

CASE #2

# Northern Arizona University's Cline Library and the *Protocols*

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OVERVIEW:

This case study examines how Northern Arizona University's Cline Library has responded to the [Protocols for Native American Archival Materials](#) since their publication in 2006 and uses examples to support specific recommendations such as building relationships of mutual respect, striving for balance in content and perspectives, accessibility and use, providing context, copying and repatriation, research protocols, and awareness of issues.

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## Introduction and Institutional Context

When discussing the *Protocols for Native American Archival Materials*, it would be difficult to do so without including their relationship to the institution in which they were originally drafted. Northern Arizona University's Cline Library was integral in bringing together a team of international colleagues—nineteen Indigenous and non-Indigenous archivists, librarians, museum curators, historians, and anthropologists—to share ideas and collaborate on what would eventually become the *Protocols*. These authors gathered in the Presidents' Room of the library, a special space available to the university president for various special events; it is aptly located within the footprint of the library's Special Collections and Archives department. Since their publication in spring 2006, the *Protocols* have had profound impact on Cline Library, Northern Arizona University, and the profession in a regional, national, and international capacity.

It has been thirteen years since their release, and the archival profession has spent much of this time debating the *Protocols* and its place within contemporary archival theory and practice. While Cline Library was quick to embrace the guidelines articulated in the *Protocols*, archivists and librarians across the country took a much more cautious and skeptical approach. In late 2007, the Society of American Archivists created a task force that surveyed archivists in the United States about the *Protocols*; they released their findings publicly in February 2008.<sup>1</sup> The report emphasized many trepidations that archivists felt about how the *Protocols* would impinge on core professional values concerning access and both academic and intellectual freedoms. At the core of the feedback was a sense of discomfort with the level of engagement with source communities recommended in the *Protocols*, and how firmly held understandings of intellectual and physical property rights were now being challenged. The Society of American Archivists' (SAA) Native American Archives Roundtable, created in 2005, helped with the formation of the Native American *Protocols* Forum Working Group; they facilitated discussions at the 2009, 2010, and 2011 SAA Annual Meetings.<sup>2</sup> These sessions were designed as a way to present the *Protocols* to archival colleagues broadly and answer any questions asked by the SAA membership more directly. Despite ongoing and repeated concerns, a quiet revolution was already forming: the *Protocols* were now being discussed and debated in the profession and the classroom. A new generation of information professionals were becoming more engaged with issues of equality and social justice. Contemporaneously, institutions of all shapes and sizes shared with the Forum Working Group that they had begun implementing aspects of the guidelines in their own collaborative work with local Indigenous communities. It would not take long before SAA would confirm its commitments to issues of diversity and inclusion<sup>3</sup> and see an evolution with its core values and ethics to support this.

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<sup>1</sup> Society of American Archivists, "Report: SAA Task Force to Review *Protocols for Native American Archival Materials* (February 2008)," <http://files.archivists.org/governance/taskforces/0208-NativeAmProtocols-IIIa.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> The Native American *Protocols* Forum Working Group released a full report on these meetings in 2012: <https://www2.archivists.org/sites/all/files/0112-V-I-NativeAmProtocolsForum.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> Society of American Archivists, "Statement on Diversity and Inclusion," revised August 2016, <https://www2.archivists.org/statements/saa-statement-on-diversity-and-inclusion>.

The most recent Society of American Archivists endorsement of the *Protocols* as an external standard (August 2018) provides further validation of its continued acceptance and use. However, Cline Library had been engaged with implementing aspects of the document well before then. Northern Arizona University was one of the first national institutions to both endorse and adopt the *Protocols*, providing the library with significant leverage when determining effective and meaningful implementation strategies, including building upon any existing efforts. As such, Cline Library is uniquely positioned to help model how other publicly-funded state institutions of higher learning can interpret the “guidelines for action” contained in the *Protocols*. As a precursor, it should be emphasized that Cline Library sees the *Protocols* as a series of descriptive guidelines, rather than prescriptive rules that *must* be followed. The authors recommended that “Institutions and communities are encouraged to adopt and adapt the culturally responsive recommendations to suit local needs.”<sup>4</sup> Every repository and Indigenous community is unique and will both interpret and adopt the *Protocols* according to their own institutional goals or objectives. As will be shown throughout this case study, several guidelines have not been exercised at Cline Library; this may be because they were not applicable within the library’s past or present operations, or perhaps because a situation requiring an intervention advised in the *Protocols* had not yet presented itself. For this reason, the *Protocols* functions most effectively as an invaluable reference tool for non-Indigenous repositories seeking to strengthen their connections with Indigenous communities represented in their holdings. As each section within the *Protocols* demonstrates, these collaborations cover a breadth of relatable topics. Ultimately, this case study examines how Cline Library has responded to the *Protocols* and uses examples to support specific recommendations addressed throughout the document. It is hoped that other similar institutions, or even those with different funding structures (i.e., private, corporate) or that are located in different geographic locales, can find Cline Library’s experiences useful in their own interpretations and implementations.

