

# Libraries' Support Services for Indigenous Research & Scholarship at the University of Manitoba

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## Acknowledgements

The University of Manitoba campuses are located on original lands of Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene peoples, and on the homeland of the Métis Nation. We respect the Treaties made on these territories, we acknowledge the harms and mistakes of the past, and we dedicate ourselves to move forward in partnership with Indigenous communities in a spirit of reconciliation and collaboration.

The authors are grateful to the Indigenous faculty members who were willing to share their experience with the individual librarians that carried out the interviews. We value each participants' perspective and their willingness to share their experience with the interviewers and with the wider academic community. We have endeavoured to synthesize points and perspectives that we heard from the participants. We are mindful that this is an opportunity to use the experience of the participants to support current and future Indigenous students, faculty and researchers and wish to do so in an accessible, respectful, and accurate manner. We are grateful to all those who agreed to be interviewed. These included those who elected to include their names, those being:

- Dr. Marcia Anderson
- Dr. Marlyn Bennett
- Ms. Laura Forsythe
- Dr. Lynn Lavallee
- Dr. Cary Miller
- Ms. Wendy Ross
- Dr. Moneca Sinclair



## Introduction

The University of Manitoba Libraries joined other institutions in North America to take part in an Ithaka S+R research project consisting of an in-depth qualitative analysis of the research practices of Indigenous faculty and researchers. Ithaka S+R provides research and strategic guidance to help the academic and cultural communities serve the public good and navigate economic, technologic, and demographic change.<sup>1</sup> This project was guided by an advisory committee of Indigenous and non-Indigenous librarians and scholars.

This report outlines the findings at the University of Manitoba, including identifying improvements to existing research support services at the University of Manitoba Libraries and opportunities for developing new services to support Indigenous scholarship. The university has affirmed its commitment to advancing Indigenous research and scholarship, highlighting Indigenous achievement, in the message from President David Barnard, “as a priority, making it a cornerstone of our vision, and weaving it throughout” the strategic plan<sup>2</sup>. This project is one of the ways the Libraries is contributing to that goal.

The report presented here focuses on what we heard, as librarians, from some of the Indigenous researchers in the academy who shared their experience with us. We have included references to some of the work we are doing that reflects the suggestions we heard, but it should not be seen as being a comprehensive list. We do not wish to detract from the voices we heard. We want to refine our services and build on strengths and identify weaknesses based, in part, on the experience and Indigenous perspective shared with us.

Through conversations with the researchers, we came to the understanding that we were being gifted with the time and knowledge of each of the participants. We are greatly appreciative of those gifts shared by the Indigenous scholars who agreed to participate. Two pieces of knowledge that were shared by the participants were the importance of community and relationships in their work, and the importance of context in Indigenous research. In keeping with this, this report has been shared with the participants to ensure that their voices are being represented in context and as intended. In addition, because we are in the process of learning from our colleagues and this report summarizes our interpretations of what we learned, we have chosen to write it in a more narrative, rather than an academic, style.

## Methodology

Participants were recruited from a list of Indigenous faculty maintained on the University’s website<sup>3</sup>. We attempted to recruit researchers from diverse faculties and programs in order to get a wide variety of voices that would help us to improve services to Indigenous researchers across the university. Indigenous researchers who participated came from various faculties and were from units based in several locations in Winnipeg. Participants were representative of faculties in the arts and humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and health sciences.

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<sup>1</sup> ITHAKA S+R (2018). About. Retrieved from <http://www.sr.ithaka.org/about/>

<sup>2</sup> University of Manitoba [2014]. Taking Our Place: University of Manitoba Strategic Plan 2015-2020. Retrieved from [https://umanitoba.ca/admin/president/media/PRE-00-018-StrategicPlan-WebPdf\\_FNL.pdf](https://umanitoba.ca/admin/president/media/PRE-00-018-StrategicPlan-WebPdf_FNL.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> University of Manitoba. Indigenous Connect (2018). Indigenous faculty members. Retrieved from [http://umanitoba.ca/admin/indigenous\\_connect/faculty.html](http://umanitoba.ca/admin/indigenous_connect/faculty.html)

The participants agreed to take part in individual semi-structured interviews with us. The interview questions were designed by the ITHAKA-led advisory committee [Appendix A]. The interviews took place in spring 2018 at both Bannatyne and Ft. Garry campuses of the University of Manitoba. The interviews were recorded and then transcribed, and the transcriptions were analyzed thematically using grounded theory methodology with the coding structure developed in the process of reading through the data. We focused our attention during the coding and analysis on what the participants had identified as their research support needs with the aim of enhancing development and awareness of library services and collections to support those needs. This was an opportunity for us to learn from the experience of the Indigenous researchers and to reflect upon current library practice, identify gaps, build bridges and foster innovation.

