and objects that were otherwise illegally exported from their country of origin.

[AAM Code of Ethics Collections Professionals 2021]

**Virtual Repatriation:** although “virtual repatriation” has several potential definitions…[it] is not truly repatriation at all and should instead be more accurately referred to as ‘cultural revitalization studies.’ These studies involve two very different concepts. The first concept is to photograph all or part of a collection for Indigenous peoples to view the collection in a virtual environment, such as through a public database or in a private setting. The other concept of ‘virtual repatriation’ involves something very different…instead of repatriating actual human remains or cultural objects, museums would ‘repatriate’ duplicate photographs of them.”

[Keeler 2012]

**Sacred Objects:** are associated or unassociated funerary objects or objects needed by traditional religious leaders for the practice of traditional religions by their present-day adherents

[from Code of Ethics and Professional Practices for Collections Professionals 2021]
**Sua:** a human-like consciousness; according to Alutiiq tradition, everything in the universe - the wind, and the animals, the rocks and the trees has a sua. The world is alive; a place where all objects are sentient - aware of and sensitive to human action.

[“The Alutiiq Museum’s Guidelines for the Spiritual Care of Objects”]

**Human Remains:** the physical remains of a human body of a person of Native American ancestry. For purposes of this policy, it is assumed that all human remains in the collection are of Native American ancestry unless otherwise known. The term does not include remains or portions of remains that may reasonably be determined to have been freely given or naturally shed by the individual from whose body they were obtained, such as hair made into ropes or nets. For purposes of this policy, human remains do not include culturally modified human remains as defined in Section II.1.e. [NMAI Repatriation Policy, from *A Step-by-Step Guide through the Repatriation Process*, National Museum of the American Indian 2014]

**Human Remains:** all physical remains belonging to the biological species Homo sapiens.

**They include:**
- All non-processed, processed or preserved forms of human bodies and parts thereof. This covers particular bones, mummies, bog bodies, soft tissues, organs, tissue sections, embryos, foetuses, skin, aahir, fingernails and toenails (the last four even if they originate from living people) and cremated remains;
- All (ritual) objects into which human remains as defined above have been knowingly incorporated.

**They do not include:**
- Mouldings of human bodies or body parts, death masks, audio recordings of human voices, anthropological photographs;
- (ritual) objects previously associated with human remains, such as for example burial objects.

[Recommendations for the Care of Human Remains in Museums and Collections, German Museum Association 2013]
**Sacred Objects**: objects needed by traditional Native American religious leaders for the practice of Native American religions, including objects needed for the renewal of a religious practice. [NMAI Repatriation Policy, from *A Step-by-Step Guide through the Repatriation Process*, National Museum of the American Indian 2014]

**Objects of Cultural Patrimony**: objects having ongoing historical, traditional, or cultural importance central to the Indian Tribe or Native Hawaiian Organization of culture, rather than property owned by an individual Native American, and which, therefore, cannot be alienated, appropriated, or conveyed by an individual regardless of whether or not the individual is a member of the Indian Tribe or Native Hawaiian Organization. The given object shall have been considered inalienable by the Indian Tribe or Native Hawaiian Organization at the time the object was separated from said group. [NMAI Repatriation Policy, from *A Step-by-Step Guide through the Repatriation Process*, National Museum of the American Indian 2014]

**Cultural Affiliation**: a relationship of shared group identity that can be reasonably traced historically or prehistorically between a present-day Indian Tribe or Native Hawaiian Organization and identifiable earlier group. [NMAI Repatriation Policy, from *A Step-by-Step Guide through the Repatriation Process*, National Museum of the American Indian 2014]

**Cultural Patrimony**: is understood to mean any property (tangible or intangible) that is owned by a community as a whole, or by a group which holds such property in trust for the community, is inalienable except by community consent, and which may be fundamental elements of a community’s cultural identity and heritage.” [from *Protocols for Native American Archival Materials*]

**Cultural Patrimony**: objects with ongoing historical, traditional, or cultural importance central to a community, ethnic, religious, or Indigenous group as a whole, rather than property owned by an individual group member. [Code of Ethics and Profession Practices for Collections Professionals 2021]
**People of Origin:** the ethnic and indigenous communities which are direct descendants of those peoples from which the human remains originated. These peoples of origin may have transferred the representation of their interests in whole or in part to state political bodies, into which they are today incorporated. However, the peoples of origin are not to be regarded as identical to the higher-level state agencies which represent them. [Recommendations for the Care of Human Remains in Museums and Collections, German Museum Association 2013]

**Language Models**

“‘Access’ encompasses not only physical access to collections for purposes of viewing, research, making reproductions and ceremonial use, but also access to funding sources, policy development and implementation activities, as well as training and employment in museums and other cultural institutions.” (4)


“Cultural objects have different meanings in indigenous communities and often encompass much more than a simplistic aesthetically-oriented reinterpretation of the cultural object as art.”

[from *Indigenous International Repatriation Guide*, Keeler]

“It should be acknowledged as a right of indigenous communities to self-determine the fate of these cultural objects, particularly when they have been stolen from the community or exhumed from gravesites.” (794)

[from *Indigenous International Repatriation Guide*, Keeler]

“The exhibition, interpretation, and publication of these sensitive items should be done with tact and respect for human dignity and in consultation with appropriate Native groups.”

“…the right to the use and control of their ceremonial objects; and the right to the repatriation of their human remains.”
[from the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, Article 12, p.6]

“States shall seek to enable the access and/or repatriation of ceremonial objects and human remains.”
[from the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, Article 12, p.6]

“No staff member will be required to handle sacred items or human remains against their will. Staff members who are uncomfortable with a potential task should inform their supervisor.”
[from *The Alutiiq Museum’s Guidelines for the Spiritual Care of Objects* 2004]

“Collecting institutions and Native communities are encouraged to build relationships to ensure the respectful care and use of archival material. Meaningful consultation and concurrence are essential to establishing mutually beneficial practices and trust. Through dialogue and cooperation, institutions and communities can identify mutually beneficial solutions to common problems and develop new models for shared stewardship and reciprocity or for the appropriate transfer of responsibility and ownership for some materials.”
[from the *Protocols for Native American Archival Materials*]

“The protocols’ central idea is that museums must give full consideration to the communities whose knowledge the institution is collecting, storing, sharing, and displaying.”
[Chip Colwell-Chanthaphonh, (2011). *Sketching knowledge: Quandaries in the mimetic reproduction of Pueblo ritual*]

**Resources**


Castle, B. (2021). *Living Context: Sm’algyax language integration at the Burke Museum of*

Clavir, M. and Moses, J. *Caring for sacred and culturally sensitive objects.*


REFLEXIVITY AND AWARENESS OF INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES

Definitions

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: adopted during general assembly on the 13th of September in 2007. It passed by a majority vote of 144 states in favor and 4 votes against – Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States.109 It was not until a few years later that the United States and Canada approved and supported the document.

If equality is the end goal, then equity is the means. Equality asks for sameness, and that everyone receive the same things.

If you use equality as the solution, and simply treat everyone the same, you only continue and exacerbate the inequalities and inequities that exists.

- The equality approach does not correct for historical inequalities.