Cline Library continues to thank the nineteen contributors<sup>5</sup> who came to Flagstaff to draft this important document; without them and their participation the profession would not be having these critical conversations that help to move the rights of Indigenous peoples in a positive direction. Many of these original contributors continue to collaborate with Cline Library on issues of shared stewardship of Indigenous resources. Special kudos must be made as well to Karen Underhill<sup>6</sup>, former Head of Special Collections and Archives at Cline Library. Underhill was instrumental in securing funding to bring the group together, ultimately realizing over a decade of personal and professional commitment to better serving Cline Library and Northern Arizona University’s Indigenous communities, patrons, and colleagues.

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<sup>4</sup> First Archivists Circle, *Protocols for Native American Archival Materials* (Flagstaff: Northern Arizona University, 2006), 7.

<sup>5</sup> Kathryn “Jody” Beaulieu (Anishinabe/Ojibwe), Briana Bob (Colville Confederated Tribes), Sheree Bonaparte (Mohawk/Akwesasne), Steve Crum (Shoshone), Amelia Flores (Mohave), Alana Garwood-Houng (Yorta Yorta), David George-Shongo (Seneca), Eunice Kahn (Diné), Stewart Koyiyumptewa (Hopi), Kim Lawson (Heiltsuk), Robert Leopold, Gloria Lomahaftewa (Hopi), James Nason (Comanche), Jennifer R. O’Neil (Confederated Tribes of Grande Ronde/Chinook), Lotsee Patterson (Comanche), Richard Pearce-Moses, Willow Roberts Powers, Alyce Sadongei (Kiowa/Tohono O’odham), Karen Underhill.

<sup>6</sup> For Underhill’s excellent description of the ten sections of the *Protocols*, see: Underhill, Karen J., “Protocols for Native American Archival Materials,” *RBM: A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Cultural Heritage* 7:2 (2006), 134–145. Available from: <https://rbm.acrl.org/index.php/rbm/article/view/267>.

## Building Relationships of Mutual Respect

Cline Library has benefited from the broader institution's commitment to serving Native American and Indigenous students, staff, and adjacent communities. In its most recent strategic plan<sup>7</sup>, Northern Arizona University has made "Commitment to Native Americans" its third out of five institutional goals, prioritizing it after "Student Success and Access" and "Research and Discovery."<sup>8</sup> Within this goal are five objectives, one of which asks NAU to "Collaborate with Native/Indigenous nations to develop projects and programs for the direct benefit of Native American and Indigenous communities," while another seeks to "Promote appreciation and understanding of Native American/Indigenous people, cultures, and nations within the university and in the broader community."<sup>9</sup> These objectives dovetail with the functions of the campus' Native American Cultural Center (NACC),<sup>10</sup> which opened in 2011 and serves as a familial space for the nearly 900 Native American and Indigenous students; these students represent approximately 3% of NAU's total student population.<sup>11</sup> Staff with NACC, in particular the NAU Vice President of Native American Affairs, have done significant work with relationship-building among the twenty-one federally recognized tribes<sup>12</sup> and their representatives in Arizona. Cline Library has collaborated with NACC on a number of occasions when materials in its possession relate to communities in which the library seeks updated or altogether new contacts with a tribe's historic preservation office, library, archives, or community center. In some cases, Cline Library has longstanding relationships with specific communities, and NACC staff have been receptive to coordinating efforts and sharing resources.

