

Indigenous Representation and Preservation Challenges in Audiovisual Archives

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Abstract: Tribal communities possess a wealth of knowledge that represents each community's unique worldview, and these ideas and beliefs are represented in both tangible and intangible media: manuscripts, songs, film, audio recordings, and religious ceremonies, among other manifestations. Representation of indigenous films and photographs in audiovisual repositories is a contentious subject in the archival community, and it closely relates to the tensions surrounding intellectual property and traditional knowledge. With a rich and diverse history, this study focuses on the universal challenges faced by communities across the Americas and how communities have banded together to address issues of representation, intellectual property, and artistic expression.

This poster broaches these questions by analyzing intellectual property, preservation challenges and approaches, and cultural representation through the analysis of three distinct scenarios in the United States, Canada, and Mexico. I explored scholarly articles, primary audiovisual sources, and archival descriptions of indigenous collections to probe these topics. While this paper was initially designed to consist of first-person perspectives via direct interviews with tribal repositories, indigenous filmmakers, and artists, the present state of global affairs at the time of researching this paper helped shift the focus of this research to the preservation efforts and representation of tribal communities in audiovisual archives.

About the author:

Bárbara Carrera is a Simmons University Master of Science candidate in the Department of Library and Information Sciences with a concentration in Archives Management. She is presently employed as the Records Manager with the Boston Housing Authority, working with the agency's departments to develop retrieval and organizational systems to address each program's needs and ensure compliance with legal and federal retention policies. Bárbara also volunteers at the Dedham Historical Society in Dedham, Massachusetts and is presently working on developing a finding aid for one of the museum's genealogical collections. Bárbara earned her Bachelors of Arts from Cornell University with majors in Sociology and American Studies and minors in Latino Studies and Inequality Studies, after which, she dedicated ten years of her professional career in Boston's nonprofit affordable housing sector.

With over ten years of experience advocating for fair housing and working with Boston's homeless and low-income communities, Bárbara is transitioning to the field of Library and Information Sciences to address issues of inequality in information access, equal representation

in archival collections, and providing communities with a public platform to share their histories through a variety of media. Bárbara is a native of Waterbury, Connecticut who dedicates her spare time to volunteering with Boston's Forgotten Felines, an animal welfare organization, and to fostering stray and abandoned cats. Additionally, she spends time with her husband exploring the many hiking trails Massachusetts has to offer.