The equity approach understands that not everyone starts at the same place, and acknowledges the historical barriers.110

110 Cultural Sensitivities” (Sanchita)
**Restitution:** the border term for any object wrongfully or illicitly taken from its country of origin that may include antiquities, colonial appropriations, or works transferred during the Nazi-era. [“AAM Code of Ethics Collections Professionals 2021”]

**Control:** “having a legal interest in human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects or object of cultural patrimony sufficient to lawfully permit the museum or Federal agency to treat the objects as part of its collection for purposes of these regulations whether or not the human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects or objects of cultural patrimony are in the physical custody of the museum or Federal agency. Generally, museum or Federal agency that has loaned human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects or object of cultural patrimony to another individual, museum, or Federal agency is considered to retain control of those human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony for purposes of these regulations.” The museum or agency that has control of any NAGPRA-related items or remains has the final say as to the disposition of those remains or items and makes all decisions regarding that collection. All consultation should be carried out primarily with the entity that has control. [Hemenway, E., Henry, M. and Holt A. (2012). Finding Our Way Home: A Handbook for Tribes, Universities, Museums and Individuals Working Towards Repatriation Under NAGPRA. Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, Repatriation, Archives and Records Department; In Partnership With the National Park Service, Harbor Springs.]

**Possession:** “Having physical custody of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony with a sufficient legal interest to lawfully treat the objects as part of its collection for purposes of these regulations. Generally, a museum or Federal agency would not be considered to have possession of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony on loan from another individual, museum, or Federal agency.” Larger federal agencies have a high likelihood of having their collections spread out in multiple museums, archives, or other repositories. When consulting with a federal agency on its collection, make sure to locate all known locations that have possession of agency collections. [Hemenway, E., Henry, M. and Holt A. (2012). Finding Our Way Home: A Handbook for Tribes, Universities, Museums and Individuals Working Towards Repatriation Under NAGPRA.
Diversity: Diversity includes all the ways in which people differ, and it encompasses all the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. It is all-inclusive and recognizes everyone and every group as part of the diversity that should be valued. A broad definition includes not only race, ethnicity, and gender – the groups that most often come to mind when the term “diversity” is used – but also age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, and physical appearance. It also involves different ideas, perspectives, and values.

http://racialequitytools.org/glossary#diversity [Diversity & Inclusion Task Force Final Report, the Juneau Arts and Humanities Council, by the Diversity & Inclusion Task Force 2017]

Inclusion: Authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision/policy making in a way that shares power.

http://racialequitytoos.org/glossary#inclusion [Diversity & Inclusion Task Force Final Report, the Juneau Arts and Humanities Council, by the Diversity & Inclusion Task Force 2017]

Language Models

“Concerned that indigenous peoples have suffered from historic injustices as a result of, inter alia, their colonization and dispossession of their lands, territories and resources, thus preventing them from exercising, in particular, their right to development in accordance with their own needs and interests”

[from the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, p.2]

“The point is not so much that Indigenous perspectives need to be included in the general politics of knowledge (though that is true); rather it is that the Indigenous itself is generative of that knowledge, not peripheral to it.”

[Deloria et al., Unfolding Futures: Indigenous Ways of Knowing for the Twenty-First Century (2018)]
Resources


LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AS THE FLOOR AND NOT THE CEILING

Definitions

“Sovereignty is the guiding story in our pursuit of self-determination, the general strategy by which we aim to best recover our losses from the ravages of colonization: our lands, our languages, our cultures, our self-respect. For indigenous people everywhere, sovereignty is an ideal principle, the beacon by which we seek the paths to agency and power and community renewal. Attacks on sovereignty are attacks on what it enables us to pursue; the pursuit of sovereignty is an attempt to revive not our past, but our possibilities.”

Theoretical Definitions of Sovereignty (Cobb, A. 2005):

Cultural Sovereignty: “involves trusting the older ways and adapting them to our lives in the present” (Beverly Singer, Santa Clara – Filmmaker)

Intellectual Sovereignty: based on the notion of sovereignty as an open-ended process, a beginning step rather than an end. (Warrior)

Hermeneutical Sovereignty: Native scholars need not turn to Western critical theories or interpretive frameworks to analyze our own cultural production; must come from and account for the community. (Jace Weaver)

Rhetorical Sovereignty: “the inherent right and ability of peoples to determine their own communicative needs and desires in this pursuit, to decide for themselves the goals, modes, styles, and languages of public discourse.” (Lyons)
What is “Indian Country”?
- As a term of art, identity, and modern indigeneity, all the lands where Indigenous peoples have existed since time immemorial; a way of referencing the collective “community” of Indigenous homelands, villages, and subsistence areas.
- As a term of law (Federal Law 18 U.S.C.) all land within limits of any Indian reservation, under the jurisdiction of United States government, notwithstanding issuance of any patent, including rights-of-way running thru reservations (as is the case in Metlakatla, AK).  

What is the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA)?
- “The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971 (ANCSA) was a new approach by Congress to federal Indian policy. ANCSA extinguished aboriginal land title in Alaska. It divided the state into twelve distinct regions and mandated the creation of twelve private, for-profit Alaska Native regional corporations and over 200 private, for-profit Alaska Native village corporations. ANCSA also mandated that both regional and village corporations be owned by enrolled Alaska Native shareholders. Unlike in the lower-48 states where the reservation system was the norm, ANCSA departed significantly – its foundation was in Alaska Native corporate ownership. Through ANCSA, the federal government transferred 44 million acres – land to be held in corporate ownership by Alaska Native shareholders – to Alaska Native regional and village corporations. The federal government also compensated the newly formed Alaska Native corporations a total of $962.5 million for land lost in the settlement agreement.”
- Today, Corporations are utilized by Alaska Native peoples as a tool for exercising political action and influence, rather than as end to efforts for social justice rights and recognition of tribes by Western governments.

Land Acknowledgement: Land Acknowledgement opens a space with gratefulness. It allows us to publicly recognize the Indigenous people whose traditional lands we stand upon. Land

111 Alaska Native Governance & Protocol – Alaska Native Policy (8 Jun 2021), Barbara Waahlaal Gidaak Blake and Kacey Qunnigu Hopson.
112 From ANCSA Regional Association (ARA)
Acknowledgment honors the past and present Indigenous stewardship of the natural world. It also offers respect and visibility for the histories, contributions, innovations, and contemporary perspectives of the Indigenous people. As we gather in our institutions, businesses and communities we can acknowledge that we all stand upon generations of their work, in each and every place we move within. [You Are on Indigenous Land: Resources & Considerations for Recognizing Indigenous People through Land Acknowledgment, Written and compiled by Melissa Shaginoff]

Language Models

“There is a strong consensus that partnerships should be guided by moral, ethical and professional principles and not limited to areas of rights and interests specified by law.” (4) [from Task Force Report on Museums and First Peoples, Assembly of First Nations & the Canadian Museums Association, 1994]

“The intangible cultural heritage of Alaska’s Native populations, both past and present, is of concern for the ethical operations of the Museum. This heritage includes the objects and artifacts associated with the Aleut/Unangan Native cultures represented in the MOTA ethnographic collections. MOTA is opposed to the unethical appropriation of iconic Native symbols and design motifs by individuals without the express consent of the affected groups MOTA staff will make every effort to ensure that the use of the objects in the collections legitimate research and not for personal gain.”
[from Museum of the Aleutians Institutional Code of Ethics, p.15]

“Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, as well as the manifestations of their sciences, technologies and cultures, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports and traditional games and visual performing arts. They also have the right to maintain,
control, protect and develop their intellectual property over such cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions.

[from the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, Article 31.1]

“Object acquisition records are not necessarily public information. Data contained in the Museum’s acquisition records will be available to the public on a limited basis. Certain types of information (e.g., sacred knowledge associated with an artifact) may be kept private.”

[from *The Alutiiq Museum’s Guidelines for the Spiritual Care of Objects* 2004]

“…tribes are not racial collectives, but political/legal ones, which means that they exercise the right to define their own citizenship.”