Relationship-building involves labor on the part of the institution seeking collaborations with tribal communities. Rather than the community doing all of the work to discover resources pertaining to them in Cline Library collections, the library's Special Collections and Archives (SCA) department has combed through many of its primary-source resources and has created a comprehensive LibGuide to "Indigenous Peoples in Special Collections and Archives."<sup>13</sup> This tool has the capacity to significantly increase engagements with communities, and provides a checklist-like opportunity for consultation and collaboration. By way of example, out of the 568 primary-source collections that comprise archival holdings in SCA, 193 of them contain content that refer to the Navajo/Diné community. The LibGuide is organized in a navigable series of subject tabs, which helps organize the 193 collections in a meaningful and engaging manner for multiple audiences. While this approach is more proactive, ad-hoc consultations with specific collections have also occurred, requiring the identification of an appropriate liaison with a specific tribe depending on the contents of the materials. SCA's digital archives,<sup>14</sup> for example, generally

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<sup>7</sup> Northern Arizona University, *2018-2025 Strategic Plan: One NAU. Side by Side*. <https://nau.edu/strategic-plan-2025>.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Northern Arizona University, "Goal 3: Commitment to Native Americans," in *2018-2025 Strategic Plan: One NAU. Side by Side*. <https://nau.edu/strategic-plan-2025/commitment-to-native-americans/>.

<sup>10</sup> "Native American Cultural Center," Northern Arizona University, <https://in.nau.edu/native-american-cultural-center/>.

<sup>11</sup> Naomi Bishop, Jonathan Pringle, and Carissa Tsoie, "Connecting Cline Library with Tribal Communities: A Case Study," in *Collection Management* 42:3-4 (2017), 240-255. Available from <http://openknowledge.nau.edu/5229/>.

<sup>12</sup> "List of Federal and State Recognized Tribes," *National Conference of State Legislatures*, <http://www.ncsl.org/research/state-tribal-institute/list-of-federal-and-state-recognized-tribes.aspx#az>.

<sup>13</sup> "Indigenous Peoples in Special Collections and Archives," <https://libraryguides.nau.edu/c.php?g=759211>.

<sup>14</sup> "Special Collections and Archives Digital Archives," <http://archive.library.nau.edu/cdm/search/>.

contain materials pertinent to the US Southwest, however a recent accidental digitization of a series of Menominee images from Wisconsin (well outside SCA's geographic collecting scope) turned into an opportunity to engage with a community that would otherwise not have known these materials existed.<sup>15</sup>

Transfers of records between institutions is a frequent and necessary occurrence, and one that can lend itself well to future collaborations and increased trust-building. Geographic scope is a strong consideration when determining whether an archives' holdings should be retained; in many cases archival professionals find more suitable repositories for those materials that are felt to be outside of its collecting scope. Yet simply retaining records due to their content being relevant within the geographic boundaries of the institution is not enough. In many cases, rights to materials can reside with other entities; in others, a donor may not have even had the rights necessary to convey to an institution in the first place. Further still, a competing institution within the same geographic area may ultimately be more suitable for the long-term care of the materials. Nowhere can this be more frequently seen than with the records of anthropologists and archaeologists. The Southwest has been the focus of extensive archaeological excavation and anthropological research. SCA houses the research files of a number of well-known regional anthropologists. In some cases, the work they were doing was located directly on tribal land; in one instance, the tribe commissioned the work itself. Beginning in 2016, a significant deaccessioning project was undertaken that saw a portion of the archaeological records of one such anthropologist, Dr. Robert Euler,<sup>16</sup> returned to the respective land owner (tribal, state, or federal) or another agency/institution tasked with managing and maintaining the materials through any sort of existing curation agreements. Outreach to a tribe's historic preservation departments or their libraries, archives, or museums helped facilitate this positive opportunity to form new partnerships and further develop existing ones. To ensure the integrity of the materials and to help facilitate transparency, as physical records were being deaccessioned, patrons were given details about where those records had been sent through the finding guide (figure 1).

