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ORIGINAL PAPER

Toward slow archives

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Abstract
This article examines the structures, practices, and processes of collection, cataloging, and curation to expose where current cultural authority is placed, valued, and organized within archival workflows. The long arc of collecting is not just rooted in colonial paradigms; it relies on and continually remakes those structures of injustice through the seemingly benign practices and processes of the profession. Our emphasis is on one mode of decolonizing processes that insist on a different temporal framework: the slow archives. Slowing down creates a necessary space for emphasizing how knowledge is produced, circulated, and exchanged through a series of relationships. Slowing down is about focusing differently, listening carefully, and acting ethically. It opens the possibility of seeing the intricate web of relationships formed and forged through attention to collaborative curation processes that do not default to normative structures of attribution, access, or scale.

Keywords Ethical curation · Indigenous collaborations · Access · Technology

Pushing forward: intro

On September 13, 2016, we were part of a panel at the American Folklife Center (AFC) symposium "Collections, Collaborations and Connections," at the Library of Congress. It was an especially significant panel for us because of our ongoing collaboration with our co-panelists: Donald Soctomah, Tribal Historian of Passamaquoddy Tribe, and James Francis Sr., Tribal Historian and Director of the Department of Cultural and Historic Preservation for the Penobscot Nation. The four of us had been working in various ways together for over a decade and this was the first time we had a chance to speak publicly together about our

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work related to the digital repatriation and intellectual property needs of Passamaquoddy and Penobscot collections. The intersections of our work were most outwardly visible within the specific instances of the Mukurtu CMS platform and the Traditional Knowledge (TK) Labels each tribe created. Where they met and merged these platforms aided the Passamaquoddy and Penobscot creation of their own digital archives—as mediated expressions of relationships to ancestors, territories, and kin. During the symposium, we set out to frame these tools and their potential for archival engagements and collaborations.

While the symposium focused on AFC collections, Soctomah and Francis turned our attention to tribal temporalities, landedness, and presence as a way of framing their engagements, collaborations and wider sets and senses of connection, responsibility, and obligation. Donald began by reframing the 2016 digital repatriation from the AFC of a set of wax cylinders from 1890 in a tribal context that moved between time and space:

> A hundred years ago, not only our language was declining, but our ways had to go underground. I was interviewing this elder one time and she told me, she said when the lights went out at the convent, they'd go to the tribal hall and start to play the drum, and [they] would sing the old songs. And then, they'd do that about once a week. It was safety for them to do that. And it just showed me how strong our culture is and how, you know, *we have to keep pushing forward* to save the culture. Because they had to do it because they'd be punished. They'd be punished for singing the old songs. They'd be punished by not getting food or being looked down upon. As I was growing up in the 1960s, there were still traditional families in our community that practiced their own way. And people from the church would call them witches. So, it was a way of looking down upon those people. *But they continued to push forward and here we are, you know, those people are leaders in our culture, because they kept that cultural way* (Collections, Collaborations and Connections 2016).

Soctomah's discussion moves between the violent and oppressive recent past of colonial technologies of control that sought to eradicate Native languages and cultural practices, and Passamaquoddy resistance to, and manipulation of, those techniques through deliberate movement: *pushing forward*. Finding safe places to speak, sing, and share allowed some cultural practices, traditional knowledge, and language to be maintained. Some, of course, was not maintained in the same form, but it was also not lost in the totalizing sense often ascribed to these encounters. In a January 2019 interview, Donald Soctomah describes this in the following way: "I believe this work [on the 1890 Passamaquoddy wax cylinders] is a collaboration with our ancestors. They're bringing back to us something that was lost, but it has always been there. We knew there were more songs in our traditions and in all the activities because every time there was an activity taking place there was always a song or a dance that came along with it" (Thorpe 2019).

Similarly, James Francis addressed Penobscot understandings of stories and becoming in relation to tribal histories and identities:

> So just a little bit about our community and how we lived. It will give some context about why we moved forward the way we do. We were a very mobile society, moving seasonally across the landscape in very sophisticated migratory patterns. And when fall would come, and into the winter months, we would gather in kinship groups. So, you were with your family, matrilineal […] And it was during those winter moons when stories and oral histories were passed down. And so, what happens, and when you start looking at the history of our community from our community, they come down through familial lines….and this digital platform, Mukurtu, allows us to share, safely, a story that is very intimate to your family, and to only share it with your family or with the broader Penobscot community. And so, what happens over time is these stories start to snowball and we start to have our history unfolding before us. And so, it's a real exciting time for us because we're starting to hear these stories that haven't been told for a long time. You know, often time we got criticized by ethnographers that there's three different versions of that same store. Which one's right? Well there's three different versions because they probably came through three different families. And none of them are wrong, they're all correct. They all hold that core belief system. The beautiful thing about an oral history is that it's told by an elder to a younger. And then that younger holds that story for his whole life before he retells that. But when he does retell that, that story has his life experience woven into it. He uses examples that are relevant to his contemporaries, he uses language that is relevant to his contemporaries. *So as oral histories are passed down through time, they evolve and change with the people.* That core belief is always there. (Collections, Collaborations and Connections 2016)

Here Francis locates the significance of using Mukurtu CMS—as a tool for community access to collections—through and within networks of kin and the flows and cycles of shared stories and their multiplicity. Both Francis and Soctomah point to tribal temporalities and ways of becoming through kin, through stories, through multiplicities, and through shared experiences that are not limited to non-Native notions of time, relations, and events. This is a form of what Mark Rifkin calls *temporal sovereignty* that recognizes the "importance of attending to Native conceptualizations, articulations and impressions of time" that cannot be reduced to or contained within settler norms and structures (Rifkin 2017, p. 4).

Emphasizing temporal sovereignty demands that we jettison notions of a "shared modernity or presentness of Natives and non-Natives" because it "implicitly casts Indigenous peoples as inhabiting the current moment and moving toward the future in ways that treat dominant non-Native geographies, intellectual and political categories, periodizations, and conceptions of causality as given—*as the background against which to register and assess Native being-in-time*" (Rifkin 2017, p. viii, emphasis added). The emphasis on shared temporality facilitates a politics of recognition that disregards the "ongoing assault on Indigenous sovereignties" (Ibid, p. 8), because as Mohawk scholar Audra Simpson shows, "[s]ettler memory is this faulty, but upending force" (2016, p. 442) that provides a foundation for current denials of Indigenous territoriality, governance, and sovereignty. Placing the past

and present within a shared frame of modernity privileges non-Native sensibilities and protects the power structures that maintain settler colonial logics and violence. Temporal sovereignty is expressed and lived through varied place- and kin-based experiences including—but not determined by—coloniality. Coloniality is not just colonialism. While colonialism is typically considered to be a political arrangement that has existed since time immemorial, coloniality refers to the *logic*, *culture*, and *structure* of the modern world system (Mignolo 2000). In their recent work connecting sovereignty, connections to land, and settler relations, Kanaka Maoli scholars Noelani Goodyear-Ka'ōpua and Bryan Kamaoli Kuwada show how Kanaka Maoli "future-making" disrupts the "linearity of Western liberal-democratic understandings of temporality" by "foreground[ing] Kananka Maoli enactments of relationalities of times and places that transcend settler temporalities and mappings" (2018, p. 50). It is, then, critical that we engage with and center Indigenous temporalities, relationships, and geographies as we seek to decolonize archives.

How can we begin to position this embodied, intimate, kin-based, land-based affective practice of hearing, listening, sensing, remembering, making, and remaking at the center of archival practices? It is from these lived, embodied, and dynamic practices that both digital and analog archives come into being and are continually in process. How do we recognize and rebuild archival practices, structures, procedures, and workflows that allow for *relational*, *reciprocal*, *respectful*, *and restorative* connections to knowledge, kin, and community within their frame? This article examines the structures, practices, and processes of collection, cataloging, and curation from multiple vantage points including colonial, community-based archives, and institutional archives to expose where current cultural authority is placed, valued, and organized within archival workflows. The long arc of collecting is not just rooted in colonial paradigms; it relies on and continually remakes those structures of injustice not only through the seemingly benign practices and processes of the profession, but also through how terms like access and circulation are understood and expressed.