[Amy Den Ouden, In: *Deloria et al., Unfolding Futures: Indigenous Ways of Knowing for the Twenty-First Century* (2018)]

“We stand on living land that has been Indigenous territory since Time Immemorial. We acknowledge the traditional homelands of the original people of this place: the Aak’w Kwaan of the Lingit nation who have lived on and loved and protected this storied land for hundreds of generations and thousands of years. Let us honor the ancestral, ancient, place-based intellectual knowledge of the aak’w Kwaan and express our gratitude for the inherent presence of past, current, and future Aak’w Kwaan generations. Gunalcheesh Aak’w Kwaan. Gunalcheesh Aak’w Kwaan. [Saankalaxt Ernestine Hayes (Tlingit), Alaska State Writer Laureate, 2016-18, from *The Sprit Wraps Around You: Northern Northwest Coast Native Textiles*]

“We are gathered on the un-ceded land of the Auk peoples. I ask you to join me in acknowledging the Auk community, their elders both past and present, as well as future generations. The Alaska State Libraries Archives and Museums acknowledges that Alaska was founded upon exclusions and erasures of many indigenous peoples, including those on whose land this institution is located. This acknowledgment demonstrates a commitment to the process of working to dismantle the ongoing legacies of colonialism.” [Addison E. Field, Chief Curator, Alaska State Museum, from *The Sprit Wraps Around You: Northern Northwest Coast Native Textiles*]
Resources


Definitions

*Cultural Affiliation*: “Cultural affiliation means that there is a relationship of shared group identity which can reasonably be traced historically or prehistorically between members of a present-day Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization and an identifiable earlier group. Cultural affiliation is established when their preponderance of the evidence - based on geographical, kinship, biological, archeological, linguistic, folklore, oral tradition, historic evidence, or other information or expert opinion - reasonably leads to such a conclusion.” [Keeler 2012]

*Cultural Heritage*: any object or concept considered of aesthetic, historical, scientific, or spiritual significance.
[Code of Ethics and Profession Practices for Collections Professionals 2021]

*Language Models*

“Indigenous peoples have the right to practice and revitalize their cultural traditions and customs. This includes the right to maintain, protect and develop the past, present and future manifestations of their cultures, such as archaeological and historical sites, artefacts, designs, ceremonies, technologies and visual and performing arts and literature.”
[from the *UN Declaration on the rights of Indigenous Peoples*, Article 11,1]

“Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, as well as the manifestations of their sciences, technologies and cultures, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports and traditional games and visual performing arts. They also have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over such cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions.”
[from the *UN Declaration on the rights of Indigenous Peoples*, Article 31,1]
“The linkage between Aboriginal heritage and the present circumstances of First Peoples should also be represented…”
[from Task Force Report on Museums and First Peoples, Assembly of First Nations & the Canadian Museums Association, 1994]

“The very nature of the Indigenous museum, engaged with Indigenous epistemologies, suggests in important ways the possibility that one might invest objects with the power to return one’s gaze…to maintain a relation of reciprocity between object and viewer, to find in the institutional setting an occasion for musing – the generation of living, creative knowledge.”
[Philip Deloria, The New World of the Indigenous Museum (2018)]

“Indian people are central to the ways in which we need to think about the collective future.”
[Deloria et al., Unfolding Futures: Indigenous Ways of Knowing for the Twenty-First Century (2018)]

“Make an effort to collect resources created by rather than just about Native Americans.”
[from the Protocols for Native American Archival Materials]

Resources


MUSEUM HISTORY

The Alaska State Museum was established on June 6, 1900, when an Act of Congress created the Historical Library and Museum for the District of Alaska. The purpose of the Museum was to collect, preserve and exhibit objects from the territory. Although the collection of artifacts and volumes grew rapidly, a permanent place to house and display materials was not found for 20 years. Initially, the collection was originally stored wherever space could be found, with no provision made for public access. In 1920, the collection of the Alaska Historical Museum was made available to the public in the Arctic Brotherhood Building in Juneau. In 1923, the Territory assumed responsibility for Museum operations and the Museum continued to acquire and display important historical objects, and also developed research, tour guide programs, and educational activities. By the mid-1940s, the collection had outgrown its space and the Museum could no longer adequately store and display its materials. Finally, in 1967, in honor of the centennial of the purchase of Alaska from Russia, the citizens of Juneau implemented a one percent sales tax to help fund the building of the current museum facility. Juneau subsequently turned over ownership and governance of the Museum to the State of Alaska. Since that time, the Museum’s collections have grown from 5,500 to 27,000 objects. The Alaska State Museum was accredited by the American Association of Museums in 1975 and was re-accredited in 1987, and again in 2001.

The Sheldon Jackson Museum was founded in 1888 to house an exceptional collection of Alaska Native ethnographic material, mostly of which had been gathered by Presbyterian missionary and General Agent of Education for Alaska, the Rev. Dr. Sheldon Jackson. In 1985, the state purchased the Sheldon Jackson Museum and now administers its collection of 6,000 objects. In 1972, the Museum’s unique building – the first concrete structure built in Alaska – was added to the National Register of Historic Places. Until it was sold to the state, the Sheldon Jackson College in Sitka operated this facility.

MUSEUM STRUCTURE

The following Section outlines the Alaska State Museums mission, statement of purpose, and governance. Each section will focus on the particular relevance to Indigenous collaboration and collections management.

113 All information provided by the Alaska State Museum, and can be found in the Alaska State Museums’ “Collections Management Policy 2020” document.
Mission:
The Alaska State Museums (a state education agency comprised of the Alaska State Museum and the Sheldon Jackson Museum) identify, collect, preserve, and exhibit Alaska’s material and natural history and provide public access to services and collections of the Museums. The Alaska State Museums interpret and disseminate knowledge of the history of the state, its people, and its resources, and support others in these efforts. The Museums also assist and advise in the growth, development, and excellence of other museums within Alaska.

Statement of Purpose:
- To acquire artifacts, natural history specimens, art objects, and other items that pertain to the human and natural history of Alaska by purchase and by gift;
- To identify, catalog, preserve and display the museums’ acquisitions; to acquire and catalog Alaskan photographs and maintain a card catalog of this collection;
- To accept endowments, grants and gifts;
- To collect and maintain books, periodicals, pamphlets and other materials pertinent to museum administration, techniques and collections;
- To assist and advise in the development of local museums;
- To collect and keep current information concerning museum activities throughout the state;
- To coordinate the museum activities of the state with those of other agencies; to keep the museum open at reasonable hours for the convenience of visitors;
- To provide museum services and administer state and other grants-in-aid to museums in the state to supplement and improve their services

Museum Authorities

The Alaska State Museum is a state agency. It is organized as a Section of the Division of Libraries, Archives, and Museums (LAMs) of the Department of Education and Early Development.

The Section is led by the Chief Curator who is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Alaska State Museum and Sheldon Jackson Museum (Museums).

The Division is led by the Director and Deputy Director.

The Department is headed by the Commissioner of Education and Early Development.
The **Chief Curator** is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the section. The Chief Curator is also responsible for approving all acquisition and deaccessions. The Museum Collections Acquisition Committee…

The **Museum Collections Advisory Committee** (MCAC) must approve all purchases and donations valued at $5,000 and over, as required by Alaska State Statute, Chapter 57, Section 14.57.050. Members serve a three-year term. Terms rotate so that at least one vacancy occurs each year. The committee’s policies are contained in their statutory authorization and by laws. The in house procedures for administration of the MCAC are as follows:

**The collections** are managed by a professional staff which may be assisted by volunteers. Collections staff are expected to keep current in the field of museum practice as well as in the subject fields falling within the scope of collections for each institution. These may include Alaska ethnology, natural history, history, fine art, etc.