Participants had the opportunity to waive confidentiality for all or a portion of their responses and to be publicly identified in the report if that was their preference. We recognize that there has been a long history of a colonized approach to research involving Indigenous participants and that it persists to this day by some researchers. For many research projects, little to no benefit from the research has trickled down to Indigenous research participants. Additionally, we recognize that Indigenous contributions to knowledge have often been stolen and obscured by Western researchers. For our project, we are endeavouring to share our work and outcomes with the participants along the way and to acknowledge the experience and wisdom shared by each by providing attribution wherever possible, based solely on the preferences expressed by each person. We wish to ensure each person's agency over their participation in the research process<sup>4</sup>.

The participants were invited to review and revise their transcribed interview and, if they chose to do so, decide which components of their interview they would agree to having publicly linked to their identity. Participants were also provided with a draft of the final report and invited to review it and provide feedback. This process reflects our intent to honor the relationships established, be accountable for our work and return something to the participants. The results of the broader research carried out at other institutions participating in this project will also be shared with the University of Manitoba participants.

## Indigenous Research Methodologies

### Lessons learned about Indigenous research methodologies

We learned that community-led research and the sustained development of relationships between a researcher and community participants was very important to all participants interviewed. Researchers told us about their responsibility to take the time to establish trust with community members prior to starting the research project, to follow cultural protocols and ethical standards, to learn from community members, to be guided by them, and to be transparent and inclusive throughout the gathering and dissemination of research. Much knowledge is held by community members and any research taking place in a community or using traditional lands or knowledge must have the consent of the community. Participants told us that relationships need to be reciprocal, providing benefit or useful information for the community. The legacy of researchers carrying out pre-defined research prior to, or without, community consultation, or using data about a community without permission or

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<sup>4</sup> Chilisa, B. (2012). *Indigenous research methodologies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

contextualization has been acknowledged as a tangible and legitimate barrier to establishing trust for Indigenous people. As Marcia Anderson expressed it, in her experience, *“relationships were valued over everything else, which is different than most mainstream research.”* Lynn Lavalée expressed it this way: *“If you want to do research with a community, you have to develop that relationship.”*

However, we also learned that Indigenous research does not always involve Indigenous research methodologies. One participant talked about how her work did not involve a particular community even though the work was focused on Indigenous communities and she talked about whether her work was Indigenous ‘enough’. She said, *“I didn’t feel that my research methods or framework were Indigenous enough... I didn’t have some sort of Indigenous angle and... [it felt like] that was the furthest Indigenous thing we could possibly do...”*

Some participants referred to Shawn Wilson’s book, *Research is Ceremony*<sup>5</sup>. Establishing trust in an academic researcher by community participants was of paramount importance. If the population, especially Elders, did not see you as trustworthy, they would not share their experience or knowledge to the fullest extent. So much so, that many scholars agreed that much richer conversations can be had by *“acquiring a climate for trust, for appreciation.”* It was suggested that this could be facilitated by *“getting to know somebody, sitting down and having a cup of tea and talking about really what you want to achieve.”* This not only improves your reputation, but it lets them know that you are invested in who they are.

Marcia Anderson told us about the need for *“...check-ins that this project is going well, they feel valued, they feel trusted and they feel heard in addition to just asking those questions. So, I think seeking that feedback is a really important part of learning how to develop the relationship.”*

Participants interviewed described the need for those working with Indigenous communities to be clear about the purpose and intent of the research. Moreover, informed consent must be obtained from community leaders acknowledging the community’s right of ownership, access and use of the information gathered. This applies to qualitative and quantitative research. Some participants interviewed spoke of the need by many to use mixed-methods research in order to provide the context needed to interpret the findings through a community-informed, Indigenous lens to inform non-Indigenous users of the results.

Participants referred to books on Indigenous research methods as being useful as well as books to assist with developing research programs that are often based in mixed methods approaches. As Moneca Sinclair explained, *“...when you’re working in Indigenous communities, you end up doing a lot of different methods, it’s not just one method.”*

We heard Indigenous research methods described as being distinctive, misunderstood or misapplied by non-Indigenous researchers, and undervalued by non-Indigenous peers and publishers. Some participants also mentioned that books grounded in critical research theory sometimes affirmed their culturally-informed knowledge of what they felt was the right way to do research and validated, to some extent, their unease with the way research methods (i.e. non-Indigenous) were being presented within the larger academic community. Moneca Sinclair also suggested that there are *“a lot of terms that they use in research methods [that] are methods that we always use, but they were never called*

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<sup>5</sup> Wilson, S. (2008). *Research is ceremony: Indigenous research methods*. Black Point, NS: Fernwood Publishing.