Our emphasis is on one mode of decolonizing processes that insist on a different temporal framework: *the slow archives*. Slowing down creates a necessary space for emphasizing how knowledge is produced, circulated, contextualized, and exchanged through a series of relationships. Slowing down is about focusing differently, listening carefully, and acting ethically. It opens the possibility of seeing the intricate web of relationships formed and forged through attention to collaborative curation processes that do not default to normative structures of attribution, access, or scale. Focusing on the temporality of slow archives is not meant to pose a binary between fast and slow. Rather, slowness is imagined and enacted in terms of relationality, positionality, and a framework that privileges restorative and reparative work that is decolonial in its logic and practice. Slow archives do not presume one course of action; in fact, they allow for changing course, for shifts, and for unexpected endings. The slow archives pivots around the register of decolonization as a processual move in centering Indigenous temporalities, territorialities, and relationalities on their own as well as in conversation with settler colonial logics and practices.

Slow archives are embodied and enacted. They are produced, created, and curated through a commitment to and ethics of mutuality that recognizes,

respects, and prioritizes Indigenous communities' values, goals, relationships, needs, and protocols. Recent moves in archival studies and practice have emphasized post-custodial (Sangwand 2014; Kelleher 2017) participatory (Gilliland and McKemmish 2014) and community archives (Bastian and Alexander 2009; Hennessy et al. 2013; Caswell 2014; Thorpe 2017; Cifor et al. 2018) as modalities for upending and redirecting archives' power and structures of dominance, erasure, and authorial control. As archivists Caswell, Migoni, Geraci, and Marika note "Archival communities and community archives have formed around ethnic, racial or religious identity, gender and sexual identity, economic class, and geographic location" (2017a, p. 7). And these formations have occurred within social, political, and historic framings that are lodged within the nation-state. Indigenous archives, while sharing some common ground in relation to state power, control, and surveillance, are also distinct in that they are set both outside and in relation to settler states through their position as sovereign nations—whether recognized as such or not by settler governments and governance.

Sovereignty, self-determination, and autonomous governing frameworks existed prior to settler state assertions of power, genocidal practices, and political violence. These settler ambitions, practices, and assertions are all reproduced in varied ways within archival processes writ large and within the structure of state and national archives in particular (Russell 2006; McKemmish et al. 2010; Roy et al. 2011; O'Neal 2014, 2015). We suggest *one mode* of decolonizing archives is to implement a *slow archives* methodology and modality whereby Indigenous temporal and spatial frameworks and relations are foregrounded and figure as the driving force for archival practices, process, and systems. Thus, the decolonial movement is one toward building new logics, structures, pathways, and frameworks that prioritize and position Indigenous knowledge systems as the starting point—as they engage, refuse, and move toward archival actions that are both affective and embodied.

We begin by foregrounding the history of collecting as an integral aspect of the history of colonialism in order to highlight the linkages and fractures that connect practices of collecting to archives and to open up the space for Indigenous practices as both part of and integral to a different understanding of collecting. This section examines the omissions and instantiation of systems of erasure in colonial records, as well as in the practices, policies, and projects that produced the records. We begin with the *record* as a foundational aspect of archives (Iacovino 2010; McKemmish et al. 2011; Caswell 2016) in order to reorient both the notion of records within archives and to reframe records within a framework that privileges multiplicity, plurality, orality, relationality, and territoriality (Faulkhead 2009). As Evans et al. (2017) suggest, "A record is figured and constantly re-figured, never wholly present at any given moment in time, in stark contrast with an artefactual view of records as static end products" (2017, p. 5–6). For a slow archives methodology focused on Indigenous systems and knowledge, then, records are unmoored from structures of singularity and stasis and oriented toward fluid, ongoing, and often unpredictable temporal paths. From here, we go on to examine how collecting practices and technologies of colonial management, including the perpetuation of logics of property, are embedded and become enduring systems of archival processes that elide Native

systems of knowledge production. We end this section by exploring what contemporary systems of gathering, sharing, narrating, and returning look like with ethical concerns and engaged practices at the forefront.

Section two locates slow archives methods within a set of workflows and practices that derive from community-based commitments and projects. Here we focus on the creation and use of two interrelated platforms: Mukurtu CMS and Local Contexts that take as their starting point a slow, ethical, decolonial, and engaged process of knowledge circulation, attribution, and access. The slow archives in practice, then, turns upon processes, structures, relations, and systems of authority. Mukurtu CMS—a community digital access platform—and Local Contexts—an initiative to provide legal resources including traditional knowledge (TK) Labels—are *disruptive tools* in that they force us to reevaluate the workflows and procedures of digital archiving and curation by emphasizing differing temporal and spatial frames alongside the sets of relationships required and enabled through collaborative curation models and methods (Mukurtu, Local Contexts 2018). The conclusion emphasizes an archival ecosystem grounded in an ethics of care (Schwartz and Cook 2002; Cook 2011; Caswell and Cifor 2016) alongside and in conversation with an active recognition of the decolonial politics of refusal (Simpson 2014; Tuck and Yang 2014). That is, the slow archives method we advance purposefully renders visible how traditional archival workflows are in friction with and oftentimes discordant to Indigenous knowledge systems and formations. This demands attention to the making of new practices for an archival future including the development of new methodologies that moves toward archival justice that is reparative, reflective, accountable, and restorative (Caswell et al. 2017b; Sutherland 2017; Hughes-Watkins 2018; Sangwand 2018).

The history of collection is the history of colonialism

On May 28, 1830, USA President Andrew Jackson signed the *Indian Removal Act* into law. Earlier in the year, during his Second Annual Message to Congress, Jackson set the new policy within the trajectory of removal. He began, "It gives me pleasure to announce to Congress that the benevolent policy of the Government, steadily pursued for nearly thirty years, in relation to the removal of the Indians beyond the white settlements is approaching to a happy consummation." He went on:

> It puts an end to all possible danger of collision between the authorities of the general and state governments on account of the Indians. It will place a dense and civilized population in large tracts of country now occupied by a few savage hunters (Jackson 1830).

It is evident from his speech that Native dispossession was fueled by rhetoric that depended upon and recirculated a view of Native peoples as savages, on the verge of extinction, destined to the margins of an imagined American nation allowing for the ensuing violence, reversal of treaties, and attempts at assimilation. The ensuing forced removal of the Cherokee, Chocktaw, Chickasaw, Creek, and Seminole peoples from their homelands into other tribal lands in the west realized the settler

colonial ambitions for legislative infrastructures that could justify dispossession while also simultaneously hiding its form and function within legal and administrative processes.

In 1887, after decades of sustained violent dispossession the USA Congress passed the General Allotment Law (*Dawes Act*). Elevating the logic of allotment, new forms of dispossession were initiated forcing Native peoples to reduced tracts of land and leaving many more landless (Washburn 1975). The *Dawes Act*, building on assimilationist federal Indian policy of the time, instigated the practice of dividing up previously held collective reservation territories by allocating tracts of land to specific families. The legislation created mandatory enrollments of Native peoples through specifically tying property ownership to identity and citizenship. The "Dawes Rolls", as they were colloquially called, set in motion logics and markers of identification that persist to this day (Duarte 2017, p. 119–120).

The USA government's Indian policy was grounded in the usurpation of Native lands and was simultaneously upheld through legislation, policy as well as rigorous and purposeful documentation practices (Horseman 1967; Dowd 1992; Trigger and Washburn 1996; Calloway 2013). Government officials—in partnership with scholars, missionaries, and traders—documented the lives of Native peoples through formal and informal means resting precariously on the notions of the "salvage" and "preservation" of Native cultures and languages they sought to destroy. Indian agents, as the government's representatives sent to administer federal Indian policy on Native territories, dispatched regular reports on all elements of community life. This documentation included information on general welfare, religious practices, status of language and included the collection of material objects, the production of maps, and course the recording of Native peoples in photographs, on film, and through sound recordings. Early scholars on Native culture were indebted to Indian Agents who were integral in facilitating initial encounters and later unequal research relationships (Anderson 2018). Many early researchers also worked for the government. Amy Lonetree (Ho-Chunk) shows that, "In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, many anthropologists made their careers on systematically collecting American Indian material culture" (Lonetree 2012, p. 9). All of these materials were marshaled in different ways at different times through "rituals of the state—national parades, coronations, museums, exhibits…" to not just uphold government policies, but also to define what it meant to belong within the nation. As Audra Simpson (Mohawk) notes, "the state also had a crucial role in the classification and definition of those people through its monopoly over territorial boundaries" (Simpson 2014, p. 17). Claims of Native violence, savagery, and primitivism produced federal Indian policies of dispossession and destruction, created research mandates that focused on documentation, and defined generations of collecting practices that resulted in the collections now housed within national, state, and academic archives, museums, and libraries.