- There is a **Curator** responsible for the integrity of each ASM’s collections (ASM and SJM).
- These curators are responsible for coordinating the acquisition of objects for the permanent collection.
- One of these curators may be designated the **Sr. Curator of Collections**. The Sr. Curator of Collections is responsible for Chairing the Staff Acquisitions Committee, coordinating the deaccession of objects.

Access to and day-to-day management of the collection is the responsibility of the **Museum Registrar** and **Collections Manager**.

In accordance with AAC 58.110 the Sr. Curator of Collections is responsible for chairing the **Staff Acquisition Committee** (SAC). This committee consists of ASM Curator of Collections, SJM Curator of Collections, Registrar, Conservator, and Curator of Exhibits. The purpose of the SAC is to review all acquisitions regardless of method of acquisition. The SAC makes recommendations to the Sr. Curator of Collections based on professional opinion and proposed disposition of potential acquisitions.

**Museum Policies and Law**

**Code of Ethics:**
The Museums are grounded in the tradition of public service. They are organized as public trusts, holding their collections and information as a benefit for those they were established to serve. Members of their governing authority, employees, and volunteers are committed to the interests of these beneficiaries. The law provides the basic framework for museum operations. As nonprofit institutions, the Museums legal standards governing trust responsibilities. This Code of
Ethics takes that compliance as given. But legal standards are a minimum. The Museums, and those responsible for them, must do more than avoid legal liability, they must take affirmative steps to maintain their integrity so as to warrant public confidence. They must act not only legally, but ethically. This Code of Ethics therefore, outlines ethical standards that frequently exceed legal minimums and is used to guide those who work for the Museums, or on its behalf, to address personal activities and conflict of interests. The Code of Ethics for the Museums are in compliance with AS39.52 (the Alaska Executive Branch Ethics Act).

Loyalty to the mission of the Museums and to the public it serves is the essence of museum work, whether volunteer or paid. Where conflicts of interest arise – actual, potential, or perceived – the duty of loyalty must never be compromised. No individual may use his or her position for personal gain or to benefit another at the expense of the Museums, its mission, its reputation, and the society it serves. In subscribing to this code, the Museums assume responsibility for the actions of members of their governing authority, employees, and volunteers in the performance of museum-related duties.

**Strategic Plan:**
This plan focuses largely on diversifying and broadening our audience by promoting access, developing programming, and building relationships – inclusion, diversity, and equity were key themes in its development. The formal planning process for the 2020 Strategic Plan was initiated by the staff of the Alaska State Museum in Juneau (ASM) and the Sheldon Jackson Museum in Sitka (SJM) in 2017 with the formation of a working group comprised of five volunteers who met monthly over the course of a year to review existing documents, gather information, and plan a way forward.

**Collections Management Policy:**
The collections programs directs and implements the acquisitions and collections management of the Alaska State Museums. The collections staff is responsible for cataloging and inventorying objects and for maintaining preventive conservation measures for artifacts in storage. Prospective purchases and donations are researched for relevance to the Museums’ collection goals [and missions]. The Collections staff provides assistance in collections management to museums throughout Alaska. A loan program is also administered by the Collections program, serving public institutions in Alaska, other states, and abroad.

Alaska State Museum Collections Management Policy establishes policies and guidelines for the acquisition, care, loan, use, and deaccession of the collections of the Alaska State Museum. These policies shall not replace any state, federal, or international law, statute, or regulation under which the Museum is legally or ethically bound to operate.
Under the general direction of the Chief Curator, the Curators of Collections and Registrar oversee all collections management functions of the State Museum, including records management, incoming and outgoing loan programs, and fiscal planning and accountability for the Collections Program. Repair and restoration work is performed by the Conservation in consultation with the Curator of Collections. Preventive conservation is carried out under the direction of the Registrar with technical advice from the Conservation.

Alaska State Museum Collecting Plan:
This document summarizes the current state of the permanent collection of the Alaska State Museums. In addition to describing scopes and attributes of the existing collection, this plan provides suggestions to future development.

Sheldon Jackson Museum Collections Plan:
The Collections Plan is a guideline for thoughtful and systematic growth for the Sheldon Jackson Museum. It is based on an examination of current artifact holdings, existing gaps, identifies what objects are candidates for deaccessioning, articulates how objects should help the museum fulfill its mission and the community’s and visitor’s needs, and provides and intellectual framework and vision for future collection. The Collections Plan seeks to give a sense of where the Sheldon Jackson Museum currently is in terms of its holdings and to provide a framework for consideration when adding to the collection in the future. This document will guide the Curator of Collections, the Staff Acquisition Committee, the Museums’ Collection Advisory Committee, and Friends of the Sheldon Jackson Museum’s Board of Directors in making collection acquisition recommendations and decisions.

The first section of the Collections Plan outlines the history of the Sheldon Jackson Museum’s collecting practices and policies and what, as a result, the museum currently has in its permanent collection. What is currently housed in the permanent collection and current weaknesses and strengths is outlined in a broad and general way. This section is by no means intended to present an exhaustible listing of strengths and weaknesses as that is not possible to do within this document.

The second section of the Collections Plan outlines goalposts for priorities of collecting based on current holdings, state regulations, and curatorial goals. It includes a flow chart to assist in determining whether or not an artifact is admitted to the permanent collection, which is a decision ultimately made by the curator on a case by case basis in conjunction with staff, specifically the Staff Acquisition Committee. The chart can assist staff in thinking about whether or not to accept a donation or pursue an acquisition. There may be occasions when it will be insufficient to determine if something is added or retained. Those instances shall require flexibility on the part of the curator and staff.
4 AAC 58.120. Loans of objects in the collection (a) A nonprofit museum or cultural center may apply on a form prepared by the museum for a loan of an artifact from the Alaska State Museum collection for nonprofit educational use of the artifact. In determining whether to grant or deny the loan request, the chief curator shall consider the (1) standards for safety and security adopted and the implemented by the institution applying for the loan; (2) ability of the institution to care for the object, including whether the institution (A) will insure the object under an all-risk, wall-to-wall policy during the time of the loan; and (B) will provide special care if special care is required; (3) risk of damage or loss to the artifact from the requested use; (4) effect the loan will have on the Alaska State Museum’s programming; (5) term of the loan; a long-term or permanent loan may not be approved; and (6) public interest. (b) The museum will reserve the right to terminate a loan at the museum’s discretion. The chief curator shall determine in writing whether to approve a request for an extension of a loan. The chief curator may not approve a loan extension unless all conditions of the loan, including insurance, will be met for the term of the extension. (c) An educational institution in the state may apply on a form prepared by the museum for a loan of objects that have been placed by the museum in a hands-on educational collection. The chief curator may approve a loan request under this subsection if the request is consistent with the (1) education purpose for which the collection was designed; that purpose may, if appropriate, include uses that affect, modify, or destroy the object; and (2) public interest. (d) An Alaska Native clan or tribe may apply under 4 AAC 58.130 for a loan for cultural use of an Alaska Native artifact in the permanent collection of the museum.