*ethnography or grounded theory or any of those.”* Former Chief Norman Bone, Keeseekoowenin First Nation, is quoted in *Framework for Research Engagement with First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples*, stating “*As Indigenous Peoples we have always done research, always searched for understanding, ways of being and knowing the worlds around us in order to survive, we just didn’t call it research.*”<sup>6</sup>

Researchers interviewed also noted that there was a lack of understanding and a blatant undervaluing of ethical protocols and practices in Indigenous communities, leading to conflicting emotions for the Indigenous researchers. Participants shared with us the need for Indigenous researchers to advocate for change so that non-Indigenous colleagues and administrators would respect community rights and practices. Moneca Sinclair spoke of a conflicting situation she encountered early in her career, as follows:

*She [non-Indigenous university researcher] said, ‘well we do have ethics.’ I said, ‘yeah, but the ethics isn’t, you know [all that’s required] ... they have their own ethical way of doing things and that’s one of the things they want, is that you go to the [band] council.’*

A statement on how this group of Indigenous researchers described their experience might be summed up in the words of Dr. Sinclair who stated, “*...there’s a huge divide between how we do research as Indigenous people and how settler community does research.*”

### Information Resources used by Indigenous Researchers

In the semi-structured interviews, we asked participants about their use of primary and secondary sources. A primary source was defined as “an artifact, a document, diary, manuscript, autobiography, recording, or other source of information that was created at the time under study.” We heard that some researchers use primary documents, such as archival materials, and letters, but most described primary sources as the people who participate in or guide their research. Oral information, experience, and knowledge was considered to be the primary source frequently referred to in response to this line of inquiry. The Indigenous scholars interviewed also referred to Elders and Traditional Knowledge Keepers as primary sources of information, particularly in their role as valued resources who guided the research process. While some books on Indigenous research methods were mentioned, participants universally spoke of the need to learn from Traditional Knowledge Keepers, teachers, and Elders within the community.

Many participants told us of the value of finding a more experienced Indigenous academic(s) to mentor them. More than one participant talked of how critically important it was to find a mentor who was more than just experienced in Indigenous research methods, but one who was also able to share their experience of being Indigenous in the non-Indigenous environment of the academic research community. Mentors were local or geographically distant, and continued to be valued and consulted years later.

Secondary sources were defined as “created later by someone who did not experience first-hand or participate in the events or conditions you’re researching,” such as scholarly articles or monographs. Some participants told us about the difficulty of finding materials written by Indigenous people. Some

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<sup>6</sup> University of Manitoba. Faculty of Health Sciences [2013]. Framework for research engagement with First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples. Retrieved from [https://umanitoba.ca/faculties/health\\_sciences/medicine/media/UofM\\_Framework\\_Report\\_web.pdf](https://umanitoba.ca/faculties/health_sciences/medicine/media/UofM_Framework_Report_web.pdf)



spoke of searching for materials by using keywords only to find this to be a hit and miss exercise yielding irrelevant results. Many spoke of seeking guidance from other Indigenous scholars or using reference lists from books and articles written by key Indigenous scholars. Marcia Anderson described how she relied on her mentor:

*When I first started doing research, my mentor suggested readings to help build my critical lens, so that's where some of those books came in...Reading a lot of books early on to try to build a critique or understand the limitations of what I'd already been taught up to that point [in my academic program].*

Researchers expressed a need to us to examine and use literature outside one's discipline – particularly for researchers in the sciences, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) programs, to seek out authors in the social sciences, particularly Indigenous authors, to have a more holistic academic background in order to carry out research and teaching. As Dr. Anderson explained:

*I started doing a lot more reading and application of critical theory and critical race theory and really understanding power relationships, power imbalances and how they're operating and that formed a lot of my theoretical foundation that I brought into my work here as an academic.*

This provides a framework not only for critical Indigenous research methodologies, but has also contributed to curriculum development, anti-racist policy making, and enhanced cultural safety for students, staff and faculty.

As discussed earlier, participants gave us some specific titles of books on Indigenous research methods and described the need to also search beyond Indigenous-specific research methodologies to other qualitative research methods. This need to search beyond Indigenous research methods seemed to be based on a belief for some participants that there were not many Indigenous research methods books. Few participants mentioned book chapters or articles as sources for information about how to conduct research using Indigenous methodologies.

In terms of content, participants told us they needed interdisciplinary works. Moneca Sinclaire explained:

*As a person [working] in health, I never just looked at health. I would look in education, anthropology, history, 'cause to me that's all those things that have happened to us that have created who we are, like, if we don't add the history – the historical component – into our research ... and [those in health] don't look at our history... [It was] the other faculties that were making more headway into the research of why Indigenous people were having all these challenges.*

Several participants spoke of *History* books, and it was clear they were referring to the books which non-Indigenous librarians might classify as *Indigenous Studies* books. This is one example in which non-First Nations librarians could see how our language and perspectives differed from the Indigenous scholars. *History* books specifically were used by researchers across all disciplines, with an understanding that these would include the history of colonization, would be written from the perspective of Indigenous peoples, and that other essential works used incorporate Indigenous ways of knowing and worldviews. As Marlyn Bennett expressed it, the value of historical publications helped to address the “*need to know where you've been in order to know where you're going.*”

