



SSC 894 | INDIGENOUS ORAL HISTORY FIELDWORK

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
SUMMER 2009 | SSC 894 SECTION 001
TIMES | ARRANGED
CLASSROOM | THREE FIRES TERRITORY

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CELL |

‘We’re not losing our language, our language is losing us.’
– Joe Auginaush (White Earth Anishnaabe)

‘We were given speech by the Great Spirit to foster goodwill among ourselves, and to commune with the spirits. It has both a practical and a spiritual end. It is a sacred act...In order to inspire trust we must attend to our elders, who have urged us to listen and to talk—but to be as gentle in our speech as the balm of the south wind.’
– Basil Johnston (Cape Croker Anishnaabe)

FIELDWORK DESCRIPTION |

This fieldwork is predicated on the act of listening. By listening to Anishnaabeg elders, we will hopefully begin to follow the lead of Maori intellectual Linda Tuhiwai Smith, who outlines an Indigenous research agenda as an anti-colonial and emancipatory tool. Similarly, Paolo Freire places listening at the core of any authentic and revolutionary dialogue.

Throughout this co-dependent fieldwork project, we will begin to use Indigenous methodologies to lay the foundation for a fully-developed Anishnaabeg oral history project. Concentrating on the oral histories of Lansing-based Anishnaabemowin speakers, this fieldwork project hopes to [INSERT STUDENT-CREATED PROJECT OUTCOMES]. Following this summer’s pilot project, the model established in Lansing will be implemented in the chief urban Native communities of Michigan.

OBJECTIVES |

The goals and objectives of this fieldwork are multiple. By reading, discussing, and analyzing ‘texts,’ as well as actively engaging in oral history fieldwork, participants will accomplish the following:

1. [INSERT STUDENT-CREATED OBJECTIVES]
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

READINGS |

1. Charles Trimble, Barbara W. Sommer, and Mary Kay Quinlan (2008). *American Indian Oral History Manual: Making Many Voices Heard*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast.



2. Susan Lobo, ed. (2002). *Urban Voices: the Bay Area American Indian Community*. Tucson: University of Arizona.

3. Association of Canadian Archivists (2007). *Aboriginal Archives Guide*. Association of Canadian Archivists Public Awareness Campaign.

ADDITIONAL READINGS > will be available from me as a PDF or the books may be checked out from the library.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS |

readings	20%
transcription	10%
field notes	10%
reflective journal	20%
recording of oral histories	40%

READINGS |

It is expected that we will all do the readings. These readings shall be done prior to our weekly (or bi-weekly) meetings so that we may collectively discuss them. If participants do not regularly do the proposed readings, they will need to write weekly reflection essays about these readings.

TRANSCRIPTION |

You will be expected to transcribe one interview, either in English or Anishnaabemowin (or bilingual). The length of the interview will be determined through consultation between participants.

FIELD NOTES |

You will be expected to take notes while speaking with community elders. If the act of note-taking distracts from fully engaging in discussion, make sure to take post-interview notes. These notes will be handed in at the end of the summer.

REFLECTIVE JOURNAL |

At least once per week, reflect upon the various readings, discussions, interviews, and activities that you have recently engaged in. This is your chance to begin to ‘analyze’ and make sense of the multiple activities and discourses you are involved in. These may be typed or handwritten.

ORAL HISTORIES |

The bulk of this project is meant to engage the Lansing Native community in an oral history project, which will hopefully later expand into Detroit and Grand Rapids. It is expected that you will begin to actively interview community members with the intention of reciprocally sharing stories. Because oral histories depend on many outside forces, the number and length of the oral histories will likewise vary.



POLICY ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM + INTEGRITY |

In agreement with Article 2.3.3 of the *Academic Freedom Report* which states that ‘the student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards,’ it is expected that students neither plagiarize nor copy from a peer’s intellectual or creative work. In addition, MSU adheres to the policies on academic honesty as specified in *General Student Regulations* 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades, and in the All-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades, which are included in *Spartan Life: Student Handbook + Resource Guide* (<http://www.vps.msu.edu/SpLife/index.htm>). Students who engage in academically dishonest activities may receive a 0.0 on that given assignment or for the overall course.