4 AAC 58.130. Agreements regarding Alaska Native artifacts (a) The Alaska State Museum may enter into an agreement with an Alaska Native tribe or clan regarding an Alaska Native artifact that has a historical connection to the tribe or clan, if the museum finds that the agreement is (1) in the interest of the collection, (2) consistent with the mission of the museum. (b) An agreement under (a) of this section may be for the following purposes: (1) a loan of an artifact in the museum collection to a tribe or clan, including a standing agreement for a loan for cultural or educational use of the artifact; (2) acceptance of shared ownership between the tribe or clan and the museum of an artifact being donated by the tribe or clan; the agreement may provide for display of the artifact by the museum and cultural use of the artifact by the tribe or clan; (3) a loan of an artifact to the museum from a tribe or clan; the agreement may provide for display of the artifact by the museum and cultural use of the artifact by the tribe or clan; (4) other purposes that promote the mission of the museum. (c) An agreement under (a) of this section must include (1) requirements of care for objects in the museum collection that provide for protection of the artifact from damage or loss; (2) clear arrangements for the release and the return of the artifact; and (3) a dispute resolution process that is approved by the Department of Law.
Alaska State Museums

Code of Ethics

[2022 Recommended Revisions Copy]

Mission Statement

The Alaska State Museums (Alaska State Museum and Sheldon Jackson Museum) identify, collect, preserve, and exhibit Alaska’s material and natural history and provide public access to services and collections of the Museums. The Alaska State Museums interpret and disseminate knowledge of the history of the state, its people, and its resources, and support others in these efforts. The Museums also assist and advise in the growth, development, and excellence of other museums and cultural heritage organizations within Alaska.

Philosophy

A museum is a social institution created and supported by society to serve educational objectives. Museums, like schools and libraries, provide an opportunity to satisfy educational, artistic, scientific, spiritual, and recreational needs. Museums collect, preserve, research, interpret, and exhibit as educational goals.

The sustaining core of the Museums is the collection, to which the greatest portion of the Museum’s fiscal and human resources is devoted in its security, preservation, enhancement, research, interpretation, and public display. The Museums record the present, rather than simply preserve the past, so the collection process never ends. As the collection grows, so does the need for additional facilities in which to properly store and exhibit it. Without human and physical resources to preserve the collections, the citizens of the State of Alaska will lose significant portions of their material heritage.

The physical presence of a broadly based collection of materials does not in itself constitute a museum. While care and display of objects are an important component of a museum’s mission, no less critical is the influence a museum exerts on modern culture. Museums provide exposure to the diverse history and societies that shaped the present. A museum fails when it overlooks its responsibilities to the present and future. When the Museums perform their work well they encourage respect and appreciation of Alaska’s diverse human and natural history. The Museums increase self-awareness, pride of heritage, and provide a deeper understanding of the roots of the present and the range of human experience and achievement.
The work of the present becomes the heritage of the future. Along with other public, private, and tribal heritage and arts organizations, the Museums play a significant role in the continuation and development of traditional art forms through supporting new artists and programs that enhance cultures & communities of Alaska. In this manner the Museums create documented collections for the future.

**Code of Ethics**

The Museums are grounded in the tradition of public service. They are organized as public trusts, holding their collections and information as a benefit for those they were established to serve. Members of their governing authority, employees, and volunteers are committed to the interests of these beneficiaries. The law provides the basic framework for museum operations. As nonprofit institutions, the Museums comply with applicable local, state, and federal laws and international conventions, as well as with specific legal standards governing trust responsibilities. This Code of Ethics takes that compliance as given. But legal standards are a minimum. The Museums, and those responsible for them, must do more than avoid legal liability, they must take affirmative steps to maintain their integrity so as to warrant public confidence. They must act not only legally, but ethically. This Code of Ethics therefore, outlines ethical standards that frequently exceed legal minimums and is used to guide those who work for the Museums, or on its behalf, to address personal activities and conflict of interests. The Code of Ethics for the Museums are in compliance with AS39.52 (the Alaska Executive Branch Ethics Act).

Loyalty to the mission of the Museums and to the public it serves is the essence of museum work, by all museum staff, volunteers and collaborators. Where conflicts of interest arise - actual, potential, or perceived - the duty of loyalty must never be compromised. No individual may use his or her position for personal gain or to benefit another at the expense of the Museums, its mission, its reputation, and the society it serves. In subscribing to this code, the Museums assume responsibility for the actions of members of their governing authority, employees, and volunteers in the performance of museum-related duties.

**Museum Governance**

Museum governance is a public trust responsible for the institution’s service to society. The governing authority protects and enhances the Museums’ collections and programs and its physical, human and financial resources. It ensures that all these resources support the Museums’ mission, respond to the pluralism of society, and respect the diversity of the natural and cultural commonwealth.
The Department of Education (DOE) shall manage and have complete charge of all of the property contained in the Museums. The Alaska State Museum shall be maintained in the state capital. Branch museums (such as the Sheldon Jackson Museum in Sitka) may be established and maintained in other localities in the state. The DOE shall acquire artifacts, natural history specimens, art objects, etc., that pertain to the human and natural history of Alaska by purchase and by gift; identify, catalog, preserve and display these acquisitions; acquire and catalog Alaskan photographs and maintain a card catalog of this collection; accept endowments, grants, and gifts in accordance with the Executive Budget Act; collect and maintain books, periodicals, pamphlets, and other materials pertinent to museum administration, techniques, and collections; assist and advise in the development of local museums; collect and keep current information concerning museum activities throughout the state; coordinate the museum activities of the state with those of other agencies; keep the Museums open at reasonable hours for the convenience of visitors; and provide museum services and administer state and other grants-in-aid to museums in the state to supplement and improve their services, the grants to be paid from money appropriated for that purpose, or from money available for that purpose. The DOE may establish by regulation, and collect, reasonable user fees and other fees for services provided by the DOE, per AS 14.57 (the State Museum).

Museum Collections Advisory Committee

The appointees shall be broadly representative of the public’s interest in the preservation of the human, cultural, natural, archeological and anthropological history of Alaska. When possible, some of the Museum Collections Advisory Committee (MCAC) members shall be known for, or possess, special expertise or a culturally relevant background in these aspects of the art and history of the state.

A member of the MCAC may not act on a matter relating to the Museums in which the member’s relationship with another person, or with respect to the acquisition or disposition of an item owned by, in custody of, or proposed to be acquired by or for the Museums, creates a conflict of interest. A MCAC member may not have a pecuniary or property interest in an item that is proposed to be acquired or disposed of by, or for the Museums. Notwithstanding this, a MCAC member may bequeath or donate an item to the Museums.

A MCAC member may not have pecuniary or property interest, directly or indirectly, in a contract to which the Museums, or the state on behalf of the Museums, is a party. A MCAC member may not receive compensation for services rendered to the Museums as a consultant, expert, appraiser, or otherwise, except as provided in AS 14.57.040 (Museum Collections Advisory Committee).
Museum Management

Professionalism

Members of the Museums’ administration and governing entities must respect the knowledge and expertise of staff, and all collaborative partners and communities, each having been engaged because of their special knowledge, insight or ability in some aspect of museum activity. The Museums’ governance must be structured so that the resolution of issues involving professional matters incorporates opinions and professional judgments of relevant members of the Museums’ staff. Responsibility for the final decisions will normally rest with the Museums’ administration and all employees are expected to support these decisions; but no staff member can be required to reverse, alter or suppress his or her professional judgment in order to conform to management decision.

Personnel Practices and Equal Opportunity

In all matters related to staffing practices, the standard should be ability in the relevant discipline. In these matters, as well as with MCAC selection, management practices, volunteer opportunity, collection usage and relationship with the public at large, decisions cannot be made on the basis of discriminatory factors such as race, color, creed, sex, personal orientation, age or disability.

It must be remembered that the components of contemporary culture vary by reason of ancestry, experience, education and ability in the extent to which they can share in the museum experience, either as visitors or as paid or volunteer participant. The Museums must recognize that it is a significant force within its own social fabric and that these differences do exist. It should seize and indeed create opportunities whenever possible to encourage employment opportunities and the accessibility of the institution as a resource to all people.