In March 1890, Passamaquoddy community members Noel Josephs, Peter Selmore, and Peter Lacoote made some of the first wax cylinder recordings with Jesse Walter Fewkes using Thomas Alva Edison's cylinder phonographic recorder. It is worth noting that in December of this same year was Wounded Knee—the largest domestic massacre in the history of the USA. Fewkes had travelled to Calais

Maine to test the new machine prior to traveling to the American southwest as part of a larger salvage mission to document supposedly dying Native cultures and languages. Fewkes was replacing Frank Cushing as the leader of the Hemenway Expedition to the Southwest. This Expedition was funded by Mary Hemenway and it was Hemenway who was instrumental in connecting Fewkes to Mrs. Wallace Brown in Calais Maine for his visit to the Passamaquoddy. At the same time, as the government was advancing a federal Indian policy built on displacement and the destruction of languages, cultures, and lives through allotment and assimilation, technologists were quickly building recording devices to preserve the languages and cultures the government and the church were actively seeking to destroy. It was also during this same time period that USA Army Surgeon General Joseph Barnes called for field surgeons to collect Native human remains. It was no accident, in other words, that the rise of recording and preservation technologies marched alongside the burgeoning USA Indian policies of violent removal and dispossession. Like the telegraph before it, which had been strategically used by Indian agents to track and monitor Native peoples, the cylinder phonographic recorder was updated technology produced for extended techniques of surveillance and management. These intentions, however, were largely masked by emphasizing how the new technology served larger 'documentation purposes.'

Jesse Walter Fewkes—a marine zoologist, anthropologist, and later Chief of the Bureau of American Ethnology—is widely regarded as being the first person to use the new recorder to document Native peoples' languages, songs, and cultural practices, a process that quickly became a standard part of fieldwork for anthropologists, folklorists, and linguists. Fewkes, however, did not just pioneer the effort to use the cylinder phonographic recorder in fieldwork (Brady 1999). Importantly, he championed its use as a vehicle to produce "scientific" documentation of Native peoples lives and languages, presumed to be "rapidly becoming extinct" (Fewkes 1890b, p. 267). That is, his coupling of science, technology, and documentation is a significant narrative strand that links colonial efforts, territorial displacement, and preservation practices together under the nomenclature of *scientific advancement*. His training as a biological scientist was a factor in how he approached both the study and documentation of language and the need for technological interventions to aid in producing what he saw as non-biased studies.

> The possibilities of the phonograph in these studies indicate one of the great advantages of this instrument. What specimens are to the naturalist in describing genera and species, or what sections are to the histologist in the study of cellular structure, the cylinders made on the phonograph are to the student of language (Ibid, p. 268)

Connecting the work of and materials collected within biological and linguistic studies, Fewkes highlights the technological advantage of the phonograph for scientific documentation and encourages the understanding of cultural and ethnological studies as inherently scientific—and, to his mind, therefore, unbiased.

> The necessity for some means of accurately recording and preserving the languages of the Indians has lately been met by the invention of the phonograph…

> In order that folk-lore as far as applicable to aboriginal races, may be placed on a scientific basis, an accurate record of the story as told by the reciter is necessary. This can be accomplished by the use of the phonograph and the records thus made can be indefinitely preserved (Fewkes 1890a, p. 495)

During this time, Fewkes and others created a narrative of scientific study in order to propel folklore and ethnology to the ranks of other, more well accepted, sciences acceptable for producing knowledge about Native peoples. Accuracy, for Fewkes, is the lynchpin for scientific validation and it happens through the introduction of the technology—seen here as neutral; that is, providing an exact replication of original utterances for research and preservation.

In a letter to the leader of the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to the Torres Straits dated March 20, 1890, five days after his first sound experiment in Calais, Fewkes made the case for the use of the phonographic recorder for international research of the same nature:

> Dear Prof. Haddon,
> I have been much interested in your paper in the last number of the "Folklore" on the "Legends of Torres Straits." I have myself done something in the study of our North American Indian folklore, and will be able in a short time to send you a paper on the use of the phonograph in this study. I have made researches on the legends songs etc. of the Passamaquoddy Indians, the survivors of those who once inhabited New England.
>
> I have been able to get them to talk and sing into the instrument in their Native language, and to tell their stories on those magic cylinders of wax where they are indelibly fixed forever.
>
> I think I am the first to use this instrument for this purpose and it seems to me to offer most wonderful possibilities in this line of research. In a lecture which I gave on this subject I was able to repeat their songs so that they were perfectly audible in a large audience room.
>
> The phonograph will I think give a *more scientific turn* to the study of Folk-Lore for it will give an exact record of the stories exactly as the Indians tell them with their exact pronunciation (Clayton 1996, p. 69, emphasis ours).

Fewkes may well be credited with Haddon's subsequent use of the phonograph in his 1898 Cambridge Expedition to the Torres Strait. It is the phonographic recorder's ability to fix "forever"—thus, preserve—language and culture that makes it an apt "instrument" for scientific research that relies on an "exact record" for its credibility. In his study of the British Library's National Sound Archive, Martin Clayton traces the history of the collection including their earliest ethnographic collection of wax cylinders—those from Haddon's expedition in 1898-99. Clayton suggests that:

> Haddon's famous expedition of 1898 was to mark not only the start of British field recording but (rather more famously) the emergence of a major British school of social anthropology which was to embrace scholars such

> as Seligman, Malinowski, A.R. Radcliffe-Brown and W.H.R. Rivers. As this fieldwork-based anthropology developed, so did sound recording, as various researchers followed in Haddon's footsteps, many of them gathering sound recordings along with other kinds of data (Clayton 1996, p. 69–70).

In the USA, Fewkes actively advocated for the use of the phonograph in the field through public lectures and numerous articles that he published after his visit to Calais (Fewkes 1890a, b, c, d). Significantly, he directly lobbied Thomas Edison himself to make changes to the original recorder to aid in this type of field research. While Edison saw the main market for the machines as commercial, Fewkes requested specific improvements that would aid in a more mobile machine for field documentation. In a handwritten letter one year after his Passamaquoddy experiment dated June 17, 1891, from Arizona where he was recording among the Hopi, Fewkes wrote to Edison:

> I have had in my mind for some time writing to you and seeking if I could not obtain a phonograph for this Ethnological work for purchase. The work is purely scientific, and I am put to great inconvenience and expense in renting [a phonograph] from the different companies. Moreover, I should very much like to have a more compact instrument than any which I have yet been able to obtain. If I could get a compact phonograph, after the nature of a Kodak camera, which I could carry with me it would be a very great advantage to me. An electro-motor is out of the question in Ethnological work especially when one is a hundred miles from the railroad as I now am. A treadle machine is very cumbersome. If you could have a small, compact box machine, with hand motor it would be a great help to me and I should be glad to purchase it if such a thing is possible. I know of several Ethnologists who would rent or buy such a machine, and I think perhaps I am sanguine that a machine of that kind is destined to come into use more and more into Ethnological research (Fewkes to TAE, June 17, 1891).

Intimately tied to the need for accurate and scientific documentation is the vanishing Native narrative that permeates Fewkes' early discussions of the usefulness of the new technology as a tool of and for science (Gitelman 1999). His pleas to Edison highlight the technology's role in propelling both scientific inquiry and preservation agendas. Fewkes did not, of course, explicitly link the "vanishing" or "disappearing" of Native people, languages, and cultural practices to the nation's policies and practices of displacement, violence, and removal, despite this letter being written only six months after the massacre of Wounded Knee. The silence is deafening.

In his subsequent position as the Chief of the Bureau of American Ethnology (BAE)—an institution set up by Congress in 1879—Fewkes followed in the footsteps of the agency's first Chief, John Wesley Powell, a geologist and amateur anthropologist. Fewkes began his work at the BAE in 1895 following Powell's dictum that Indian lives and culture could not be understood without knowledge of language (Powell 1881). Once he was appointed Chief in 1918, he championed the use of the recorder even further. In his 1920 Annual Report to Congress, he makes his

case connecting the urgency of the task of preservation to specific documentation of Native languages:

> In linguistics the necessity of recording those languages that are in danger of extinction is urgent. Several of these are now spoken only by a few survivors—old men or women—and when they die this knowledge which they possess will disappear forever…*It is urgent to gather all possible data regarding the ethnology of the Indian prior to the advent of the white man*, and where written history is silent on this subject, legends, monuments, and other prehistoric remains are the only media to supply the unknown chapters of history (Fewkes 1924, p. 2–3, emphasis ours).