Relationship-building also similarly extends to establishing policies and agreements with Indigenous communities around collaboration. Collaboration is critical for institutions in possession of potentially harmful or culturally sensitive information in their repositories. Since the early 1990s, NAU has had a formal partnership with the Hopi Cultural Preservation Office and a series of reciprocal actions expressed through a formal memorandum of agreement (MOA).<sup>17</sup> The most recent version of this MOA was signed between NAU President Dr. Rita Cheng and Hopi Tribal Chairman Herman G. Honanie in November 2016. The MOA with the Hopi Tribe is a commitment-based response that strikes many similar tones seen in

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<sup>15</sup> A chance encounter with a Menominee woman at the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual International Conference of Indigenous Archives, Libraries, and Museums in Prior Lake, MN (October 2018) allowed this author to share a hyperlink for digital materials in SCA holdings related to the Menominee. This effort was designed to allow for future collaborative opportunities that would help facilitate the identification of sensitive materials or other mutually beneficial access efforts.

<sup>16</sup> "Robert C. Euler Finding Guide," Arizona Archives Online, [http://www.azarchivesonline.org/xtf/view?docId=ead/nau/euler\\_robert.xml](http://www.azarchivesonline.org/xtf/view?docId=ead/nau/euler_robert.xml).

<sup>17</sup> Hopi Tribe and the Arizona Board of Regents [ABOR] Acting for and on Behalf of Northern Arizona University, *Memorandum of Agreement* (revised November 2016), internal document.

**Figure 1.** Deaccession Note in the Robert C. Euler Collection from *Arizona Archives Online*.

the *Protocols*. For example, the *Protocols* asks that archives and libraries “Be cautious in approving access or use requests, if the requests appear to conflict with the *Protocols*, until appropriate tribal community representatives can be consulted and have had ample time to consider these issues for culturally affiliated materials.”<sup>18</sup> In its MOA with the Hopi Tribe, Cline Library agrees to “Refer requests for any form of reproduction of ceremonial or culturally sensitive photographs to the Hopi Cultural Preservation Office in recognition of and to meet the intent of Hopi Tribal Council Resolution H-070-94.”<sup>19</sup>

Recognizing the sovereignty of Indigenous nations has helped Cline Library when communicating with its patrons and donors about how communities are involved with the review of materials post-acquisition. In a draft of a new collections management policy, in a section titled “Commitment to Donors,” Special Collections and Archives relays to donors that “Cline Library and SCA have endorsed the *Protocols for Native American Archival Materials* (2006), and as such primary-source (archival) materials focused on Indigenous peoples are subject to periodic cultural review by the respective community. These reviews may similarly result in restrictions and/or disposition or deaccession as per the wishes of the donor as expressed in the SCA Deed of Gift.”<sup>20</sup> Once approved, it is anticipated that the full collections management policy will be made available online for both patrons and donors in the near future, as a tool towards greater transparency.

<sup>18</sup> First Archivists Circle, 8.

<sup>19</sup> Hopi Tribe and ABOR, Cline Library agreement #2.

<sup>20</sup> Cline Library, Special Collections and Archives, “Commitment to Donors,” *Collections Management Policy* [draft], internal document, 16.

## Striving for Balance in Content and Perspectives

In 2011, fifteen archival repositories in the state of Arizona participated in the Arizona Archives Matrix project.<sup>21</sup> This project utilized a survey tool to elicit information about a variety of aspects about the holdings held in a variety of institutions across the state. One measure was the extent Native American-focused holdings were present in each repository, as well as overall across all fifteen. Institutions selected “Native American” as the primary subject in 6% (total count) and 7% (linear footage) of overall collections in their repositories. Cline Library’s Special Collections and Archives responses accounted for 24% of these when measuring the *number* of collections; it only represented 7% when describing *linear footage*.<sup>22</sup> None of the fifteen institutions that responded were associated with an Indigenous community; it was posited that the survey instrument itself was not responsive to specific individual community taxonomies or ontologies.<sup>23</sup> Out of 704 primary source archival collections found in Special Collections and Archives, 111 of them were identified as either primarily or secondarily focused on Indigenous communities. While these numbers seemed encouraging, the matrix project team considered the lack of direct Indigenous creation and authorship of these materials, and openly challenged the extent to which these collections supported self-representation.<sup>24</sup>

The *Protocols* encourages archives and libraries to “make an effort to collect resources created by rather than just about Native Americans.”<sup>25</sup> Special Collections and Archives realizes the extent to which its resources are the reflections and observations of outsiders, and has recently engaged in a survey of its Navajo/Diné-themed holdings to flesh out those resources that are genuinely Diné-created (figure 2).<sup>26</sup> Several of the subjects, including “Animals,” “Ethnography,” “Trading Posts,” and “Health” prioritize records featuring direct Diné voices and perspectives above those created by outside observers. This visual reminder of the dearth of Diné-led materials is a humbling reminder of the effects of colonialism and the structures in which archives have been both collecting and creating. It also serves as a call to action for institutions to collaborate more closely with source communities on the preservation (of) and access to Indigenous-led archival resources. Whether these be more intentional documentation projects, or more simply an increase in referrals of researchers to a tribal repository, SCA encourages its patrons to seek additional opportunities to hear Indigenous voices in the research process.