Volunteers

Volunteer participation is a strong tradition of the Museums, and they could not exist without the contributions of devoted volunteers. Paid staff should be supportive of volunteers, receive them as fellow workers, and willingly provide appropriate training and opportunity for their intellectual enrichment. While volunteers participate in most Museums’ activities, those with access to the Museums’ collections, programs and associated privileged information work in areas that are particularly sensitive. Access to the Museums’ inner activities is a privilege, and the lack of material compensation for effort expended in behalf of the Museums in no way frees the volunteer from adherence to the standards that apply to paid staff.
The volunteer must work toward the betterment of the institution and not for personal gain other than the natural gratification and enrichment inherent in museum participation. Although the Museums may accord special privileges, volunteers should not accept gifts, favors, discounts, loans, other dispensations or things of value that accrue to them from other parties in connection with carrying out duties for the institution. Conflict of interest restrictions placed upon the staff must be explained to volunteers and, where relevant, observed by them. Volunteers must hold confidential matters of program function and administration.

**Interpersonal Relationships**

The professional museum worker always must be dedicated to the high standards and discipline of his/her profession, but they must remain mindful that s/he is an employee as well as an independent expert. While they must strive for professional excellence in his/her own specialty, they must simultaneously relate productively to their colleagues, associates and fellow employees. The wisdom and experience of a professional can be lost to the institution if they are not made to act constructively within the total context of the institution.

Members of the museum profession have an obligation, subject to due acknowledgment, to share their knowledge and experience with their colleagues and with scholars and students in relevant fields. They should show their appreciation and respect to those from whom they have learned and should present without thought of personal gain such advancements in techniques and experience which may be of benefit to others. The training of personnel in the specialized activities involved in museum work is of great importance in the development of the profession and all should accept responsibility, where appropriate, in the training of colleagues. Members of the profession who in their official appointment have under their direction trainees, students and assistants undertaking formal or informal professional training, should give these the benefit of their experience and knowledge, and should also treat them with the consideration and respect customary among members of the profession.

**Inter-Institutional Cooperation**

If museums intend to contribute to the preservation of Alaska’s cultural and environmental heritage, and the continual dedication to knowledge production, they should seek and respond to opportunities for collaboration with a diverse range of organizations, communities, and individual artists and experts that help further these goals. A museum should both welcome and facilitate such collaborative action, understanding the value and ethical importance of engaging with Native and non-Native Alaskan publics.
Of particular concern are collaborations with Alaska Native entities. The Alaska State Museums’ histories are inherently linked to colonial worldviews, practices and the misrepresentation of Indigenous peoples of Alaska. The State Museum in Juneau is located on and occupies traditional Auk Kwan territory, and the Sheldon Jackson Museum carries legacies of its namesake and institutional establishment that represent harmful actions against Alaska Native peoples and their cultures. Thus, the Museums are obligated and entrusted by the State of Alaska to acknowledge, reconcile and decolonize its institution.

There is a potential for competition or duplication of effort between the Alaska State Museum and the Sheldon Jackson Museum due to overlapping scopes of collections in the area of Alaska Native material culture. When an object becomes available that could be placed in either collection, cooperation is necessary to insure that a rational decision is made regarding which institution makes the purchase.

Ownership of Scholarship Material

The object, its documentation and all additional documentation accrued or developed subsequent to its acquisition are the property of the institution. The analysis of an object for scholarly purposes usually includes the production of interpretive notes, outlines and illustrative material. It can be held that such material is essentially an extension of the intellect and the memory of the scholar, and that as such it is the property of the individual. An equally persuasive case can be made for institutional ownership of all such interpretive material, especially if a staff member was paid to render scholarly analysis. Either is ethically acceptable if the institutional policy is made known beforehand to the staff member, and if the administrative determination of ownership and access is not the result of vindictive or punitive motivation. The guiding ethical principle must be the most effective and timely dissemination of analytical information derived from the collection.

Programs

The Museums have the responsibility to serve all of Alaska by advancing an understanding and appreciation of Alaska’s rich tangible and intangible heritage through exhibitions, research, scholarship, publications, and educational activities. The Museums’ programs aim for the highest ethical standards, and museum staff will to the best of their abilities avoid all bias or stereotype portrayals in museum operations, programming or exhibitions. The Museums will also avoid institutional expressions or opinions of partisan political, economic, and religious ideologies. The Museums will not accept financial or other support, assistance or contributions which compromise intellectual freedom, honest scholarship and full integrity of current best practices in research and presentation.

Truth in Presentation
Within the Museums’ primary charge is the responsibility to use material culture and multimedia heritage for the creation and dissemination of knowledge. Intellectual honesty and integrity in the presentation in museum publications & exhibitions, and the cultures & communities they represent is the goal of every museum employee, volunteer, and collaborator. The stated origin of the object or attribution of work must reflect the thorough and honest investigation by the Museums and must yield promptly to change with the advent of new fact or analyses. The Museums must use their best effort to ensure that exhibits are honest, and expressive of Alaska-related content without perpetuating myths or stereotypes. Exhibits must provide with candor and tact an honest and meaningful view of the stories they tell.

In the display and exhibition of Alaska Native peoples and their cultural patrimony, the Museums recognize that the most honest and accurate representations of these cultures and knowledge systems come from Alaska Native peoples themselves.

Friends of the Museum

Relationship between Museum and Friends

Friends’ Board members must endeavor to conduct all of their activities, including those relating to persons, businesses, and organizations closely associated with them, in such a way that no conflict will arise between the other interests, policies, or operations of the Museums. The appearance of such conflicts should be avoided. The reputation of the Friends’ organization, Store, and Museums could be damaged should a Board member continue an inappropriate activity concurrent with his/her service with the organization.

Whenever a matter arises for action by the Board, or the Museums engage in an activity where there is a possible conflict, or the appearance of conflict between the interests of the Museums and an outside or personal interest of a Friends’ Board member, or that of a person close to him/her, the outside interest of the member should be made a matter of record.

Board members serve in support of the Museums. They should not attempt to derive any personal material advantages from their connection with the institution. They should use the Museums’ property only for official purposes, and make no personal use of the Museums’ collection, property or services in a manner not available to the general public.

Museum Store

Since public perception of the Museums’ Stores are closely tied to the image of the Museums, it is the responsibility of personnel to be fully aware of the source, quality, authenticity and
educational value of merchandise offered for sale. Misrepresentations, intentional or not, reflect upon the reputation of the Store and Friends’ organization, and upon the Museums as well. It is unethical for Store personnel to engage in any activity which may compromise the integrity of the institution or undermine the public confidence.

All purchases and developed products will comply with state, federal and international laws and treaties that deal with antiquities and wildlife protection. The Friends acknowledge the Museum Store Association Code of Ethics (1981) and Ethics Policies for Archaeological and Ethnological Resources (1984) and the Store Management will utilize the guidelines contained therein as deemed appropriate. In arranging for the manufacture and sale of replicas, reproductions or other commercial items adapted from an object in a museum’s collection, all aspects of the commercial venture must be carried out in a manner that will not discredit either the integrity of the museum or the intrinsic value of the original object. Great care must be taken to identify permanently such objects for what they are, and to ensure the accuracy and high quality of their manufacture.