These perverse sets of preservation practices lead to thousands of wax cylinders now held in multiple repositories, archives, libraries, and collecting institutions. Recordings made and removed from their home communities were largely put to use by the USA government in its attempts to remove and assimilate Native peoples. As legal scholars Angela Riley and Kristin Carpenter suggest: "Indian appropriation is the process by which the US legal system has historically facilitated and normalized the taking of all things Indian for others' use, from lands to sacred objects, and bodies and identities" (Riley and Carpenter 2016, p. 865–866). The taking bolstered collecting practices as well as the erasure of Native authority and attribution. It was not until the 1970s that the American Folklife Center (AFC) advanced the effort to return—repatriate—the recordings as part of the Federal Wax Cylinder project aimed at preserving the wax cylinders. In the 1980s, AFC staff began to consult with Native nations about the status of the recordings, protocols around their use, and mistakes in the original metadata.

Contemporary library, archival, and information science practices and professional aspirations were built from this imperial impulse to collect and codify under the same colonial scaffolding. The collections themselves come encoded with these logics of removal and erasure and continue to affect the futures they are imagined within (Anderson 2013). As Jennifer O'Neal (Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde) reminds us, "hundreds of non-Native repositories, including universities, historical societies, and federal agencies in the United States, hold much of the physical archival collections that document Native American history and lifeways in far removed repositories outside of tribal communities" (O'Neal 2015, p. 5). These collections are largely comprised of materials where "Indigenous people were the object (and subject) of the gaze of colonial authorities and 'experts,' and from which Indigenous knowledge, perspectives and voices were excluded" (McKemmish et al. 2011, p. 213). The residue of settler colonial ambitions of study and science are apparent throughout these institutions in their structures, systems, and stacks. Within these institutions, settler colonial logics endure even as movements to decolonize spaces are advanced (Tuck and Yang 2012). These logics are embodied in the physical and digital infrastructures of the archival project, as well as in the processes that these materials are routed through.

In addition to the collections—manuscripts, sound recordings, moving images, etc.—critical studies have shown clearly how colonial structures of erasure, displacement, and dispossession can be seen in library subject terms, classification

schemes, metadata fields, and within general calls for open access that refuse to grapple with histories of collection and ongoing historical traumas ushered in by the creation and circulation of digital surrogates of these original physical and analog materials (Hagan 1978; Christen 2012; Anderson 2013; Thorpe 2014; Littletree and Metoyer 2015; O'Neal 2015). That is, library and archives practices structurally "reflect and reinforce a privileging of settler/invader/colonist voices and narratives over Indigenous ones" (McKemmish et al. 2011, p. 218). They maintain very specific exclusions and relations of power through policies, procedures, and daily practices of organization, access, and citation (Anderson 2013). For instance, attribution and citation practices in metadata continue to privilege the researcher as the author and property holder rather than the people and the contexts from where the knowledge derives. We should be wary, then, as Audra Simpson warns us, of systems that "sustain dispossession and occupation" and thus maintain colonialism's call (Simpson 2014, p. 21).

As we grapple with and work toward building different structures, systems, and processes within libraries and archives, we need to keep at the forefront of our vision, the colonial logics and ongoing systems of inequity maintaining or supporting territorial displacement, cultural and physical violence, and epistemic blindness. Similarly, we must focus on the politics of the technology—in its material form as well as its ideological underpinnings. Highlighting the invisibility of this ideological work, Marisa Duarte (Pascua Yaqui) argues, "The sleek look and discreet design of many contemporary devices—mobile phones, laptops, tablets—invite us to imagine these objects as neutral and futuristic, devoid of historical legacies" (Duarte 2017, pp 9). Yet all technologies derive from particular historical settings and are designed, updated, altered, and used in tandem with social, cultural, and political projects (Gitelman 2006). It is this "delusion of neutrality," as Jarrett Drake insists, that maintains library and archival systems as well as the technologies that all continue to propagate the erasure and marginalization of "others" (Drake 2016). Whether through calls for "scientific" models and tools or with nods to professionalism, the ideal of neutrality is firmed up along with the very techniques and tools that systematically maintain its power and normativity (Ramirez 2015; Hudson 2017; Noble 2018).

The collection of objects, artifacts, specimens, recordings, and detailed records has long stood in for, and sought to mask, the violent efforts at erasure of languages, lifeways, landscapes, and lives. As we look to the travels of these materials from their homelands embedded within social systems and community relationships, to the shelves, backrooms, and stacks of repositories and now back to the communities from which they were collected, taken, or traded, we should frame and consider these movements of return as *decolonial processes*. That is, by purposefully keeping colonial structures and practices in our view—as they are manifest in our institutions, policies, practices, and technologies—we can begin the work of tearing them down and building anew. As we keep these colonial structures accountable and see how and where they continue to assert power, we must also simultaneously, hold Indigenous systems of relation and structures of relationality in our view. To do both means that we must be dually aware of how they have interacted, as well as how Indigenous systems, structures and

relationality will necessarily move archives differently—ethically, linguistically, socially, and politically.

In her most recent book, feminist scholar Donna Haraway (2016) suggests that we *stay with the trouble*. That is that we continue to be open to "unexpected collaborations and combinations" (Haraway 2016, p. 4). We must continue to see the colonial troubles—the structures and logics that drive our collection, curation, and circulation practices and processes. For Haraway, staying with the trouble requires a "material semiotics which is always situated, someplace and not no place, entangled and worldly." (Haraway 2016, p. 4). If we start from a place of relatedness, from a position that both acknowledges and seeks to upend systems that promote unethical, oppressive, and extractive systems, we can work slowly to create new ones. It is in the slowing down that we can start to see modes of ethical archives that reflect *accountability, engagement, relationality, and reciprocity* that work alongside, within, and in opposition to settler structures and archival logics of displacement and dispossession. These are the principles underpinning our call for *slow archives*—frameworks that untangle and reposition archival practices as part of Indigenous temporalities and territorialities disrupting, disordering, and refuting standard archival practices and techniques. Slow archives call attention to the multiplicity and plurality of knowledge, storying, placedness, and relational events without reducing practices or systems to binary logics of control or submission, past or present, authority or victim. At the same time, an ethical view of slow archives calls attention to ongoing relations of respect and reciprocity—in practice and in the processes that allow for alternative distributions of control.

Engaged and ethical platforms

The pervasiveness of colonialism in our institutions, in the technologies, within the collections themselves leads us to ask about alternatives: options that simultaneously keep us with the trouble but also propel and inform new collaborations and combinations. In this section, we outline two digital initiatives that we have been involved in building that take as their starting point that *the history of collecting is the history of colonialism*. Mukurtu CMS—a community digital access platform—and Local Contexts—an initiative to launch Traditional Knowledge (TK) Labels. Mukurtu CMS has been in use for a decade now and the Local Contexts initiative for seven years. In this section, we highlight the workflows and processes that each platform requires and thus emphasize how slowing down is not an inhibitor for libraries and archives, but rather a proactive means for resisting the ongoing colonial logics of rapid access and endless circulation where Indigenous materials continue to be subject to the same colonial logics.

The need for thoughtful, responsible, and ethical workflows also necessarily takes on the issue of scale. For instance, we are often asked in public and private forums how we can scale up these platforms. "Does it scale?" is a pervasive question that belies the underlying logics of distribution attached to capitalist models of production particularly in relation to software and other digital tools. However, these platforms were not designed to conform to those kinds of logics—there is no quick

fix here. To the contrary, these initiatives emphasize reciprocity, engagement, and accountability through design, implementation, and use. They are efforts to build and support relationships, to help in repairing broken ones, and to create ones never previously possible. Mukurtu and Local Contexts are both invested in a model of *scaling out*, *with, and through*, not up, where relationships are an integral part of any future in building archive infrastructures and facilitating their sustainability.

Questioning digital archives as de facto egalitarian and democratic, Ellen Cushman (Cherokee) provides a framework for a decolonial option:

> Decolonial archives operate through an understanding of *time immemorial* that belies the imperial creation of tradition marked along Western timelines. They operate by relocating meaning in the context of its unfolding that opposes the imperial archive's penchant for collecting, classifying, and isolating. They operate through the *co*-construction of knowledge based on interactions between storytellers and listeners that counter the imperial archive's insistence on expert codification of knowledge. *And they operate through linguistic and cultural perseverance rather than the imperialist agenda of preservation of cultural tradition as hermetically sealed, contained, and unchanging* (Cushman 2013, p. 116–117, emphasis added).

