

Community and Indigenous Knowledge Resources:

What should we be aware of?

How can we help students respectfully engage with Indigenous Knowledge and community resources within a colonial educational framework?



Anne Carr-Wiggin



UNIVERSITY OF
ALBERTA



44 First Nations in three treaty areas; 124 reserves; and approximately 700,537 hectares of reserve land.

Many First Nations and Métis people live outside the reserves.

The most commonly spoken First Nations languages are: Blackfoot, Cree, Chipweyan, Dene, Sarcee, and Stoney (Nakoda Sioux).



UNIVERSITY OF
ALBERTA

Indigenous knowledge / traditional knowledge

Indigenous ways of knowing

Indigenous research methods

Growing acceptance

Sensitivity to both



UNIVERSITY OF
ALBERTA

Role of libraries

Preservation and access

Protocols

Teaching and awareness

Staff sensitivity and familiarity



UNIVERSITY OF
ALBERTA



Indigenous research methods

Relationships
Cultural significance
Narrative
Ceremony

Challenge the notion of neutrality of the researcher

Aim to animate postcolonial institutions with Indigeneity

Challenge the assumptions of domination, patriarchy, racism

Growing acceptance – the proposed PhD program in Indigenous Studies at UA will use Indigenous research methods



UNIVERSITY OF
ALBERTA

Course requirements

Peer reviewed resources – valued by mainstream and Indigenous scholars

Primary sources –

Many assignments require or encourage the use of primary sources

Indigenous knowledge resources can often be used here



UNIVERSITY OF
ALBERTA



Primary sources -

Community-produced materials

Images of traditional clothing, regalia, activities

Recordings / digital versions of traditional practices

(Ceremonies are not usually photographed or recorded and if they are, it may not be appropriate to use them.)

Oral pieces



UNIVERSITY OF
ALBERTA

Issues in using Indigenous knowledge

Assessing the quality of the information without peer review

Ethics requirements for obtaining information directly from people.



UNIVERSITY OF
ALBERTA

Questions and discussion

Anne Carr-Wiggin anne.carr-wiggin@ualberta.ca

Photo credits: Bonnie Gallinger, Anne Carr-Wiggin



UNIVERSITY OF
ALBERTA