Cary Miller discussed the necessity of recording findings of historical research in an “*inclusive holistic way*” in order to facilitate the reconciliation process and the necessity of making sure that these histories are in the proper place in libraries:

*Historical research as an act of reconciliation must go beyond just adding Indigenous content- otherwise our story ends up in sidebars rather than part of the central narrative. The central narrative itself must also be re-examined, not only to see where our story weaves into it, but excise western historical myths that perpetuate stereotypes and inequality. The structures of modern society are steeped in their historical foundations. To challenge them we need to lay bare the cracks, weaknesses, and instability of those foundations by shining light on historical misinterpretations that have been passed on as truth by generations of historical scholars. History shapes our identity- our identity nationally as well as individuals. The histories that we write need to be classified as histories by libraries so that mainstream historians will stumble across and hopefully read them as they do future research. The questions researchers ask is shaped by the theorems underlying it that are assumed to be true. We have to get more scholars outside of Native Studies to re-examine their assumptions about us and our histories as politically, socially, scientifically, technologically sophisticated and complex peoples to move beyond a narrative of victimhood or cultural deficiencies which are inaccurate and distorting. False foundations make all the research based on them distorted and inaccurate. The histories indigenous studies scholars write put the truth in truth and reconciliation.*

The researchers spoke to us about the various types of grey literature. In some cases, researchers identified the need to access documents published by non-Indigenous governments which were not easily available or identifiable on the internet or in our academic library. Virtually all participants referred to the need and desire to use Indigenous community-based reports and surveys. Marcia Anderson stated:

*...there’s a ton of work that’s done...in the community organization sector and non-profit sector that doesn’t get published in the academic literature, but is really valuable. And so, I think that’s where librarians and networks become really important in accessing information.*

Another participant relied heavily on government documents, stating:

*All of the documents I work with are primary [government] documents, and then I try my best to locate recordings or documentation of proceedings or conferences where they use first-person voices of Indigenous leaders... when they’re talking about their specific agreement or how they feel about that agreement.*

Researchers told us that community-based reports and other grey literature was provided directly from community members, retrieved from UML holdings and subject guides, identified on the Internet, posted by Indigenous communities, or co-published by Indigenous-university partnerships. These included open access Indigenous journals that are often unindexed in major commercial databases such as those subscribed to by academic libraries.

### Archives and Historical Societies

Archives and historical societies were cited by researchers as an important resource for historical scholarly work. In Manitoba particularly, the Hudson Bay Archives and the Manitoba Archives were

cited as particularly useful, but archives and historical societies in other locations were also used. Cary Miller discussed the importance of treaty diaries found in archives in her research describing how *“reading a treaty document is like reading the minutes of a meeting but treaty diaries are where you get all the back and forth.”*

### Elders and Traditional Knowledge Keepers

We learned that one area which is distinctive in Indigenous research compared to Western research is the inclusion of Elders and Traditional Knowledge Keepers in the research process, both as partners and as resources. These respected community members hold traditional knowledge (TK) about the land, customs and history of communities and serve as a vital resource in conducting ethical research in keeping with local custom. As librarians, we were interested in the search, retrieval and use of academic books and journals, but this is only part of the information and knowledge needed by Indigenous scholars. As Wendy Ross shared, she was informed by Elders early in the research process that she *“was very book smart but not necessarily Cree smart.”*

### Working with Communities – Ways of Knowing; Ways of Doing

Participants provided us with information and examples of how leaders, teachers, and participants in Indigenous communities also contribute to the research process. They serve as resources for Indigenous scholars and vital partners in the research process. Much knowledge is held by community members and any research taking place in a community or using traditional lands or knowledge must have the consent of the community. Community ethical protocols must also be followed. For the past several years, standards have been implemented by First Nations, Métis and Inuit groups and individual communities to assist community participants and researchers working together so that ethical principles surrounding stewardship, ownership and access to the community data is done respectfully and ethically to support the community. The First Nations principles of OCAP may be the most well-known of these. These standards governing ownership, control, access, and possession, assert *“that First Nations have control over data collection processes in their communities, and that they own and control how the information can be used.”*<sup>7</sup>

Marcia Anderson discussed the contradiction between the OCAP principles and the move toward open access primary data in the non-Indigenous research community. As she stated, *“So I supported some of the resistance to that as it pertains to Indigenous specific data because I could not imagine a way where you could do that and also follow OCAP rules.”* Furthermore, she noted her role as being one of *“stewardship only for the specific purpose of the study [agreed to]. And that it would really disadvantage Indigenous health researchers who would not be able to commit on behalf of potential community partners to release primary data in open access ways.”*

All the participants interviewed told us about how people guided them at every stage of the research process, including Marcia Anderson who described a project where women who had participated in focus groups contributed to the thematic coding process:

*The thematic analysis with coding...was all built around the framework we developed with them in the first place which was very in-depth...they wanted to know...one of their key questions was*

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<sup>7</sup> The First Nations Information Governance Centre (2018). The First Nations principles of OCAP® Retrieved from <https://fnigc.ca/ocapr.html>

*how are the seven sacred teachings being operationalized in this program? So, we built our codes around what they taught us 'love' meant to them or what they taught us 'respect' meant to them... We had all these frequent check-ins, and... we went back and checked in; this is what we heard you say, this is how we define the seven sacred teachings and then that became our frame for analyzing the qualitative data later. And then also once we analyzed the data and prepared a report of the findings from it we went back and we presented all of that as a check-in... this is how we interpreted this to get their consensus that, 'yeah', that made sense – that's how they saw it too – that's what was meant. So, it was really actually an approval of the analysis also, both from how we were going to do it right through to when it was done*

One challenge we heard Indigenous researchers discuss is that Western research holds that researchers should be unbiased observers and not part of a community. However, Indigenous researchers understand being a community member often provides necessary context in doing research. Cary Miller described how *"a lot of my process quite honestly comes from going to ceremonies, being in community... it is not that I'm taking any information without permission, but I have a body of knowledge from the way we do things that I use as a filter for accuracy when I read primary sources."*

Lynn Lavallee echoed this sentiment saying:

*"REBs typically look at projects and say, researchers have to be objective, and not connected to the community... When I was doing my PhD, the Indigenous literature didn't exist so I cited community-based research literature that says if you're a member of the community it's actually an asset."*

The researchers we interviewed discussed some aspect of the basic tenet of reciprocity with communities and research participants. Whether it was doing research at the direction of a community, acting as a conduit for funding for research that the community wanted to do, building capacity for research within a community or other means, Indigenous scholars realized that research involving the community must include some benefit for the community. As Wendy Ross stated:

*I tell students, you're getting your letters behind your name, you work hard for those! But, you've got to think about why you're doing the research and you know you're probably going to get a job where you get paid a lot of money, but what does the community get?*

One participant mentioned that even though she does not currently work with specific communities, she has given presentations to communities about their research in treaty negotiations:

*I have presented to community members. And especially those who are in communities that are negotiating, they're really excited about what I'm speaking about because they really see the value in it. So that's encouraging... I've been asked to go to certain communities... and present to their educational coordinators or treaty negotiators.*

Marlyn Bennett spoke of her personal growth in in this area:

*One of the things that I am always cognitive of when I'm doing research is that it's a reciprocal process, when you ask someone to participate in research with you, they're giving you a gift and I always think that it's important to give back as well... I always think of gift giving as really important because that's something that's a cultural way of doing things as well as right, to*

*honour, to honour the gifts that people share with you, so I've learned to do that in the last few years as it is really being an important part of doing my research and I'm able to share a bit of myself with those I ask to participate in my study.*

For Dr. Bennett, that reciprocity included sharing her gift of the art she creates with those who have participated.

When discussing relationships, researchers told us that there is an ethical imperative to know the community they are working with and to be known by that community. That sentiment was conveyed by Wendy Ross who said *"you have got to show up to the community, if you want to do research with that community."*

However, we also heard that being known to, or part of, the community can also be an issue for Indigenous academics who need to maintain their integrity, both personally and professionally, within their community. Some of the researchers we interviewed commented that they are in high demand to be part of research teams precisely because of those community connections and, as a result, have demands for their time that non-Indigenous researchers might not experience. Lynn Lavalée shared her experience *"One of the first pieces of advice I got when I became a professor... make sure you only do stuff that's within your research portfolio because as Indigenous people we're wanted people."* She goes on to describe:

*I will not be a token, I'm going to be sitting at the table and if my expertise is not valued or if my integrity with community is placed in jeopardy I will leave a project. All too often, Indigenous scholars advance the research of non-Indigenous scholars with little if any reciprocity.*

Moneca Sinclair succinctly summed up her experience: *"What I've learned through the years is that relationships work both ways right? I have to develop them with community and with health professionals."*

The above comments highlight one of the themes we heard from the Indigenous scholars interviewed as well as others over the past few years; that being that Indigenous researchers can sometimes feel as though 'everyone wants a piece of them' simply because of their Indigeneity. With universities across Canada, like the University of Manitoba, implementing strategic plans to support Indigenous research, Indigenous scholars can feel stretched thin by a steady influx of invitations to collaborate, speak at conferences, teach classes, and develop curriculum.