Decolonial projects must make a radical shift away from preservation as the main reason for archival work. Here Cushman systematically links decolonial moves to processes of opposing imperial and ongoing forms of collecting and classifying which isolate the relational, deeply embodied, practiced, and dynamic processes between people, belongings, land, and communities that make, remake, and unmake cultural heritage, knowledge, and traditions. Digital transitions do not mean we should move away from the landed, physical, and relational. Nor does a shift to more current technological trends erase the legacies of settler colonial logics that drove earlier technological advancements such as the phonograph discussed earlier. Similarly, Marisa Duarte argues: "Read against the century of US anti-Indian campaigns and imperial expansion, narratives of technological advancement function to satisfy societal desires for Enlightenment-era values of progress and scientific evolution in spite of the colonial fabric of Indian eradication" (Duarte 2017, p. 11). In fact, the "digital age" has ushered in a reuse of many well-worn stereotypes and tropes about technology, indigeneity and progress. In the library, archival and information sciences, narratives about digital archives and digitization have moved in the last ten years steadily away from the technophilic revelry of early adopters with their zealotry for easily eliding power dynamics and histories of exclusion and declaring utopian digital spaces, to slightly more cautioned calls for digitization and digital practices with nods toward questions of access, use, and ongoing sustainability. Even with this shift, there is an all too easy slippage between the benefits of digitization as a format, the benefits of digital archives as a space of interaction, and the benefits of digital practices as modes of shifting power differentials and reframing epistemologies.

In this sense, Mukurtu CMS is as much an ideological and decolonial intervention as it is a technological one. From its origin story, to its architecture and ongoing development, Mukurtu CMS challenges, and is in conversation with, conventional

logics of access, use, reuse, and the circulation of digital materials. The creation of Mukurtu CMS grew from Christen's long-term collaborations with the Warumunugu community in Central Australia and it was the relationships, kinship obligations, reciprocal networks, as well as the ongoing settler colonial structures in place in Australia that affected the Warumungu community that provided the impetus for what is now the free and open-source Mukurtu CMS software.

Over the many visits that Christen and Waramungu community members made to national repositories in 2001, traditional cultural materials, images of deceased community members, and sacred sites were on display. In both physical and digital spaces, these were disturbing and distressing. State archives are places of pain and loss that continue to reproduce violence. Community members felt emotional and physical pain as archival materials were viewed, handled, and read. The display of these materials online, and the mandate to digitize and make accessible more materials, exacerbated the affront to Warumungu protocols for access, use, and circulation of cultural knowledge, belongings, and territories. It was this sense of disease with the availability of digital cultural materials—intimate, kin-based, community-oriented—that prompted the creation of the Mukurtu Wumpurrarni-kari archive for the Warumungu community, which eventually developed into Mukurtu CMS. It was visits to archives alongside subsequent trips to "country"—physical sites within Warumunugu traditional homelands—that highlighted the need for a digital access tool based on Indigenous systems of caring for, stewarding, and sustaining country, kin relations, and traditional knowledge (Christen 2012). The set of concerns highlighted by Warumungu community members were similar to those of other Indigenous people, whereby the digital reproduction of physical materials intensifies the original dispossession, attempted erasure, and epistemological violence that undergirds classification schemes, cataloging frameworks, and legal structures that form the foundations for digital circulation and access. Underpinning the creation of Mukurtu CMS was the need for a flexible and adaptable platform that would serve as a practical intervention into the standard paradigms for digital content management, access, and use (Christen et al. 2017).

In 2002 when Christen and Waramungu elders first started imagining and planning a different kind of archive through a digital access platform for Warumungu content, Australia was openly grappling with its colonial past and settler colonial present. Narratives of reconciliation permeated institutional spaces, framed national conversations, and sparked renewed calls for treaties, self-determination, and Aboriginal protocols as a part of the fabric of the nation. By 2007, just as the first iteration (the alpha version) of Mukurtu CMS in Tennant Creek was nearly complete:

> With no warning, and no consultation, the federal government moved swiftly to seize control of many aspects of the daily lives of residents in 73 targeted remote communities. It implemented coercive measures that would have been unthinkable in non-Indigenous communities (Perche 2017).

In what became known as "the Intervention," the government suspended Indigenous rights and sought a significant roll back of decades of progressive policies (Altman and Hinkson 2010). It was within this familiar yet freshly articulated hostile national stance, through which settler colonial logics shored up practices

of ongoing erasure and violence that Mukurtu CMS grew. As Ashley Glassburn Falzetti argues, "The obfuscation and denigration of indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing the world are crucial to the ongoing project of settler colonialism. Making the violence of epistemic erasures apparent provides a moment to acknowledge, teach, protest, and mourn that which is lost—the histories, the languages, the families, the knowledges of this world" (Falzetti 2014, pp 140). A grassroots project, Mukurtu CMS is also embedded within a larger set of political imperatives that emphasize both shifts within, and an undoing of, the structures that make up collection-based practices as open-source software development. First and foremost, Mukurtu CMS adheres to a community software development model that places the needs and concerns of Indigenous communities at the center of the software's form, function, structure, and management. While Mukurtu CMS can and is used by non-Indigenous communities, repositories, and institutions, the focus is on meeting the specific curatorial, informational, and access needs of Indigenous communities.

Mukurtu CMS has a set of features that set it apart from other content management systems and access platforms. At the heart of Mukurtu are flexible cultural protocols for managing circulation and access to material—customizable to local needs. Protocols are community driven rules, laws, obligations, and responsibilities that govern relationships around access and use of cultural knowledge. There are no pre-packaged protocols; instead, each community (or communities within a site) can add and define their already existing protocols. This flexible design component means that there is no open by default—if a public or open protocol is needed, it has to be added. It is a conscious and ideological choice. As a compliment to these protocols, Mukurtu CMS provides custom warning labels that allow communities to define and control how they warn viewers of potential harm, for instance, when there is an image of a deceased member of the community.

Mukurtu CMS offers the possibility of parallel and multiple sets of metadata. There is the option for multiple records—and protocols—to be added to any digital heritage (DH) item (media assets can be grouped together as DH items). Alongside the content, expanded metadata fields based on local needs and vocabularies including "traditional knowledge" and "cultural narratives" allow for elaborate, diverse, and multiple sets of narrations, attributions, and parameters. These sets of records allow for diverse and collocated narratives, knowledge, and perspectives. That is, tribal knowledge, stories, names, and languages can sit side by side with each other, thus creating parallel and relational metadata that recreates metadata as a storied narrative rather than defined and secluded fields of information. In this way, there is no hierarchy of metadata, no elevation of "standard" metadata above that which is community-derived, nor is there a relegation of community voices to a comments section or an "other" field. The emphasis on multiplicity and relatedness is an active undoing of the notion of any one "expert" or "authority" record and a simultaneous untethering of accumulated knowledge from existing collections. By emphasizing the multiplicity of metadata Mukurtu CMS provides a pathway for dialogue, conversation, and highlights sociality within and between narratives, cultural materials, and heritage. That is, Mukurtu's metadata structures and functions are not first and foremost about undoing or updating colonial records—although they allow for

both—but instead, Mukurtu Core and Community Records provide the space for different ways of knowing, presenting, framing, and engaging with knowledge that allows for divergent temporal and spatial realities and relations.

The various modalities of sharing knowledge within Indigenous communities—whether between kin or other relations or extended to non-Indigenous peoples—demanded that we build pathways for ethical and culturally mediated exchange of information. To do so, Mukurtu CMS provides a suite of tools called "roundtrip" that provide easy import and export of content and metadata—with a selective sync option so communities have a choice about when and how to share selected metadata and content. Unlike aggregators that act as uninformed collectors, seamlessly "hoovering" up content and "scraping" metadata—and thus often reproducing inaccurate, incorrect, and offensive metadata while defining these tactics as promoting "easy accessibility"—Mukurtu does not have an open API, sharing is managed by protocol "stewards" within the administrative dashboard. While APIs and aggregators could, in a technical capacity, honor and respect sharing protocols, this has not been the desired effect. Instead, APIs and large-scale aggregators have been lauded for their ability to reproduce and "share" collections without permissions. Within these environments, the aspiration and impulse are generally toward scaling up. Different types of permissions or systems for circulation are not accommodated or valued. In fact, they are seen as a hindrance or an obstacle to access. Working against this model of aggregation and accessibility, collaboration based on the ethical and cultural protocols of Indigenous communities is promoted through Mukurtu's roundtrip features. The platform's features require a thoughtful approach to selection and sharing. This is a mode of sharing predicated on relationships of trust built between people, not one predicated on *more* taking.