POLICY ON ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES |

Students with disabilities that may interfere with completing your assigned course work may speak with me, as well as contact the *Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities* to establish reasonable accommodations. For an appointment with a counselor, call 353-9642 [voice] or 355-1293 [TTY].

NOTE |

This is a working document. Additional activities may be inserted or altered as this fieldwork organically develops. This will, of course, depend on the interests and needs of the participants, as well as the time constraints of the academic semester. Let me know if readings become too labor intensive.



WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Week 01 | May 18

Meet + Develop Fieldwork Structure

Week 02 | May 25 | Write Oral History Release Agreement

Readings |

Charles Trimble, Barbara W. Sommer, and Mary Kay Quinlan (2008). *American Indian Oral History Manual: Making Many Voices Heard*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast; 15-55.

Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999). “Articulating an Indigenous Research Agenda” and “Twenty-five Indigenous Projects.” *Decolonized Methodologies: Research and Indigenous People*. London: Zed; 123-141 and 142-162.

Week 03 | June 1

Readings |

Taiiaki Alfred (2004). “Warrior Scholarship: Seeing the University as a Ground of Contentions.” Devon Abbot Mihesuah and Angela Cavender Wilson, eds. *Indigenizing the Academy: Transforming Scholarship and Empowering Communities*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska; 88-99.

Charles Trimble, Barbara W. Sommer, and Mary Kay Quinlan (2008). *American Indian Oral History Manual: Making Many Voices Heard*. Walnut Cree, CA: Left Coast; 57-88.

Marjorie Hunt (2003). *The Smithsonian Folklife and Oral History Interviewing Guide*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution; available as PDF.

Week 04 | June 8

Readings |

Association of Canadian Archivists (2007). *Aboriginal Archives Guide*. Association of Canadian Archivists Public Awareness Campaign.

Marie Battiste and James (Sa’ke’j) Youngblood Henderson (2000). “What is Indigenous Knowledge?” and “The Importance of Language for Indigenous Knowledge.” *Protecting Indigenous Knowledge and Heritage*. Saskatoon, SK: Purich; 35-56 and 73-85.

Dolores Hayden (1997). “Urban Landscape History: The Sense of Place and the Politics of Space.” *The Power of Place: Urban Landscape as Public History*. Cambridge, MA: MIT; 14-43.

Week 05 | June 15 | Cancelled

Week 06 | June 22

Readings |



Kimberly M. Blaeser (1999). "Writing Voices Speaking: Naïve Authors and an Oral Aesthetic." Laura J. Murray and Keren D. Rice, eds. *Talking on the Page: Editing Aboriginal Oral Texts*. Toronto: University of Toronto; 53-68.

Julie Cruikshank (1999). "The Social Life of Texts" Editing on the Page and in Performance." Laura J. Murray and Keren D. Rice, eds. *Talking on the Page: Editing Aboriginal Oral Texts*. Toronto: University of Toronto; 101-119.

Beatrice Medicine (2001). "Learning To Be An Anthropologist and Remaining Native." In *Learning How To Be An Anthropologist and Remaining Native*. Chicago: University of Illinois; 3-16.

E.P. Roesch (1991). "Oral History to Historical Fiction. *Oshkaabewis Native Journal* vol. 1, no. 3. Bemidji, MN: Indian Studies, Bemidji State University; 31-61.

Week 07 | June 29
Interviews

Week 08 | July 06
Interviews

Week 09 | July 13
Interviews

Week 10 | July 20 | Transcription Due
Interviews

Week 11 | July 27
Interviews

Week 12 | August 03
Interviews

Week 13 | August 10
Interviews

Week 14 | August 17
Field Notes + Journal Due



READINGS FOR INDIGENOUS ORAL HISTORY FIELDWORK

INDIGENOUS METHODOLOGIES

Taiaiake Alfred. "Warrior Scholarship: Seeing the University as a Ground of Contentions." Devon Abbot Mihesuah and Angela Cavender Wilson, eds. *Indigenizing the Academy: Transforming Scholarship and Empowering Communities*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska; 88-99.

Jo-Ann Archibald (2008). *Indigenous Storywork: Educating the Heart, Mind, Body, and Spirit*. Vancouver : University of British Columbia.

