

Abstracts
2009 Plateau Conference



NIMIIPUUM WEET'ES (Nez Perce Homeland)

A Film Documentary by Nicolas Barbier
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Nimiipuum Weet'es focuses on land, sovereignty and environmental issues related the Nez Perce Indians and neighboring non-Indian communities in the 13 million acres Nez Perce Indian Homeland in the states of Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. Sixty people speak in the film – half of them Native American – including prominent Native American figures such as John Trudell and Winona LaDuke. *Nimiipuum Weet'es* is divided into two parts (Part 1: 62 minutes; Part 2: 84 minutes). These two parts can be shown separately and maintain their coherence individually, but the two parts put together present the full scope of the film project. This documentary film presents the historical, socio-economic, political, environmental, scientific, and spiritual dimensions of the addressed issues.

Documentary Filmmaking for Endangered Language Communities

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This workshop presentation will introduce the theory and practice of documentary filmmaking/ video production and its broader application to community-based heritage language revitalization and cultural preservation practices. It will provide information necessary to understand the basic elements of the filmmaking process such as getting started, preproduction, production, and post-production. It will also explore some of the key issues informing community-based heritage language revitalization and cultural preservation and ask what might be the implications for documenting the *audio/visual* aspects of culture. Brief film clips will be shown throughout this presentation.

Effects of Climate Change on Our Sacred Foods

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Global climate change is a reality that is occurring today. The increased concentrations of green house gasses will continue to rise through time and will likely continue to increase temperatures in freshwater and saltwater (ocean) ecosystems. Based on current and projected rates of increased CO₂, we make predictions of shifts in fish biodiversity on a global scale, and then project changes in distribution by local extinction and invasion of fish along the Pacific Northwest coast by the year 2050. Under this scenario, indigenous peoples will experience dramatic impacts on aboriginal rights and traditional knowledge systems.

Spiritual Symbiosis: The Jesuit, the Medicine Man, and the Leader of Song

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The story of Tom Connolly (a Jesuit), Gibson Eli (a Spokane healer), and Mitch Michael (Indian hymn leader) is one of friendship fed by a shared desire to engage with Spirit. For the first time in Columbia Plateau history, a Catholic priest was attending indigenous ceremonies and assisting with traditional healings. Conversely, Indian hymns and indigenous songs could be heard emanating from the pews and pulpit of Sacred Heart church, established by Pierre DeSmet a century before. In their work together, Gibson Eli, Fr. Connolly, and Mitch Michael transcended the rigid barriers of religious dogma cast in the nineteenth century in the Columbia Plateau, forging a new path through the thicket of history, where the thorns of religious ideology that divided people by denomination gave way to cooperation, unity, and respect. Through their symbiotic bond, they challenged traditional notions of indigeneity and Catholicism, finding continuity between seemingly disparate faiths. Drawing from the unpublished notes of Fr. Connolly; field interviews with those close to Eli, Connolly and Michael; and research into indigenous Columbia Plateau traditions, this paper will seek to add an important thread to the fabric of Christian/ indigenous history in the Columbia Plateau.

Performing Indianness and Excellence: Nez Perce Jazz Bands of the Twentieth Century

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From time immemorial to today, music has been at the center of American Indian expression and performance. Most scholarship on music or song in Indigenous contexts in North America has focused on the communal reservation or pow-wow contexts, not on expansions of more contemporary or cross-cultural musical expression. My project explores the history of early to mid-20th century Native—specifically Nez Perce—jazz bands, and poses two important questions: “How do these musicians ‘represent’ American Indian history, culture, art forms, spiritual traditions, and/or contemporary issues?,” and “How do Native performing arts imagine and construct liberatory identities, community, and/or nation?” My project explores Philip Deloria’s claims in *Indians in Unexpected Places* that Indian people took advantage of the opportunities that arose from colonization, and that Indians participated actively in the making of American modernity and popular culture. For Nez Perce and other Indian musicians, playing and performing jazz did not signify the success of the civilizing mission of assimilation: the eradication of Indian identity and agency. Instead, it demonstrated Native achievement in musicianship and the negotiation of complex issues of identity and agency in modern America: the *survivance of Indianness*. Nez Perce musicians, like some other Native jazz performers, strategically deployed regalia such as headdresses to exploit ideas of “the primitive,” to complicate hegemonic ideas and expectations of both Indianness and modernity, and to signify their Indian identity and agency.