## **Publishing and Disseminating Research Results**

We found that Indigenous researchers published their research in standard formats that libraries have traditionally collected, but also in innovative formats that libraries have recently started collecting. Publishing and knowledge translation outputs included books, community publications, digital storytelling, and digital exhibitions. Indigenous researchers often have a holistic view regarding publishing their results in terms of making them available and ensuring that context is included. All of the researchers we interviewed explained the importance of making their work accessible to the project's community partners. Doing so can limit the choices for publication, but it was more important that the results be available as open access publications than publishing in a highly ranked or highly cited journal. One participant stated *"Publishing in a journal that will be accessible and open access is important to me. Ensuring that there's opportunities for people to have the ability to look at what I've*

*written is really quite important.”* Marcia Anderson noted *“In general I would say because we have so little published overall anyways that my preference would be to use open access mechanisms as much as possible.”* Marlyn Bennett has a wealth of experience sharing her work in Indigenous-led open access publications, community-based journals, digital storytelling, and widely distributed annotated bibliographies. The bibliographies helped many outside the academy to discover the scholarly literature indexed in databases that were difficult to use or completely unavailable to them.

Researchers also discussed with us the importance of sharing the results back to the community in multiple ways that are accessible. Activities in addition to publishing scholarly articles might include community forums, radio shows, videos, reports to council, facilitating classroom discussions at local schools, and more. These additional knowledge translation and communication activities are essential to rounding out the community engagement research process and to maintaining both the individual researcher’s and the university’s reputation with a community. The diversity and number of additional activities undertaken by Indigenous scholars exceeds, in many cases, those carried out by non-Indigenous scholars, yet this often goes unrecognized by funders and administrators.

### Monographs and Journals

In terms of scholarly output, participants told us about their participation in conferences, some journal article publishing, books, and book chapters. In some cases, participants had journal articles published, but they were not research articles. Research outputs for some scholars were primarily returned to the community, with scholarly publishing seen as a less necessary, and often problematic, output. While some scholars indicated that they published their research in peer-reviewed journals, problems with journal publishers were encountered by Indigenous scholars working in areas apart from Indigenous Studies/Anthropology/History. Participants in the sciences spoke of resistance from publishers of science journals and provided examples of publishers they had encountered who clearly did not understand or value Indigenous research methods.

As Marcia Anderson noted, *“...there is a challenge with publishing and what information is valued and valuable in publishing, so I still think there’s some space either in existing journals to shift that or to think about other forms of, of sharing knowledge that will not be seen as less valued than publication in high impact journals.”*

Moneca Sinclair shared her experience:

*For example, we’re trying to write an article that talks about Indigenous people and the way we see the world and how important that information is for everyone to know...But then you have [non-Indigenous] health practitioners that you know just come from one way of thinking and then they read your articles and because it doesn’t make sense to them, they reject it [for publication].* (Moneca Sinclair)

Participants told us about the need to justify Indigenous research methods. This included things like finding a non-Indigenous research method that could be used to back up the Indigenous methodology that had been guided by Indigenous ways of knowing. Publishers and colleagues do not give the same weight to knowledge shared by a Traditional Knowledge Keeper that they would to a quotable journal article. One researcher described her experience trying to publish an article in an ethics journal which would not allow her to quote a respected Elder even though she could not ethically ignore the value of the Elder’s information. The requirement to seek out a “quotable” published source rather than use the

Knowledge Keeper as an original source seemed ludicrous. This, along with a myriad of other criticisms from the editor unschooled in Indigenous research methods, lead her to abandon the relationship with that publisher. The wasted effort discouraged her from pursuing other publishers.

Dr. Anderson reflected on that experience, as such:

*Because that's a whole kind of epistemological approach where the written word carries more weight than the oral word, like that's a completely value-based judgment. There's no objective reason why that's of a greater standing of knowledge if it's published in that journal versus you heard it sitting around the kitchen table with a respected Elder you know.*

Another participant felt that some publishers and editors do not understand the context of a manuscript or issue covered. In one case, a participant shared the experience of submitting an article to a peer reviewed journal, only to be told that the editor objected to some of the vocabulary used in the document, specifically referring to the use of the phrase 'Turtle Island'.

Moneca Sinclair noted that publishers were resistant to authors including contextual information or to including information about how the researcher had walked in a good way and carried out the research in an ethical way. She stated:

*You know, there's nobody really writes about it [relationship] right when they do the research...like if you look in journal articles they don't say "Well, first thing we did was we went to the community, we had this meeting first..." They don't do that, they just talk about... some little historical part of it and then they talk about the discussion and results and the conclusion.*

Marlyn Bennett shared the story of how she and others founded a successful open access Indigenous journal in their discipline several years ago. In the early years of her interest in research, she was surprised by how much was generated by non-Indigenous researchers:

*I mean really good work that was done by non-Indigenous people, but really concerned that a lot of our voices weren't being published even though we have lots of experience in our community around that very issue. And that's how the journal came to be...We decided that we would develop our own journal and publish our own people who have that experience doing this kind of work in the community, who have that knowledge, but might not have written for a publication before.*

Moneca Sinclair has been trying to get her team's articles published in non-Indigenous peer reviewed journals in the sciences, but has been rejected by those publishers. She explained that they have received rejection letters, for example:

*From editors saying this is not applicable to all Canadians or its not applicable to the general population, and, like, we are not part of the general population...in my mind they're saying, well, we're the settler Canadians and because your information is only for Indigenous Canadians it's not applicable to all Canadians, but at the same time there's doctor and nurses and dentists and everyone saying, 'What can we do to improve the health of Indigenous people*

## Grey Literature

One area of non-traditional academic publishing discussed by one of the participants that involved academic work but which might not be considered as such for tenure and promotion was expert

testimony in legal cases. The issue with expert witness testimony is that *“you’ve done [research] for a court case where it now becomes a court document and the court is going to go through several appeals so you can’t put it out for peer review or publishing for perhaps 15-20 years after you’ve filed it”* (Cary Miller). In academia, with expectations of frequent publishing in order to get tenure, this is an issue for Indigenous scholars working in certain fields. Another scholar described how research was included in a report used in legal hearings that ultimately the two parties agreed should not be made public so the researcher wasn’t able to publish it at all. Although this might not be an issue limited solely to Indigenous scholars, because of the necessity of defining Indigenous rights, lands and identity in legal courts, it falls disproportionately on them.

Another example of grey literature representing academic research is curricula and curriculum revision. Given that one of the principles cited in the tenth Call to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is developing culturally appropriate curricula<sup>8</sup> this is an area that again overburdens Indigenous scholars and adds to the high demands for service on them which can undermine their academic careers and pathways to promotion and tenure.

As mentioned previously, grey literature bibliographies, reports, knowledge translation (KT) publications, and open access journals are all types of publications used by the participants to share research outcomes and methods.

### Suggestions for Libraries -- Growing What’s Working -- Developing New Initiatives

The researchers we interviewed made several references to what University of Manitoba Libraries’ staff and librarians were doing well to support students, faculty, and Indigenous scholarship.

Marcia Anderson noted, *“I always tell my students to come see the librarians too...when I want them to do papers.”* She also stated, *“I know that when I talk to some of my other colleagues from different places that don’t have the types of supports that we have they’re jealous.”* Participants referred to the value of the services offered on both campuses and the Libraries’ collections, including specific reference to the Mazinbiige Indigenous Graphic Novels collection at Dafoe Library and Neil John Maclean Library’s Indigenous Health Collection. Many participants also remarked on the relationships they had with liaison librarians.

Suggestions were also made for embedding librarian instruction into the curriculum, developing relationships, highlighting collections, and using our assets and best practices to support Indigenous people. The following are some specific suggestions we heard for improving or expanding our services to Indigenous researchers and people in general.

### Sharing of Resources Outside the Academy

A number of researchers suggested that sharing our electronic resources with Indigenous peoples in Manitoba outside the university community would be a great benefit to Indigenous communities, especially those at remote and fly-in locations. Our materials are available on campus to any person who visits but for those who cannot easily make the trip they are inaccessible. Models exist for

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<sup>8</sup> Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015). Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action. Retrieved from [https://nctr.ca/assets/reports/Calls\\_to\\_Action\\_English2.pdf](https://nctr.ca/assets/reports/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf)



expanding licenses for electronic resources to particular groups and the Libraries can investigate whether this can be done for more of our collections.

### Indigenous Identity Resource

An issue identified by a number of researchers who participated in this study was the difficulty in understanding Indigenous identity in Canada. There is no single resource that documents the identity of the First Nations, Inuit and Métis people. Additionally, Indigenous identity has in the past been defined by the government of Canada through the Indian Act and re-defined through legal challenges and subsequent amendments such as Bill C-31 which was meant to address gender discrimination in the Indian Act. Students and researchers unfamiliar with the diversity of Indigenous peoples might benefit from being directed to key resources from Indigenous people to clarify descriptions and terminology. Lynn Lavalée explained that this is important because *“if you don’t understand the identity of the population you’re working with, you’re going to have difficulties.”* As a result, researchers seeking to delineate Indigenous peoples in the course of their research would need to consult many sources and this is one area where the library could provide support through collating resources for students and researchers that describe and differentiate Indigenous identity as defined by Inuit, First Nations and Métis peoples.

### Expanding the Human Library

Marcia Anderson talked about the Human Library, held for the past several years to support students in the Max Rady College of Medicine. The Human Library implemented by Dr. Barry Lavalée and Linda Diffey for undergraduate medical education is a unique version, using only Indigenous people to be the human books telling their stories in the Neil John Maclean Library every fall. This collection of human books underscores the diversity of people who identify as Indigenous and is truly a unique version of this international movement developed to foster social change by challenging stereotypes and prejudices<sup>9</sup>. Dr. Anderson shared feedback from students:

*I was sitting with the [medical] students the other day...and one thing that they mentioned was how awesome the human library class was that Barry and Linda do. And I think that could be helpful for people who have zero exposure [to Indigenous people and ways of knowing] ... Maybe university or campus wide periodically arranging these human library type events so that people can practice speaking with an Elder, taking time, engaging with someone as a human as opposed to like a researcher and subject, I think that could potentially be beneficial. (Marcia Anderson)*

The Libraries could expand this program to other library locations.