Respectful management of resources in Special Collections and Archives extends to the physical environment in which collections are stored and understanding that specific individuals may not wish to handle certain materials. The *Protocols* asks archives and libraries to “Respect and act on both Native

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<sup>21</sup> “Arizona Archives Matrix,” <http://azarchivesmatrix.org>.

<sup>22</sup> “Native American Collections,” Arizona Archives Matrix, <https://azarchivesmatrix.org/matrix-results/top-subjects/nativeamerican/>.

<sup>23</sup> Libby Coyner and Jonathan Pringle, “Metrics and Matrices: Surveying the Past to Create a Better Future,” *American Archivist* 77:2 (Fall/Winter 2014), 465.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 476.

<sup>25</sup> First Archivists Circle, 9.

<sup>26</sup> *Navajo/Diné*, “Indigenous Peoples in Special Collections and Archives,” <https://libraryguides.nau.edu/c.php?g=759211&p=5444402>.

Welcome	Ethnography	Popular Sites	Trading Posts	Material Culture	Physical Environment	Animals	Politics
Engineering	Military	Education	Religion	Language	Health	Archaeology	Appropriation

A number of collections in Special Collections and Archives focus on traditional and contemporary perspectives on including raising sheep, goats, horses, and cattle, and their use for food or material goods, or for broader utilitarian purposes.

- [View relevant publications](#) available at Cline Library
- [Search the SCA digital archives](#) for digitized information
- Come to Special Collections and Archives and ask for the following vertical/clippings file:
  - Navajo--Agriculture
  - Navajo--Livestock
  - Navajo--Wildlife

**Diné Perspectives**

Navajo Chairman [Raymond Nakai](#) (served from 1963-1971) spoke at the third annual Convention of Navajo Cattle Growers in 1963. A digital version of the speech he made is available [here](#). Another related speech he made to the group in 1966 is available [here](#). He made another speech to the California Livestock Association in 1968 and it is available [here](#).

**Other Perspectives**

The [Day Family](#) were traders in the late 19th century; they maintained records related to their interactions with those involved in the sale of sheep and cattle in the early 20th century. Explorer [Stuart M. Young](#)



**Figure 2.** Resources Related to “Animals” in the Diné Resources Page.

American as well as “Western” approaches to caring for archival collections. Traditional knowledge systems possess equal integrity and validity. Actions and policies for preservation, access, and use based on Native American approaches will in some cases be priorities, as a result of consultations with a tribal community.”<sup>27</sup> In late 2010, a Diné student working in SCA was reviewing a donation of books. A curious envelope at the bottom of the box, titled “Beware. Snake!!!,” was opened and it was discovered to indeed be a snake skin, an item from an animal that is considered taboo and a bad omen for the Diné as well as several other Indigenous nations. The student alerted the head of SCA, who in turn immediately contacted the dean of the library; shortly thereafter, the special advisor to the president for Native American Affairs contacted the head of SCA. SCA received instructions to place the contents of the envelope in the forest in a remote location for natural deterioration. A local medicine man, who was on contract with NAU for such matters, visited the department and performed a ceremony to cleanse the area and restore balance. The student worker’s family addressed any of her personal health needs. The department and library learned many lessons from the situation:

1. Know who to inform and consult should a problem arise.
2. Appreciate that such a discovery can cause serious emotional and possibly physical harm (health) for the Indigenous student or employee.
3. Embrace the idea of caring for materials in different ways (cleansing, blessing by a recognized representative from a community of origin).<sup>28</sup>

It is anticipated that more direct guidance will be provided in a forthcoming SCA preservation policy.

<sup>27</sup> First Archivists Circle, 9–10.