Envisioning Collaborative Environments for Language Revitalization

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Academic Institutions of the Northwest Pacific Plateau have a unique role to play in supporting language preservation. This session will provide an overview of some of the languages of this region, as well as examine some of the language collections at academic institutions in the Pacific Northwest. Positive outcomes of language programs will be considered and misconceptions regarding language revitalization will be discussed. Collaborative efforts between the WSU Native American Students Center and the Libraries to raise awareness of endangered language issues will also be examined.

The Exiles (1961)
A Film by Kent Mackenzie
Milestone Films

Gritty, realistic and far ahead of its time (in a period when Hollywood films featured noble savages), the script for THE EXILES was created exclusively from recorded interviews with the participants and with their ongoing input during the shooting of the film. Native American writers and activists have long considered the film as one of first works of art to portray modern life honestly and as an important forerunner for the cultural renaissance of American Indian fiction, poetry, filmmaking and theater starting in the 1970s.

Forgotten Voices: Death Records of the Yakama, 1888-1964
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In this presentation I will give an overview of the research and findings offered by Cliff Trafzer and I in the book *Forgotten Voices*. The book focuses on the reservation period and explores the implications of disease and death on the Yakama Reservation. It is our hope that this research will help people understand the many causes of death on the Yakama Reservation and come to some appreciation of the battles that individuals, families, and communities fought just to stay alive in the wake of catastrophic changes during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Historical Trauma and its effects on a Ni mii puu Family; finding story, healing wounds
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The need to heal wounds is profound and deep in the Native American community. Beginning with the first European contact over five hundred years ago, the Native Americans have experienced massive loss of lives, land, traditional ways, languages, forced assimilation, and the freedom to practice our Native religion. These atrocious acts of inhumanity against the Native Americans have been a stumbling block in the healing journey. The purpose of this study was to identify the historical unresolved grief over five generations of a *Ni mii puu* (Nez Perce) family

to identify and heal wounds. This study interlinks two conceptual frameworks. One framework is centered on phases of historical unresolved grief over the generations beginning with the first contact with European culture. The second focused on a healing process that begins with self and moves outward to family, culture, and the world. A description of *Ni mii puu* cultural life before contact with colonial culture is presented. Three research questions guided data collection and analysis: 1) How has my family experienced and survived historical trauma? 2) How have my family's responses to historical trauma contributed to the silencing of our family story? and 3) How might the family release the trauma and wipe its tears and heal the generational wounds? The research method used was scholarly personal narrative. I am an enrolled tribal member and fifth generation from the earliest known first contact with Europeans. *Ni mii puu* history books written with respect and honor were used along with a family genogram, family oral stories, interviews, archival records, photos, papers, and dreams. Results revealed that healing could occur by placing historical pain within the context of bearing witness, affirming identity, empowerment through the memory of survival, affirming the family world view that as *Ni mii puu* we do not have to be made into the white man's image; and affirming that we are living and being *Ni mii puu*. Our story is no longer silenced but has been made public and acknowledged enabling reconciliation, forgiveness, and healing.

Peoplehood, Treaties, Prison Camps, and Governance: Nez Perce Resurgence

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Joined in a peoplehood of language, sacred histories, ceremonies, and sacred territories for more than ten thousand years, Nez Perce leaders relied on this peoplehood as they learned to deal with the United States following treaties made with that nation in 1855 and 1863. Leaders understood that land loss, new governance organizations, separatist religious influences, loss of language, a disruptive war with the United States in 1877, and post-colonial incursions and histories of their peoplehood impinged upon their aboriginal and civil rights. Seeking redress for an abrogated federal surrender accord, deportation to Kansas and Indian Territory prison camps, and permanent removal from their homelands, young leaders relied on peoplehood, the Declaration of Independence, and new relations with the American public, the press, and federal, military, and civilian authorities to force their return to the Northwest in 1885. In their own words, camp leaders expressed the ethnohistory of their incarceration to reinforce their peoplehood and to force their return. They understood that peoplehood guaranteed their rights, that religious freedom reinforced prison camp survival, that their homelands provided healthy environments, and that deportation from sacred homelands impinged upon their religious freedoms.