While Mukurtu emphasizes Indigenous systems of knowledge management, the tensions with and ongoing engagement with Western legal systems in the form of intellectual property rights pushed us to ensure there were multiple options for licensing and labeling content. Within Mukurtu CMS, the Traditional Knowledge (TK) Labels provide an extralegal mechanism for adding cultural context for use and asserting Indigenous-based parameters for access on material that Indigenous peoples cannot control due to copyright law and its colonial foundations (Anderson and Christen, in press). This includes materials that are not owned in a Western legal framework by Indigenous communities, but instead where copyright in and/or real property ownership of physical materials resides elsewhere. Any content within Mukurtu, including public domain or material owned by third parties, can have up to four TK Labels attached to it, and multiple records from various communities can all have differing sets of labels—unhinging the idea that content is owned solely by one person and instead acknowledging the co-stewardship of cultural materials. Content can also, simultaneously, have a Creative Commons license attached to it alongside TK Labels. That is, TK Labels work as social and educational markers of context, locality, and relationships. They ask viewers to pause and find out more about the attribution, access, use, and context of these belongings, materials, and knowledge they are engaging with through Mukurtu's interface.

When speaking about the TK Labels specifically in the context of the Passamaquoddy wax cylinder recordings—attributed to Jesse Walter Fewkes, held at the

Library or Congress and with legal rights still asserted over them by the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnography at Harvard Museum—Donald Soctomah highlighted the power of the TK Labels for Passamaquoddy needs:

> So, the [TK] Labels are going to be powerful … because some of these songs are only meant for certain ceremonies. Some are only meant for men. Some are only meant for women. And then the stories; some of the stories, what I'm afraid of is somebody might hear the story and write a book about it and then they claim ownership of the story. You know, that's happened before. One of our neighboring tribes the Maliseet, there was a researcher in their community back in the thirties and he wrote down stories. He spent two years in the community gathering stories and he promised the community that the stories were theirs. Well, he passed on, his children ended up having the book published. And now the Maliseets are told you don't own these stories. You know, *that's not right* (Collections, Collaborations & Connections 2016, emphasis ours).

Donald's emphasis on what is "not right" with current international copyright law highlights the inequities that have largely been seen as standard research practices. Passamaquoddy protocols for viewing and circulating knowledge and cultural materials define stewardship, sharing, and exchange of knowledge in and through these stories. This is intimately tied to the centrality of language, songs, and stories of the Passamaquoddy today and the precarious position these materials are in with respect to proper attribution, acknowledgement, ownership as well as Passamaquoddy meaning about them. What Donald worries about here—his tribe's language, stories, and songs being used in ways that are incompatible with Passamaquoddy values and cultural protocols—is one of the reasons the TK Labels were created. They directly address this legal precarity. Now a key element of Mukurtu CMS, the TK Labels are the central component of the Local Contexts initiative, a platform and programmatic decolonial intervention addressing the coloniality of copyright law.

The Local Contexts initiative emphasizes the importance of situated and place-based meaning in relation to intellectual property frameworks, especially as they are manifest in decision-making tools and systems. Local Contexts recognizes that relationships between people within specific contexts are central to the transmission and sustainability of knowledge and heritage. Within colonial projects of research and preservation, it was critical to downplay, elide, and erase these relationships, As Sandy Littletree (Diné) and Cheryl Metoyer note, library and archive "cataloging language silences Native American history" (Littletree and Metoyer 2015, p. 642). While there has been a significant critique within LIS about the roles of subject headings and classification schemas (Owens 1998; Adler 2016, 2017), the rights field itself—and the ideological and exclusionary work that it does—has been less scrutinized as a systematic form of dispossession of Indigenous peoples' intellectual property.

Local Contexts is an initiative to upend the power of intellectual property frameworks and enhance and legitimize locally based decision-making and Indigenous governance frameworks for determining ownership, access, and culturally appropriate conditions for sharing historical and contemporary collections of cultural heritage. In so doing, it is engaged in promoting new classificatory, curatorial, and

display paradigms and workflows for museums, libraries, and archives that hold extensive Native, First Nations, and/or Aboriginal collections. The Traditional Knowledge (TK) Labels are a key device in the process of refocusing attribution, use, and access decisions and knowledge toward communities of origin. The TK Labels emphasize the significance of relationships with cultural heritage and prioritize community perspectives about proper pathways for circulation and future use by inserting Indigenous systems and modes of use and attribution directly into the management of collections held outside of communities.

With the bulk of Indigenous cultural heritage material within institutions either legally owned by non-Indigenous peoples and institutions through copyright law, or existing in the public domain (a fictional legal space made by copyright law), we made an early decision to focus on the development of the TK Labels as an educational and social intervention. The TK Labels act as markers—or tags—that identify different relationships to cultural heritage and provide a flexible option for conveying important information about cultural heritage materials—their proper use, guidelines for action, or responsible stewardship and reuse. The TK Labels can be used to include information that might be considered missing (for instance, the name of community from where it derives), what conditions of use are deemed appropriate (for instance, if the material has gendered or has initiate restrictions associated with it), whether correct protocols for vetting materials have been followed (for instance, many tribes now have tribal policies and agreements for conducting research on tribal lands), and importantly, how to contact the relevant family, clan, or community to arrange appropriate permissions.

There are currently eighteen TK Labels that have been developed through collaboration and engagement with Indigenous communities in the USA, Canada, and Australia. Each of the TK Labels has a unique icon and accompanying explanatory text, which can be customized to reflect local values and definitions. Keeping the icons stable produces a visual continuity for institutions which allows for the incorporation nationally and internationally (much like Creative Commons license icons are now easily recognizable). However, allowing the text to be customized undoes the notion of a fixed or universal legal form or frame for how cultural heritage materials should be managed, shared, and circulated. In this way, the TK Labels push back on presumptions of neutrality embedded in the law, while staying firmly with the trouble that copyright makes for people who were always already excluded from it. This tension is experienced in the catalog record itself where both a TK Label and a legal rights holder are asked to coexist in the rights field—a field usually only available to the author/owner/legal rights holder from a Western perspective (Anderson 2013; Anderson and Christen 2013). The implementation of a TK Label on an item or collection forces a visual display that challenges the authority of the "rights holder" and creates a decolonial query about how the non-Indigenous person named in the rights field became the rights holder and author of Indigenous heritage in the first place. By working to historicize the production of knowledge, we highlight deeper questions about the relationships between research and colonialism that must be addressed, including how this research turned into a very specific kind of settler colonial property that has been normalized within archives through attribution and citational processes.

The process for developing community specific TK Labels, then, requires engaged relationships and reciprocity. It is a two-step process: the first situated within a community context and the second in the relationships established between a community and an institution. Rerouting authority and control within the library and archive in meaningful ways takes time. This type of intervention requires highly visible changes to both the intellectual and material infrastructure of the institution—from an increased knowledge of staff in institutions about why collections of Indigenous materials must be dealt with differently, to adjustments in metadata standards and content management systems themselves. Of all the work that is needed, however, relationship building is central. Creating avenues for interaction and intervention by Indigenous peoples is the first step: making space for Indigenous peoples to be at the table as the rightful authorities of their cultural heritage, to make decisions about its use into the future, and to undo the fiction of erasure with acts of *resistance and survivance* (Vizenor 2008).

Giving up power and property to create new spaces of reciprocity and collaboration are the hardest things for institutions to do. Thus, what Local Contexts asks for from institutions is time, dialogue, rethinking, and the rebuilding of relationships that have been defined by settler colonial possession and control over Indigenous peoples and their cultures. It was never going to be easy work, but it is the only future. On our AFC panel, James Francis (Penobscot) explained how the TK Labels can shift histories of exclusion within the library and archive:

> And what's great about Mukurtu and the TK Labels is that this has given us a digital presence, a safe digital presence. And I stress the safe because you know, in our communities we're often guarded about, you know, archives and sharing. Because so *much take, take, take, take, take, take, take, take, take, take, take has been happening in our communities and it's time for us to protect ourselves and protect our stories, you know, on our terms.* And Mukurtu and the TK Labels are exactly that tool that's going to allow us to do that (Collections, Collaborations & Connections 2016).