Association of Canadian Archivists (2007). *Aboriginal Archives Guide*. Association of Canadian Archivists Public Awareness Campaign.

Marie Battiste and James (Sa'ke'j) Youngblood Henderson. "What is Indigenous Knowledge?" and "The Importance of Language for Indigenous Knowledge." *Protecting Indigenous Knowledge and Heritage*. Saskatoon, SK: Purich; 35-56 and 73-85.

Kimberly M. Blaeser. "Writing Voices Speaking: Naïve Authors and an Oral Aesthetic." Laura J. Murray and Keren D. Rice, eds. (1999). *Talking on the Page: Editing Aboriginal Oral Texts*. Toronto: University of Toronto; 53-68.

Julie Cruikshank. "The Social Life of Texts" Editing on the Page and in Performance." Laura J. Murray and Keren D. Rice, eds. (1999). *Talking on the Page: Editing Aboriginal Oral Texts*. Toronto: University of Toronto; 101-119.

Beatrice Medicine (2001). "Learning To Be An Anthropologist and Remaining Native." In *Learning How To Be An Anthropologist and Remaining Native*. Chicago: University of Illinois; 3-18.

Oshkaabewis Native Journal. Bemidji, MN: Indian Studies, Bemidji State University. The journal was first published in 1990 under the editorship of Dave Gonzáles and was later edited by Anton Treuer. It is only occasionally published, with issues 6.1 and 6.2 shipping in 2004.

E.P. Roesch (1991). "Oral History to Historical Fiction. *Oshkaabewis Native Journal* vol. 1, no. 3. Bemidji, MN: Indian Studies, Bemidji State University; 31-61.

Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999). "Articulating an Indigenous Research Agenda" and "Twenty-five Indigenous Projects." *Decolonized Methodologies: Research and Indigenous People*. London: Zed; 123-141 and 142-162.

ORAL + PUBLIC HISTORY METHODOLOGIES

Charles Trimble, Barbara W. Sommer, and Mary Kay Quinlan (2008). *American Indian Oral History Manual: Making Many Voices Heard*. Walnut Cree, CA: Left Coast.



Marjorie Hunt (2003). *The Smithsonian Folklife and Oral History Interviewing Guide*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution; available as PDF.

Dolores Hayden (1997). "Urban Landscape History: The Sense of Place and the Politics of Space." *The Power of Place: Urban Landscape as Public History*. Cambridge, MA: MIT; 14-43.

CASE STUDIES | INDIGENOUS HISTORIES

Tara Browner (2002). "The Musical Life of an Anishnaabeg Family: Nda Maamawigaai (Together we Dance)." *Heartbeat of the People: Music and Dance of the Northern Pow-Wow*. Chicago: University of Illinois; 119-144.

Charles E. Cleland (2001). *The Place of the Pike (Gnoozhekaaning): A History of the Bay Mills Indian Community*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan.

Maude Kegg (1993). *Portage Lake: Memories of an Ojibwe Childhood*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota.

Susan Lobo, ed. (2002). *Urban Voices: the Bay Area American Indian Community*. Tucson: University of Arizona.

Winona Stevenson, ed (1999-2000). *Oral History Forum/Forum d'histoire oral* (Special issue on Indigenous Voices) 19-20; 1-144.

ANISHNAABEG LANGUAGE + EPISTEMOLOGY + HISTORIES

Basil H. Johnston (2007). *Anishinaubae Thesaurus*. East Lansing: Michigan State University.

Basil Johnston (2001). *The Manitous: The Spiritual World of the Ojibway*. Minneapolis: Minnesota Historical Society.

David T. McNab (1999). *Circles of Time: Aboriginal Land Rights and Resistance in Ontario*. Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University.

Dale Standen and David McNab, eds. (1996). *Gin Das Winan: Documenting Aboriginal History in Ontario*. Toronto : Champlain Society.

Anton Treuer (2001). *Living Our Language: Ojibwe Tales & Oral Histories*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota.

William W. Warren (1984). *History of the Ojibway People*. Minneapolis: Minnesota Historical Society.

Angeline Williams (1991). *The Dog's Children*. Winnipeg, MB: University of Manitoba.