Museum Staff

Employment by the Museums is a public trust involving great responsibility. In all activities, Museums’ employees must act with integrity and, beyond adherence to laws, in accordance with current ethical principles and highest standards of museum practice, recognizing the continually changing practices within the field. Every Museums’ employee is entitled to a measure of personal independence equal to that granted comparable professionals in other disciplines, consistent with his/her professional and staff responsibilities. While loyalty to the Museums is paramount, the employee also has a right to a private life independent of the institution. But museums enjoy high public visibility and their employees a generous measure of public esteem. To the public, the Museums’ employees are never wholly separable from their institution. They can never consider themselves or their activities totally independent of their museum. Any museum-related action by an individual may reflect on the Museums or be attributed to it. Museum employees must be concerned not only with the true personal motivations as they perceive, but also the various ways in which such actions are perceived by diverse audiences and publics.

Conflicts of Interest

Museums’ staff should never abuse their official positions or their contacts within the museum community, impair in any way the performance of their official duties, compete with the Museums, or bring discredit or embarrassment to the Museums or to the profession in any activity, museum related or not. They should be prepared to accept as conditions of employment the restrictions that are necessary to maintain public confidence in museums and in the museum profession.
**Misuse of Official Position**

Public employees may not use their positions for personal gain or to give unwarranted benefit or treatment to any person. Specifically, Museums’ employees may not use their official positions to secure employment or contracts, accept pay from anyone other than the State for performance of official duties, or take or withhold official action on a matter in which they have a personal or financial interest. Employees are also prohibited from using State time, equipment, collections, property or facilities for their own personal or financial benefit. A supervisor may not coerce subordinates for his/her personal or financial benefit. Museums’ employees that are also artists are prohibited from selling their work to the Museums and selling items in the Museums’ Stores. Employees are also prohibited from storing personal collections on Museums’ property.

**Gifts**

Museums’ employees may not solicit or accept gifts which benefit the employee’s personal or financial interest if it can be reasonably inferred that the gift is intended to influence the employee’s action or judgment. Gifts include money, items of value, services, loans, travel, entertainment, hospitality, and employment. Even if a gift is acceptable, it may have to be reported. When any gift with a value in excess of $50 is received by an employee whose action can affect the giver, the employee must report the gift to his/her designated supervisor within 30 days of receipt. Forms are available from the designated supervisor for this purpose.

Unless rebutted by other evidence, an occasional gift worth $50 or less is presumed not to be given under circumstances in which it could be reasonably inferred that the gift is intended to influence an officer’s performance of official duties, actions, or judgment. Travel and lodging of any value received by a public officer in connection with a trip that the public officer takes as part of the officer’s official duties is not an improper gift if the monetary value of the travel or lodging is comparable to the cost that the State would have had to pay for the travel or lodging and 1) the head of the officer’s agency determines that the gift is to the State, not to the officer; or 2) the travel or lodging is incidental transportation by or hospitality at the residence of an individual, [AAC Chapter 57]. All Museums’ employees must be in compliance not only with AS 39.52 (the Alaska Executive Branch Ethics Act), but also with AS 11.56.110 and AS 11.56.120 (addressing the taking of bribes and unlawful gratuities by a “public servant”).

**Improper Use or Disclosure of Information**

No former or current Museums’ employee may use or disclose any information gained from State employment when that use or disclosure could result in a financial or personal benefit to the employee (or to a family or household member), unless that information has already been
disseminated to the public. No former or current employee may use or disclose confidential information acquired during employment.

**Improper Influence in State Grants, Contracts, Leases or Loans**

No Museums’ employee whose action or inaction can affect the award or administration of a State grant, contract, lease or loan may apply for, be a party to, receive, or have an interest in that State grant, contract, lease or loan. The prohibition also applies to the employee’s family or household members. However, employees (or family or household members) may apply for or be a party to a competitively solicited State grant, contract or lease, so long as they do not work for the administrative unit awarding or administering the grant, contract, or lease and so long as they do not take official action with respect to the award or administration of the grant, contract, or lease, (State of Alaska Handbook for Public Employees 1986).

**Improper Representation**

A Museums’ employee may not represent, advise, or assist a person or business in any matter being handled by the employee’s administrative unit if that representation, advice or assistance is for pay or if it benefits a personal or financial interest of the employee, (State of Alaska Handbook for Public Employees 1986).

**Outside Employment**

No Museums’ employee may work for (paid or unpaid) a person or organization other than the employee’s own department, if that work is incompatible or in conflict with the proper discharge of official duties. An employee must report outside employment or service to the designated supervisor. Changes in outside employment should be reported as they occur. A form is available from the designated supervisor for this purpose. Each individual involved in personal activities related to his/her Museums’ employment must complete a disclosure form outlining the details of the activity annually on July 1.

Certain types of outside employment, including self-employment and paid consulting activities, can be of benefit to both the institution and the employee by stimulating personal professional development. Remuneration may be monetary or nonmonetary, direct or indirect. The name of and the employee’s connection with the Museums should be sparingly and respectfully used in connection with outside activities. Museums’ professionals should conduct themselves so that their activities on behalf of community or public service organizations do not reflect adversely on the reputation or integrity of their museum.
Staff members are encouraged to participate in voluntary outside activities with community groups.

**Teaching, Lecturing, Writing and Other Creative Activities**

Museums’ staff personnel should be encouraged to teach, lecture and write, as desirable activities that aid professional development. Museums should facilitate such activities so long as there is not interference with performance of regular duties, and employees do not take advantage of their museum positions for personal monetary gain or appear to compromise the integrity of their institution.

The proprietary interest of both Museums and employees in copyrights, royalties and similar properties should be stated through a mutual agreement, to conform to the needs of the specific project. Although the Museums are dedicated to providing the environment of free and honest inquiry essential to its functioning, the objects in the Museums’ collections, their documentation and all additional documentation developed subsequent to their acquisition are property of the State of Alaska. The Museums prioritize dedication to the care and integrity of collections or objects on loan under care of the Museums’ and State of Alaska. However, in accordance with the institution’s outward-focused service to Alaskans and broader publics, the Museums’ aim to provide an open and inclusive environment and aspire to respect honest inquiry essential to its mission and purpose.

Museums’ employees who are creative artists, or pursue similar outside interests, must perform these activities in such a way that their status with the institution is not compromised and the institution not embarrassed. It must be recognized that the exhibition of objects in a museum can enhance their value, and the Museums should display materials created by staff members only under circumstances in which objectivity in their selection can be clearly demonstrated.

**Political Activities and Public Expression of Personal Opinions**

The Code of Ethics recognizes that employees have the same personal interests in the decisions and policies of government as do other citizens and that employees retain these rights as individuals to interests of a personal, political or economic nature. However, employees must keep any such activities separate from work and kept on a strictly individual basis. A public employee must report any political service to the designated supervisor. A form is available from the designated supervisor for this purpose. Employees are further restricted from the use of pins, clothing or other means of solicitation while in the work place. Employees are encouraged to talk with their supervisors about any activities which may be in question.
Employees may, at times, feel inclined to express opinions to people outside the institution about proposals, legislation or other issues. Occasionally these opinions may be expressed on behalf of other organizations to which the employee belongs. It should be clearly expressed that the opinions stated are independent, or personal in nature, and do not necessarily represent the position or policy of the Museums. If the opinions are in writing, they must not be on Museums’ letterhead. Preparation of the statements must be on the employees own time, equipment and materials. The operations of the Museums should not be negatively affected. Discretion and the utmost attention to professional ethics should govern these activities.

**Restriction of Employment After Leaving State Service**

For two years after leaving State service, a former public employee may not work on any matter in which the former employee had personally or substantially participated while employed by the former administrative unit. With the approval of the Attorney General, a Commissioner may waive this prohibition if a determination is made that the public interest is not jeopardized. Former State employees may be paid by a State agency to work on any matter.