<sup>28</sup> Personal email correspondence with Karen Underhill, February 11, 2019.

## Accessibility and Use

Special Collections and Archives is aware that materials presently in its possession may contain items of a culturally-sensitive nature, and that in certain instances there will be an impact on patron access and use. As a preemptive measure, archives and libraries should “seek active consultations with authorized Native American community representatives to review culturally affiliated collections in order to determine whether problems of original collection and ownership should lead to access and use restrictions being placed on some materials, whether some collections should be repatriated, (returned) or whether some materials should be available for access only with prior community review and approval.”<sup>29</sup> SCA strives for transparency in such situations, and uses its finding guides to communicate with the public about both (1) the nature of the restriction and under whose authority; and (2) the methods and procedures by which the restriction can be lifted. In the MOA between NAU and the Hopi Tribe, the Tribe agrees to “Consult on culturally sensitive issues and items related to the Hopi Tribe. NAU and [the Hopi] Tribe will continue to work collaboratively and responsively to cultural sensitivity issues involving access and preservation of the Hopi Tribe’s collections. To support NAU’s efforts, the Tribe will respond to Cline Library requests for consultation around culturally sensitive issues involving access to Hopi archival collections within 2 business days.”<sup>30</sup> These meaningful engagements have resulted in myriad tailored approaches, including restrictions at *either* the access or use level, or outright deaccessioning to a more appropriate repository—in many cases one that is tribally-affiliated. As a form of accountability, it is imperative that the archivist track these decisions (i.e., in a donor file) and make as much information as possible available to the public through an associated finding guide. Approaches such as these have enabled SCA to acknowledge historic power imbalances and give Indigenous communities the opportunity to assert greater control over how their culture is accessed and communicated about.

Access and use are also integral concepts when considering how accessible SCA collections are to the communities themselves. Non-Indigenous approaches to archival theory, practice, and even the design of archives and library buildings run the risk of making community access to archival resources both unwelcoming and intimidating. Indeed, the *Protocols* encourage institutions to “involve communities in creating welcoming and comfortable spaces for Native American visitors and rethink the need for “credentials” from patrons.”<sup>31</sup> Having worked closely with several community members over a number of years, SCA has had the opportunity to witness first-hand a number of visible and/or invisible barriers that exist for access. In concert with an overhaul to its website, in 2016 SCA worked with the library’s User Experience (UX) group to design specific personae that represent how diverse users would navigate the new SCA website. In addition to several personae devoted to on-campus users (undergraduate and graduate students; faculty; administrator), SCA staff developed off-campus users, including a fictional Indigenous woman elder named Zula Begay,<sup>32</sup> to understand their unique journey maps and significant hurdles when navigating both Cline Library’s virtual *and* physical spaces. By way of example, Zula’s

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<sup>29</sup> First Archivists Circle, 11.

<sup>30</sup> Hopi Tribe and ABOR, Hopi Tribe agreement #1.

<sup>31</sup> First Archivists Circle, 11.

<sup>32</sup> Bishop, Pringle, and Tsosie, 252.

experience has helped shape impending policies that are more lenient for patrons who do not present themselves with photo identification or have access to a credit card if a payment is necessary.

### **Culturally Sensitive Materials**

Special Collections and Archives has taken a balanced approach to its position on topics such as open access, as well as academic and intellectual freedom as these concepts intersect with the management of culturally sensitive materials. While providing as open access as possible is a goal for SCA, it will not do so at the risk of its collaborative relationships with tribal colleagues. For public institutions, it becomes even more complex if an institution is bound by state statutes that interpret privately donated collections to be official public records. The state of Arizona does not explicitly describe these types of donations as a formal public record. While privately donated archival holdings to Northern Arizona University are generally executed with a transfer of physical and intellectual rights to the state, the library operates with the understanding that these materials are not subject to public records laws. Several other states have interpreted their records laws similarly. Thus, SCA applies appropriate and reasonable restrictions (third-party privacy; cultural) on its materials with minimal risk of violating state statute mandating the public's right to access them. In general, SCA places very few restrictions on materials at the *access* level, meaning that most materials are openly available for patrons on-site and in-person. Exceptions are made for materials that have been isolated because of federal privacy legislation such as HIPAA and FERPA. However, a range of materials have been restricted at the *use* level, meaning that use of these materials (which have been flagged as culturally sensitive), will require permission from the corresponding tribal community representative prior to SCA releasing rights for use. This also correlates with what SCA provides online access to in its digital archives. In its MOA with the Hopi Tribe, SCA commits to "In consultation with the Tribe, refrain from digitizing ceremonial or culturally sensitive archival materials for public access via the World Wide Web in the Library's Colorado Plateau Archives."<sup>33</sup>