James Francis highlights how practical tools can intervene at various levels to make substantive changes not just to the record, but to the *process.* Changing the "take, take, take" to a more active listening, giving back, and caring for. The TK Labels function in this way as a tool to create a crack in the colonial mentalities of library and archival processes of collection and authority granting. Importantly, they are not the only tool that needs to be developed, but they offer a start and a strategy.

Mukurtu CMS and the TK Labels open space for a different dialogue with collecting institutions about vetting, curation, access, and use grounded in the extralegal and cultural forms of ownership and authority that have been haunting these collections. Importantly, these platforms become vehicles for providing new sets of procedural workflows that emphasize vetting content with communities through sustained conversations, co-curation that engages multiple stakeholders, ethical management, and long-term outreach practices. By foregrounding Indigenous systems of knowledge and decision-making, both Mukurtu CMS and the TK Labels promote collaborative and reciprocal relationships between Indigenous communities and cultural institutions and help increase knowledge about how Indigenous collections

should be accessed, shared, governed, circulated, used, and curated within institutions and by other non-Indigenous users of this cultural content and knowledge. In this way, they are platforms, processes, and practical projects that promote what Michelle Caswell and Marika Cifor call "affective responsibilities" as we engage with and aid in stewarding cultural heritage materials grounded in a "radical empathy" that foregrounds "a web of mutual responsibility" (Caswell and Cifor 2016). Mutual responsibility prompts non-Indigenous archivists, librarians, and scholars into sets of obligations to *act* ethically with and through sustained relations with communities and therefore with both physical and digital materials.

Thus, the webs of relation we are part of forming are framed by a mutuality based on actions grounded in modes of responsibility that must not reproduce disempowering systems of verticality. That is, responsibility must be grounded in Indigenous modes and forms of obligation, ethical action, and community values. Thus, it is this very purposeful and engaged responsibility that will move the field toward a slow archives, whereby the products—be they records, metadata or finding aids—are no longer the focus of archival practices. What becomes central in slow archives is relationships with communities of origin. It is these long-term and meaningful relations that will ultimately change archival processes, at many levels and scales. In this model, then, the radicalness of empathy must be located in moves toward repair, repatriation, restitution, reparation, and refusal. It is important that refusal be positioned within the archive to allow for and help aid in upending settler logics including that all knowledge should be documented and shared. Reimaging care must also allow for strategic refusals, relocations, and rejection. The slow archive is a commitment and an obligation to undo, redo, and build again structures that embody meaningful and mutual obligations to see, hear, and enact different ways of knowing, being, and relating through multiple temporal sovereignties.

The recordings made by Fewkes were never meant for the Passamaquoddy people. They were recorded and preserved as part of a salvage project predicated on destruction. Yet, by resalvaging the products of salvage anthropology, and reengaging with the recordings, the Passamaquoddy have shifted the place and role of these recordings in radical ways. Passamaquoddy now have control in ways that was "unthinkable" for Fewkes, his anthropological contemporaries, and the archival workers that preserved the recordings. Passamaquoddy have made the active decisions about what to make public, what remains in the community, the types of attribution required, and the pace at which these materials will be made available and accessible. They also refused the logic that all these materials need to be made available to non-Indigenous peoples. In 2016, the Passamaquoddy worked with our team to use Mukurtu CMS to provide responsible access to their digital cultural heritage materials. The resulting web portal, "At home on the Ocean and Lakes," orients one immediately to the water, the landscape, and the people in Passamaquoddy homelands, on canoes working together, gliding over the water. Underneath the main page image is a welcome prayer and a link to a further welcome page:

> We Welcome You to the Passamaquoddy Peoples' Knowledge Portal.
> *Kulasihkulpon yut Peskotomuhkati-pomawsuwinuwok Etoli-kisokehkimsultimok.*

> When the Passamaquoddy, Mi'kmaq, Maliseets, and Penobscots meet together, they are known as the Wabanaki (People of the Dawn), because we all come from the East, where the sun comes up.
> *An ci putuwosultihtit Peskotomuhkatiyik, Mihkomak, Wolastoqewiyik, naka Panuwapskewiyik, li-nonuwak Waponahkiyik,'sami nilun psi-te nuceyawultipon'cipenuk, etoli-weckuwapok.*
>
> We try to live as a peaceful people who have a strong cultural connection with the land and waters.
> *Ntoqeci-sankewi-pomawsultipon naka nuli-qsihtunen nkihtahkomikumon naka nsamaqanomon*
>
> Our language connects us to our ancestors and to who we are.
> *Kansuhsuwicik nkisi-milkunen ntolatuwewakonon, naka nkisokehkimkunen nilun eli-pomawsultiyek.*
>
> This website is a glimpse of our rich cultural traditions and history.
> *Yut kisi-nomihtasu eli-pomawsultiyek naka tan wetapeksultiyek nilun Peskotomuhkatiyik.*
>
> It will allow future generations of Passamaquoddy to learn about OUR STORY in OUR WORDS.
> *Yut-ona Peskotomuhkatiyik, yukt weckuwi-macekulticik naka keti-nomihqosul tihtit,'kisokehkimsultiniya ntatkuhkakononnul tahalu nilun nihtol elatkuhkatomek.*
>
> It will also introduce the World to our Passamaquoddy Heritage and History.
> *Weci psi-te wen kisokehkimsit wetapeksultiyek naka eli-pomawsultiyek mecimiw naka toke* (Soctomah 2018).

The Passamaquoddy framing and welcome serves as a grounding in local Passamaquoddy history, present community needs and values, and a future vision woven together not separate or dissonant. The welcome provides a clear statement about who the Passamaquoddy are and how this site serves as one node in a larger system of relationality and set of orientations to a different future. Donald Soctomah initially began using Mukurtu CMS in order to provide responsible access to and community knowledge about the thirty-one repatriated digital files from the wax cylinder recordings. He worked with Passamaquoddy speakers, elders, and community members including language learners, singing groups, and teachers to create their own collections, sub-collections, and ordering of the materials based on Passamaquoddy ways of knowing. Because Mukurtu CMS does not default to any subject headings or controlled vocabularies, the site has unique categories and keywords created by the Donald and his team to reflect community values and ways of understanding the materials culturally, linguistically, and historically. They have added their own images, titles, descriptions, narratives, and traditional knowledge to each song including added audio and video recordings of contemporary versions of the recordings from 1890. Sitting side by side, one can hear the 1890 version recorded by Fewkes, a 2016 version recorded on a mobile phone and a 2017 version sung by preschoolers in the language immersion program just learning the words, the rhythm and the initial parts of the dance that is integral to the song.

Importantly, there is also an informational page on their site dedicated to the TK Labels explaining why and how the labels are being used, and to make clear an understanding of the status of the cultural materials and traditional knowledge on the site:

> We consider ourselves to be the authority and custodians over these recordings regardless of who is considered the 'legal owners.' The TK Labels help us make this clearer to non-Passamaquoddy people and set out an alternative paradigm of rights and responsibilities for the *care and future management of our cultural heritage* (Passamaquoddy People 2018).

This statement boldly calls attention to colonial legacies of taking, while also understanding the power of that system to continually assert control over material collections and traditional knowledge. Naming their rightful place as both the authorities for and custodians of these materials shifts the onus on viewers, listeners, and those engaged with the community to act within those relations. It is the Passamaquoddy people who will care for and manage their cultural heritage, regardless of, but cognizant of, Western intellectual property frameworks, standard systems of classification, and knowledge organization. This future is about Passamaquoddy understandings—multiple and built within relationships—of these materials.

An ecosystem and ethics of care: outro

The "Collections, Collaborations and Connections," symposium at the AFC was part of the institution's fortieth anniversary celebrations. On the second day of the symposium the focus shifted to Native American collections at the AFC and specifically the catalog of wax cylinders the AFC holds, and the decades long projects that have surrounded their access, use, and preservation (AFC 2016). Although the AFC was created in 1976, the Library of Congress had long been collecting Native American cultural materials—including some of the earliest sound recordings. In 1980s, these materials increased exponentially with the Federal Cylinder Project, which brought collections of wax cylinders located around the country to the AFC for preservation (Gray 1988). At the symposium, Judith Gray, Folklife Specialist from the AFC, noted some of the shortcomings with the Library's workflow as they related specifically to sound engineering and the documentation of cultural knowledge:

> Materials then were being copied, but they were being copied by audio engineers who would've had no particular knowledge of what traditions they were working with. They would've had no particular documentation. *So, it was sort of blind copying and sometimes that resulted in things being copied at incorrect speeds. Sometimes incorrect names being applied to collections.* But it was an ongoing process. (italics added) (Collections, Collaborations & Connections 2016)

Gray points to a larger contextual issue with copying or digitizing original materials—it is easy and commonplace to separate the context and content from

the form. That is, archival and preservation practices oftentimes emphasize an end product over the process and knowledge embedded in the materials themselves. The attention to *product* did not begin with the advancement of the "more product, less process" model and workflow (Greene and Meissner 2005). However, it certainly gained momentum and visibility with this highly visible model. Coupled with neoliberal paradigms emphasizing scale and disaggregation, the unquestioned value of "more product" was afforded more recognition. Pushing back against this is the emphasis on reciprocal and collaborative curation, processing, and preservation models of sustainability put forth here and elsewhere (Christen 2011, 2018; Cifor and Lee 2017).