**Personal Collecting**

A conflict of interest may arise when any employee of the Museums personally collects items which are the same or similar to the objects collected by the institution in which they are employed. It must be understood that the employee has a right to a personal life outside the Museums which may include avocational interests and research. While such activities are potentially in conflict with the institution, such activities can also be a benefit to the institution, due to the knowledge and experience gained by the employee while engaging in personal collecting. All Museums’ employees are to be treated equally when matters of personal collecting are decided, regardless of the employee’s job title. In matters concerning personal collections, it is important that Museums’ staff avoid not only “actual” conflict of interest, but the “appearance” of conflict of interest. The guiding principle is that in acquisitions, no board member, employee, or volunteer may compete with the Museums and must never purchase, even at public auction, any object deaccessioned from the Museums.

It is the responsibility of the employee to report any instances of possible conflict to the Chief Curator and the Staff Acquisitions Committee immediately. If an object purchased by an employee falls within the scope of collections of that employee’s institution, the Museums will have the right of first refusal option of purchasing it for the permanent collection. If a Museums’ employee lends objects for an exhibition in the Museums, they should lend them anonymously.

**Dealing**
No employee may engage in any dealing in objects similar or related to the objects collected by the Museums. In this context, “dealing” means buying and selling for profit as distinguished from occasional purchase, sale, or exchange from a personal collection.

**Appraisals**

Donations are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law; however, the Museums’ staff cannot appraise items for a private owner. Donors, therefore, are expected to obtain independent appraisals for the objects they are donating. The Museums shall maintain a list of appraisers but shall not provide an endorsement. Exceptions to this are appraisals for internal use, such as for insurance evaluations for loans. Any such appraisal must represent an objective judgment and must indicate how the evaluation was reached.

**Disclosure Procedures**

When a Museums’ employee is involved in a situation which may be in violation of the Code of Ethics, the employee must not take official action related to that situation and must immediately disclose the matter in writing to the designated supervisor. The designated supervisor has forms for this disclosure. The designated supervisor will provide a written determination of whether a violation exists or will exist, and the supervisor may reassign duties to avoid the violation, direct the removal by the employee of the conflicting personal or financial interest, or find another solution.

In making determinations regarding the Code of Ethics, designated supervisors may request a written advisory opinion from the Attorney General. These opinions are confidential. Versions without identifying information are available to the public. Former public employees may request a written opinion directly from the Attorney General on the applicability of the Code of Ethics.

A third party may report a suspected violation of the Code of Ethics by a public officer in writing and under oath to the public officer’s designated supervisor. The supervisor will give a copy to the employee and review the report to determine whether a violation may or does exist. If the supervisor determines a violation exists, the employee’s duties may be reassigned, the employee may be directed to remove the conflicting personal or financial interest, or another solution may be found.

**Internet Resources and Electronic Mail**
It is the policy of the Museum to maintain access for staff to local, national and international sources of information and to provide an atmosphere that encourages access to and sharing of information. Network resources are to be used in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner. All messages are considered to be state records and will be treated like paper files, with the expectation that anything in them is available for review or disclosure. Electronic mail is not private communication and under no circumstance is it appropriate to use state resources to send messages that lobby, at either federal, state, or local levels.

**Museum Collections**

The distinctive character of museum ethics derives from balance between care and use of collections, and the natural & human stories told through physical exhibitions within the museum. This stewardship of collections entails the highest public trust and carries with it the presumption of rightful ownership, permanence, care and documentation, accessibility, and responsible disposal. The Museums ensure that collections housed in their facilities and under their care support the Museums’ mission and public trust responsibilities. It is the policy of the Museums to permit public access to Museums’ collections and records. The Museums, in consultation with collaborative parties and entities, will evaluate and develop best practices and procedures for the environmental and ethical conditions requisite for collections visits. Actions regarding documentation and any policy or restriction concerns will be deliberated prior to meeting.

**Acquisitions**

Whether acquired by gift, exchange, purchase or field collecting, objects and specimens in the collection must relate to Alaska historically, culturally, artistically or scientifically. Generally, this would mean that objects or specimens originated in Alaska. Objects that originated outside the present boundaries of Alaska could be included, provided their connection to Indigenous cultures and tribes whose ancestral territories extend across present-day boundary designations between the State of Alaska, Canada and Russia. In addition, the scope of collections may, as in the case of the Sheldon Jackson Museum, be limited to a particular time span.

All acquisitions and donations to the permanent collection must comply with State, Federal and International laws and treaties that deal with antiquities and wildlife protection. Examples include the U.S. Antiquities Act of 1906 (and amendments), the Alaska Historic Preservation Act of 1971, the UNESCO Convention, the American Religious Freedom Act, and the Marine Mammal Protection Act. In the case of Alaska Native material, applicable terms of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 will also be observed.

**Treatment and Care**

The Museums are dedicated to enduring to the best of their ability that Alaska Native exhibits and objects are treated and cared for within their own cultural contexts.

Archaeological Material

It is the policy of the Museums to discourage the unscientific or illegal recovery and sale of archaeological materials, whether from public or private lands. Therefore, the Museums will not purchase archaeological materials of any kind unless proof is given that they were excavated scientifically and legally, and have accompanying documentation. The Museums can consider donations of archaeological materials on a case-by-case basis.

Human Remains

The Museums will not collect human remains in their unmodified form. Human remains, usually in the form of hair, are often used in modified form as an integral part of many Alaska Native Artifacts. Treatment by the Museums of these artifact will be based on their contexts within cultural heritage and ties to current tribes. Each object will be considered a unified whole.

Human remains which have been collected by the Museums in the past, in the form of skeletal and other preserved remains, that are unworked into ethnographic artifacts, will be treated in the same manner as outlined in the general deaccession policy, except for the manner of disposal. The Museums ensure that the unique and special nature of human remains and funerary and sacred objects is recognized as the basis of all considerations concerning such collections. Disposal of Native American human remains is regulated by the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990. Human remains are to be treated with respect and dignity, and degrading treatment in the course of research, collection or exhibition is prohibited. The Museums should to the best of their ability, be prepared to facilitate dialogues for the return of cultural property to a tribe (or their representative entity) of origin.

Field Study and Collecting

Field exploration, collecting and excavating by museum workers present ethical problems that are both complex and critical. Such efforts, especially in other countries, present situations that can result in difficult interpersonal and international problems. Any action must be guided by good judgment, tasteful deportment and current knowledge, and in consideration of possible exploitation and extractive practices of Indigenous cultural patrimony and heritage.

Any field program must be executed in such a way that all participants act legally and responsibly in acquiring specimens and data; that they discourage by all practical means
unethical, illegal, culturally inappropriate, and destructive practices associated with acquiring, transporting and importing objects; and that they avoid, insofar as possible, even the appearance of engaging in clandestine activity, be it museum-related or not. Normally no material should be acquired that cannot be properly cared for or used.

**Deaccession**

The Museums will routinely analyze their collections, and will dispose of items from the collections. Clear and complete records must be maintained on all deaccessioned objects. This will include photographs, date of removal, catalogue number, reason for removal, method of disposal and price if sold. The disposal of some objects may result in the generation of moneys. Review will be made on a cases by case basis, as to method and acceptance of any financial remuneration gained in the transaction. Any financial remuneration gained in the transaction disposing of the piece will be returned to the museum for future acquisitions only, consistent with state policy regarding disposal of state property.

**Staff Acquisitions Committee**

Each member of the Staff Acquisitions Committee (SAC) is obligated to adhere to the more stringent rules related to the functions of the SAC. If a SAC member is aware of the potential for actual or perceived conflict of interest involving any individual SAC agenda item, they are obligated to remove themselves from any SAC discussion, vote or action.