Donors of SCA materials, both past and present, are integral to supporting SCA's mission, vision, and values. It is important that donors be apprised of how SCA will balance its commitments to both donors and tribal communities when discussing concerns around cultural sensitivity. A draft of SCA's collections management policy informs donors that, "to the best of its ability, SCA will communicate with donors about any changes in the management of donated materials, such as any new retention and disposal recommendations; any significant changes in the condition of materials; or any third-party restrictions on the content of materials due to privacy, legislative, or cultural sensitivity concerns."<sup>34</sup> It is important that donors are communicated with as openly and transparently as possible in advance of the acquisition of materials that are potentially subject to cultural restriction, so that they can make a more informed decision about whether SCA is a good fit for them and their own goals.

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<sup>33</sup> Hopi Tribe and ABOR, Cline Library agreement #3.

<sup>34</sup> Cline Library, Special Collections and Archives, "Commitment to Donors," *Collections Management Policy* [draft], internal document, 13.

## Providing Context

Feedback received in the 2008 “SAA Task Force to Review *Protocols for Native American Archival Materials*” included concerns about how the *Protocols* recommended that institutions “add explanations of derogatory words to original titles (e.g., [title created by xxx in xxxx year]) or remove offensive terms from original titles and provide substitute language (e.g., replace “squaw” or “buck” with [woman] or [man]).”<sup>35</sup> A core tenet of archival theory and practice is to preserve the original materials, as their creators intended, and to not alter or misrepresent the circumstances in which they were originally created. SCA supports the preservation of *both* contexts; that of its initial creation as well as a complementary cultural perspective/correction. This can be most visibly demonstrated through SCA’s digital archives with items that include problematic titles or descriptions by those responsible for their creation (figure 3). SCA’s digital archives also allow for complementary traditional knowledge to be added, however at this point this feature has not been used. More flexible tools, such as the open-source software Mukurtu,<sup>36</sup> have very thoughtfully considered how communities can be included in the shared management of digitized resources related to them. Mukurtu also provides for myriad integrated media tools to encourage community-based context.

### Supai Squaw Weaving Basket, Cataract Canyon, Arizona [title provided by creator]

View Description

Download



**Figure 3.** Derogatory Title Retained and Used for Caption.

<sup>35</sup> First Archivists Circle, 15.

<sup>36</sup> Mukurtu CMS, <http://mukurtu.org/>.

## Copying and Repatriation of Records to Native American Communities

When determining with how best SCA can 'return' information to a community, several options are available. For those materials genuinely created *by* the source community, or if an outside contractor (whose records were donated to SCA) represent work done on tribal land, these can simply be deaccessioned and returned to the appropriate tribal liaison or department. In general, SCA does not keep copies of these materials unless the tribe requests this as a preservation measure. If these returned materials comprised a portion of records that were retained, a corresponding 'Related Materials' note in the finding guide will point patrons to the tribal repository where that information can now be found. The situation becomes less clear when creators and/or donors rightfully own records created or collected *about* source communities. SCA approaches issues of cultural sensitivity in these records seriously, while also understanding that each situation may require a slightly nuanced approach to an appropriate resolution if there are sensitive materials within. This is especially true if a creator or donor has specific expectations about their materials, and even more so if there are monetary strings attached.

An outright deaccession of materials to an appropriate tribal repository is the extreme solution; this might occur if it is felt that the other repository would be better equipped to provide long-term access to those sensitive materials.<sup>37</sup> More commonly, a two-pronged approach would include providing copies (or digital surrogates) to communities and collaborating with appropriate representatives on a series of restrictions. As previously articulated, such restrictions would need to be specific about (1) the nature of the restriction and under whose authority; and (2) the methods and procedures by which the restriction can be lifted. SCA recognizes the power of words, and will seldom utilize the term "repatriation" to describe the return of archival materials to source communities. Repatriation is a term that is too closely connected to the Native American Graves and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), where federal institutions and those receiving federal money must return human remains, associated and unassociated funerary objects, and objects of cultural patrimony to source communities. Archival materials have not yet been subject to NAGPRA. Instead, SCA favors "deaccession," "disposition," and "transfer" to detail a process that is very familiar and common to archives and archivists.