Aurality and Embodied Knowledge in Nez Perce Religious Texts

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This paper engages a set of interrelated questions: What is the place of liturgical texts in Nez Perce literary history? How can we uncover Nez Perce perspectives in the translation of religious texts? How do we understand a type of linguistic knowledge that is constructed primarily

through aural and embodied experiences, rather than written or spoken exercise? This paper draws upon original texts and translations in the Nez Perce language to pose these questions and invite discussion that honors multiple and sometimes contradictory understandings of Nez Perce religious, cultural, and historical experience.

Using First Foods to Guide Natural Resource Management

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The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation's (CTUIR) Department of Natural Resources has organized its functions and responsibilities through a focus on traditionally gathered resources identified by the Tribal community as "First Foods". The cultural recognition of First Foods is demonstrated in the serving ritual for native foods in the CTUIR's longhouse, the center of community culture. The physical and temporal organization of First Foods manifested in the serving order is also observed in the active physical and ecological processes occurring on the landscapes on which the community depends. Traditional culture and contemporary science reinforce the First Foods paradigm. We utilize First Foods to bring attention to ecological processes that may be devalued outside of Tribal culture and to prioritize efforts to re-naturalize those processes that produce and sustain First Foods. Further, we suggest First Foods provide a direct and culturally appropriate means to monitor and report restoration success to the Tribal community.

Assessing Contaminated Cultural Materials in Museums

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The Tamastlikt Cultural Institute (TCI) and the Arizona State Museum (ASM) have engaged in collaborative programs designed to create awareness and increase consultation on pesticide residues on museum objects subject to repatriation. This issue has only recently received national attention due in part to the concerted efforts emanating from the Arizona State Museum and the University of Arizona. The TCI is one of several institutions that have worked with ASM in developing protocols for potential object testing and mitigation using the XRF (x-ray fluorescence spectrometer). This presentation will discuss how the TCI has worked with ASM to feature the XRF in its popular collections care program, "The Reservation Road Show." A brief history of the pesticide issue and its relationship to NAGPRA will be discussed as well as ASM's multi-disciplinary approach to testing and consultation.

"Holding Sacredness": The Chief Cleveland Kamiakin Oral Histories

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While conducting research for the recent book, *Finding Chief Kamiakin: The Life and Legacy of a Northwest Patriot* (WSU Press, 2008), the authors learned of the existence of two 1956 oral history recordings of Chief Cleveland Kamiakin (1870-1959) and Billy Curlew by Nat Washington of the Grant County Historical Society. Cleveland was the last surviving son of the noted Yakama-Palouse leader, Chief Kamiakin (c. 1800-1878) and traditional chief of the Yakama-Palouse band on the Colville Reservation following the passing of his older brothers in the 1930s. The three men traveled in the fall of 1956 with interpreter Harry Nanamkin to visit traditional campsites in the Moses Lake-Ephrata-Soap Lake area where the two elders spoke about their reverence for the land and experiences in the region. The elders speak entirely in Sahaptin and Moses Columbia-Salish. The authors explain how the recordings were made, recovered, and recently translated. They also share commentary from other present-day elders on the significance of such terms as *ah tow'* and *sikwan'na* to teachings on the world's sacred origins and obligations to creation, family, and others.

Nadasi'ne' Nde' Isdzane' Begoz'aahi' shimaa shini' gokal gowa goshjaa ha'ana'idili' texas-nakaiye' godosczog... "[Returning Lipan Apache Women's Laws, Lands & Strength in El Calaboz Rancheria, Texas-Mexico Border]"

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Poster Session Abstract. Indigenous cultural landscapes through the critical, historical, and archival perspectives of Nde' Isdzane' (Lipan Apache Women), whose customary and traditional lands transverse the U.S.-Mexico border, demonstrate the increasing use and need for interdisciplinary methods and tools to 'map' alternative perspectives of cultural, social and political self-determination in contemporary indigenous communities in North America. This case study of Lipan Apache traditional rancheria societies, spanning multiple generations, in an understudied region along U.S. international borders, provides an opportunity to examine community narratives, archives, and expertise which engenders our understanding of land-tenure, matrilineal and matrilocal societies of Nde' peoples outside the linear construction of U.S. historical memory and reservation, federally-recognized 'Apaches.' By examining alternative experiences of rural, agrarian, hunting and pastoral Nde' societies along the Lower Rio Grande at the nexus of two nation-states (U.S. & Mexico), contemporary Indigenous Studies scholars push the fields of Anthropology, History, Native American Studies, Law and Environmental Studies to complicate current frameworks and models for 'seeing', 'writing' and 'acknowledging' indigenous peoples' perspectives and principals, and their land-based struggles in both U.S. federal and International law fora to control their customary communal lands, laws, resources and communally shared ways of life.