As Gray narrated the long arch of this project, she also noted significant shifts in the archival process and understanding of the material:

> Through the original cylinder project, we were working very much sort of [through] outreach from here to the communities. And trying to find out what they needed, trying to provide technical assistance, trying to provide the materials themselves. But then, I think things sort of shifted. At that point, into the 90 s and more recently, *it's been much more a process of collaboration* (Collections, Collaborations & Connections 2016).

From its inception, the AFC was very much an outward looking agency within the Library of Congress—focusing on returning collections to communities of origin. What the 1990s brought at the AFC, along with the *Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act* (NAGPRA), was a shift in recognizing that community needs and goals surrounding the use, access, and preservation of these collections were different to standard library practices and therefore would require alternative processes of care and consultation. The Federal Cylinder Project grew from the direct action of, and intervention by, Native American governments, advocates, and institutions who sought the return of the materials from the AFC for their own purposes (Brady 1999).

During our panel, "The Past, Present, and Future(s) of Native American Cultural Heritage: A Conversation about Sharing, Returning, and Collaboration," we focused on practical models of collaborative curation that emphasize ethical and reciprocal processes through long-term partnerships alongside technological solutions. As an introduction to the panel Guha Shankar, a Folklore specialist at the AFC, noted that:

> This is a collaborative preservation digitization and access project, which consists essentially of … digitally reformatting analog media formats in order to recover and preserve the recorded voices of Native peoples. To be developed [alongside] curatorial protocols that address community cultural practices and perspectives regarding use and access to new cultural materials, as well as digital access tools that embed Native American cultural knowledge about and descriptions of the content of recordings and library collection records (Collections, Collaborations & Connections 2016).

What Shankar gestured to in his opening comment was that the *process* is as essential as the *product* and that process is not only temporally slow, but also slow in terms of its orientation to archival and curatorial standards and structures. In other words, the process was not only about reaching an end—the digitization or return of archival materials; but instead it was focused on a structural shift in the ways that archival materials are managed, curated, cataloged, accessed, and preserved at the AFC and elsewhere. During his talk on the panel, Donald Soctomah connected the digitization and repatriation of the original wax cylinder recordings to continuing ancestral connections:

> So, it goes with the wax cylinder recordings. The wax cylinder recordings, some of the songs almost disappeared in our community. The elders remembered bits and pieces of the song. They say, I remember that from when I was little, you know. And then when we're able to hear these wax cylinders, they broke out in song. *Now, we have our ancestors from 1890 speaking to us. You know that's really powerful, really powerful*. And you wouldn't believe, but some of the people, you know, the older people break down and cry when they hear the songs of their great–great-grandfather, or the stories that they heard bits and pieces of before.

As community members are listening, remembering, and processing language shifts from Passamaquoddy to French to English, the wax cylinder recordings—now digitized and enhanced—are more than a series of bits and bytes, they are ancestors "*speaking to us*."

It is from these traces, both digital and analog, inscribed on wax, coded into tape, and tucked in the recesses of individual memories that Passamaquoddy community members are constructing new, renewed, and remembered forms of relation to one another, to their language(s), to kin, to others, and to their homelands. The process of creation is generative and the archives they are forming—both within their communities and with the Library of Congress—are processual. That is, they will continue to unfold and be heard again and again in various places, through different media and with various sets of kin and community. The listening and the process of remembering are mixed with community desires and needs for today and the futures they are imagining and enacting.

In their special issue of *Daedalus*, "Unfolding Futures: Indigenous Ways of Knowing for the Twenty-First Century," Phillip Deloria, K. Tsianina Lomawaima, Brian Brayboy, Mark Trahant, Loren Ghiglione, Douglas Medin, and Ned Blackhawk argue that the "challenge for non-Native people lies in escaping the bad habit of viewing Indigenous peoples as relics of the past" (Deloria et al. 2018, p. 15). Undoing this orientation means that we need to think less about cultural materials as indicators or elements of the past and move, as Alice Te Punga Somerville suggests, to "assuming Indigenous presence and proximity rather than focusing on distance and loss" (Te Punga Somerville 2017, p. 121). We can shift to building an *archival ecosystem* that emphasizes *connections and care* and archival processes that do not treat access and ownership as blunt instruments, but instead, recognize that there are various modes and types of culturally specific circulation, exchange, stewardship, and sharing practices that frame the hard work of archival caring. Indeed, as Bergis

Jules suggests, it has been a profession wide "failure of care" that has continued to prop up racist, colonial, and unjust scaffolding within archives and then recreate these same systems in digital archive:

> [O]ur traditional practices in the archives are dangerously close this this legacy of institutionalized dehumanization. The silences, erasures, and distortions, and the lack of care, around the histories of the most marginalized people in our society are essential characteristics of it (Jules 2017).

Thus, as we care for, create, and nurture this emergent ecosystem we must pay attention to the formation and feeding of structures—legal and non-legal, curatorial, managerial, and technical—that tacitly or explicitly uphold systems of dispossession, oppression, and exclusion. An ethics of care, built collaboratively and from relations of respect, then, is one necessary obligation that provides the impetus for both tearing down traditional systems and structures, and—importantly—providing the fertile ground on which this new archival ecosystem can grow and thrive in physical spaces and within the bounds of personal, affective, ethical relations.

To undo these structures and the ongoing harm they cause, we are advocating for a *slow archives movement* that foregrounds Indigenous land relationships and sovereignty through institutional agreements and commitments that value long-term relationships over the quick processing of collections. We promote *collaborative curation* models by adding steps to all of our workflows that account for multiple voices, values, and temporalities—from not seeing, to seeing more than one view, from seeing partially to seeing anew. At our institutions and in our collections' processes, we support cultural sovereignty by emphasizing Indigenous access parameters and protocols by doing the hard, slow, and steady work of establishing and maintaining relationships, vetting materials, and continuing to update and upend collections records and access management systems. At the same time, the slow reminds us to be aware of when we may be recreating or replicating systems that undermine, reduce or devalue Indigenous knowledge. Donald Soctomah's observations resonate with the cultural work of *pushing forward* within settler colonial worlds is distinct and locally situated. Pushing forward is part of a slow archives movement that emphasizes the past, present and future as always in creation, in motion and part of community work.

While crafting new strategies for digital repatriation, we must also, at the same time, understand and highlight the value of being with cultural materials—in all their forms. As Sherry Farrell Racette shows in relation to museum practices:

> Visiting quietly with an object in reflective contemplation is often at odds with the assembly-line mode adopted when researchers have limited time in a museum. We might call such deep looking and listening, "slow" research. It extends time in collections and requires accommodation by researchers and hosting museums. All relationships, even with objects, take time to nurture (Racette 2016, p. 227).

Physical materials may need to be held, touched, and listened to in order to care for and steward them (Deloria 2018). Making space for these interactions means

undoing limitations on research time, updating reading room and special collections policies around the handling of materials, and inviting relationships to be a part of archival practice and sustainability models. Fragility should be understood in terms of cultural fragility as well as physical. Digital surrogates can also be catalysts for remembering, renewing, and building anew. In this way, they are also part of communities of relation and systems of care. They open up digital and material spaces to Indigenous ways of knowing and caring for belongings. These are some practical steps that ask us to imagine a future of slow archives that begin with an emphasis on archival justice built from engagements and sustained through relationships of mutuality. These are acts of unraveling old systems and building new ones. Slow archives demand movement out of standard archival spaces and frameworks and into, toward, and alongside networks of kinship that invite relationality and obligations. This is an archival future focused on nurturing a collective set of practices that emphasize care for cultural belongings as a productive and practical model for archival stewardship for the long term.

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