## Native American Research Protocols

Northern Arizona University respects the tribal sovereignty of communities who wish to better control who is doing research on their land and with their people. The Navajo Nation Human Research Review Board<sup>38</sup> was established in 1996 and works closely with NAU and its Human Research Protection Program for on-campus research involving Navajo subjects and research topics. Similarly, the Hopi Cultural Preservation Office has established its own research protocols and process to help facilitate respectful

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<sup>37</sup> NAU Cline Library has served as a pass-through agency for Indigenous collections. An oral history project from a teacher at the Tuba City high school was offered to SCA. The oral history narrators included medicine men/ceremonial information. With the original teacher's full knowledge, SCA sent the recordings along to the Navajo Nation Museum in Window Rock.

<sup>38</sup> Navajo Nation Human Research Review Board, <http://www.nnhrrb.navajo-nsn.gov/aboutNNHRRB.html>.

research for researchers seeking to work with Hopi tribal members.<sup>39</sup> Oftentimes, patrons doing research focused on those communities will begin their research by consulting primary source holdings in SCA. The department and its staff do not engage in any sort of vetting with patrons interested in pursuing such research, but will encourage them to coordinate efforts by communicating their intended goals with the source communities. The *Protocols* notes the benefits of engaging with communities in the research process, and that “A community will often endorse a project which complies with tribal guidelines.”<sup>40</sup>

## **Awareness of Native American Communities and Issues**

Cline Library has engaged with Indigenous communities and highlighted issues faced within through myriad programmatic activities and academic pursuits.<sup>41</sup> Librarians and archivists have begun integrating concepts of critical librarianship in their instructional program; SCA strives to incorporate critical librarianship when evaluating the trustworthiness of the primary resources in the department that purport to speak with authority on Indigenous issues. Students are encouraged to evaluate resources for concerns about authority, authenticity, and reliability. Questions must be asked:

1. Who created this information? Under whose authority?
2. Has the community endorsed it?
3. Is additional context available that supports Indigenous knowledge?

Cline Library librarians and archivists have also been more intentional with collection development and seek the acquisition of Indigenous-authored publications and primary resources. Finally, the library’s Native American and Indigenous Film Series provides opportunities for both commercial and archival films to be screened that center Indigenous voices and perspectives. At a 2017 screening, director Rachel Tso screened her 1994 documentary “Crimes Against Humanity,” which focuses on the forced relocation of Navajo people during the Navajo-Hopi relocation period that began in 1974. A question and answer period followed the screening; this was helpful in more directly connecting the library with communities and the broader public, which helped leverage the library’s role as an active space to encourage social change.

## **Conclusion**

There is much more work that needs to be done as Cline Library and Special Collections and Archives seeks to improve its relationships and connections to Indigenous communities. In addition to the successes to date, there are ongoing challenges that require new approaches and ideas that beg for investigation and experimentation. As archivists, our work is nuanced and requires us to consider that, “In all questions of access, [we] seek practical solutions that balance competing principles and interests.”<sup>42</sup> A careful examination of current practice may reveal that there are both visible and

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<sup>39</sup> Hopi Cultural Preservation Office, *Protocol for Research, Publication, and Recordings: Motion, Visual, Sound, Multimedia and other Mechanical Devices*, <http://www8.nau.edu/hcpo-p/ResProto.pdf>.

<sup>40</sup> *Protocols*.

<sup>41</sup> Bishop, Pringle, and Tsosie.

<sup>42</sup> Society of American Archivists, “Code of Ethics-Access and Use” in *SAA Core Values Statement and Code of Ethics*, <https://www2.archivists.org/statements/saa-core-values-statement-and-code-of-ethics>.

invisible barriers to effective collaboration with Indigenous communities. Competing interests may include deeply held institutional policies that have never been challenged or previously considered as impediments. The *Protocols* offer an excellent set of guidelines to evaluate where these barriers exist within an institution, and where the work can begin to break them down.