"Shimaa shini' ndé gozlini nagoni'i Land-Made-People"

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Presentation Abstract. This paper/presentation will briefly map the process of utilizing 'Indigenous Cultural Landscapes' as a framework for Lipan Apache women and families to respond and to challenge the United States use of Eminent Domain and the Declaration of Taking for national security purposes and the construction of the border wall. The Secure Fence Act of 2006 provided measures for the government to condemn and to possess indigenous customary and traditional lands, sacred sites, medicinal plant resources and archaeological-historical treasures of the communities along the Texas-Mexico border. The waiver of 36 federal laws paved the way for NAGPRA, and a lengthy list of environmental protection laws to be officially waived, opening up the legal path for U.S. seizure of Native American cultural properties in violation of numerous treaties. In a small communities' demonstrations of traditional and scholarly archival evidence production, El Calaboz Rancheria has reached out to communities of the Pacific Northwest, U.S.-Canadian border indigenous peoples, and the elders to construct a civic engagement mechanism, "Nde' Cultural Landscapes" as a legal, environmental, cultural and economic response to forced seizures of sacred cultures and alternative forms of sovereignty.

***Post Fire Archaeology at Cougar Bar Village (10NP464)
Hells Canyon NRA, Nez Perce County, Idaho***

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This poster illustrates the findings of archaeological field survey conducted by members of the 2008 Geography of the West field class at Cougar Bar. In 2007 a wild land fire burned over the study area providing a rare opportunity observe post fire ecological conditions while enjoying the greatly improved archaeological visibility. The 2008 field results are contextualized by findings of geophysical remote sensing work done in 2007 by archeo-imaging lab director Kenneth L. Kvamme (University of Arkansas) and pedestrian survey of previous (Central Washington University) classes. The objective was to enrich the existing cultural knowledge base through landform based pedestrian survey. Removal of the pre-existing vegetation by recent fire exposed subtle and previously obscured cultural features associated with Native American, historic period mining and Euro-American homestead period land use of Cougar Bar. Several previously unrecorded cultural features and artifacts were identified and recorded. Methods: Field derived spatial data was entered into ARC 9.2 GIS and layered over a combination of digital raster graphic mosaic, digital ortho-quad mosaic and national elevation ten meter datasets to create a distributional map of artifacts and associated cultural features visible on the surface of Cougar Bar.

Kaplac Ilp Ilp and his Legacy
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This paper describes the history and legacy of Kaplac Ilp Ilp, soyapotimtki Archie Phinney. Kaplac Ilp Ilp was born into a Nimiipu family, on September 4, 1903, on an allotment near Culatesac, Idaho. His parents were Frederick and Mary Lily (Weletpu) Phinney. They were enrolled members of the Nez Perce Tribe of Idaho. They were part of a close knit community centered around St. Joseph's Mission located at Slickpoo Idaho. Their primary language was Nimiiputimpt, which was the language of the people of the community.

Spirit Rocks: Histories both Spoken and Stolen

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Many Plateau rocks, boulders, monoliths, and major stone works of the landscape are known as 'people' to the local tribes. Coyote tales, oral traditions, and other stories tell how the spirit being came to inhabit the stone, often as a result of losing a game to Coyote or from some other event or misadventure. Natives and elders told ethnographers of these spirit rocks including reflections on their meaning, often where they were located, and some glimpse of Native interaction with these spirit people. It is known that non-Indians misappropriated some of these stones, such as *itsi-yea-yea tee-kask* [Coyote's Cradle Board] used in a Lapwai Idaho memorial raised in 1923 to Protestant missionary Henry H. Spalding. Another example shows the ill-use of spirit stones at the time of road construction for automobiles, when elders attempted to educate the Euro American public about these special Spirit beings and their history. But some of spirit rocks' destruction was without even these feeble meanings. How many of the Spirit Stones are lost and how many remain is information known to spiritual leaders and traditionalists. This essay surveys several known Spirit Rocks, honors several which non-Natives destroyed and/or confiscated, and draws lessons about their meaning and importance within the Plateau landscape.