### Best Practices

Many researchers described the needs for best practices in Indigenous research to be documented. Again, this is an area where the library could provide a space for that documentation to occur and a way of collating any existing resources on best practices.

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<sup>9</sup> Human Library (n.d.) Home. A worldwide movement for social change. Retrieved from <http://humanlibrary.org/>

## Accessing Library Information

Some participants spoke about keywords, subject headings and indexes, including memories of using the card catalogue. There was general consensus that it is difficult to find resources, so researchers often turn to seeking advice from mentors or from consulting the reference lists of key books. Moneca Sinclair commented, *“Like, no one tells you that as a student! ‘Oh, by the way this is how things are categorized in the library. They just tell you, well, you have to look up this and you use that number to go find that book in the library.”* She concluded with, *“But how they actually categorize all those books, like - I don’t have a hot clue.”*

*...it’s about finding information... [not a lot of info in Indigenous research methodologies right now] ...I remember when I used to do research in what they called Native health and medicine... if you put that term ‘Native’ in you always got other things besides Canadian. So, like it’s just because you [i.e. librarians] don’t know what the term really means. (Moneca Sinclair)*

Cary Miller also spoke about the difficulty of finding resources on her own community because of the various terms that settler-society have used for her people as well as the ones they use themselves, resulting in the need to use many search terms to complete what is essentially a search for one topic. She stated:

*Even when working on a more general project I will need to search under Indian, native, Aboriginal and indigenous to be pointed to all relevant sources... I imagine that particularly for smaller communities not all librarians have known to cross reference the traditional (name in their own language) and settler-colonial names for specific tribal nations so that all sources on a given community will be returned through a single search.*

Libraries can make improvements on how we categorize materials and use appropriate terminology that reflects what Indigenous scholars are likely to use in looking for materials. We have already begun work on this but realize there is much more to be done. Additionally, we must examine how we classify material and where it is placed on the shelves. Materials such as histories written from an Indigenous viewpoint should be categorized with all histories, not with Indigenous materials and the same holds true for other subject areas. There is explicit bias in our classification tools that must also be addressed.

Participants also spoke of doing TedTalks, media interviews, digital storytelling and grey literature publishing. Increased collaboration between Indigenous faculty and librarians could assist librarians with embedding such resources into subject guides or other curated collections.

## Library Instruction Embedded in the Curriculum

Moneca Sinclair suggested, *“in the research methods class...it would have been nice to have a librarian explain to you how these indexes work.”* Recommendations to increase librarian instruction in the curriculum can help to demystify library practice and feedback can challenge us to improve tools, such as indexes, to address diverse needs.

## Librarians Supporting Researchers in the Publishing Process

We heard some participants discuss the value of having librarians assist them in identifying suitable journals for publication, whether those be Indigenous journals, open access journals, or journals in which Indigenous research articles would reach the right audience. Indigenous and non-Indigenous librarians could be allies in the need to shift publishers to become more amenable to Indigenous research methodologies, philosophies, and issues.

*Well one thing that we've talked about that would be really helpful is even knowing what journal maybe would be more open or more aligned with the types of work that we do or might want to publish, because there's so many journals now and so many different article formats. So even some of that strategizing around where and how to try to publish would be really valuable." (Marcia Anderson)*

Marcia Anderson also spoke of how valuable it would be if librarians assisted with developing or promoting models for referencing Indigenous Knowledge and Traditional Knowledge Keepers. As she expressed it, *"to better include Indigenous Knowledge and forms of Indigenous teaching or passing on of knowledge. I think it would be cool to have an APA standard format for referencing a Knowledge Keeper..."* (Marcia Anderson). She suggested our examples of APA or other formatting styles were important for normalizing and recognizing oral tradition and the passing of knowledge. Promotion of this by librarians to the academic community would set standards that would shift publishing practice.

## The Value of Physical Collections and Spaces

Suggestions were made that special collections enhanced retrieval and were seen to positively acknowledge and respect the uniqueness of Indigenous literatures and Indigenous peoples. Having collections of Indigenous books in distinctively Indigenous spaces was favourably remarked upon by some of the participants.

There was also a fondness for physical collections in general expressed by at least one participant, and the need to meet library staff and librarians in person, to develop those relationships:

*Sometimes with technology and everything being online, sometimes we forget that there's actually physical libraries that we can go to -- that there are people there. I think that's just how we build more closer relationships with librarians, people who already work with the data that exists, in a tangible form... (Marlyn Bennett)*

Marcia Anderson commented: *"Well, I feel like we're already in a pretty good place to be honest, because we know we can refer people to you [i.e. Indigenous Health Librarian], we know we have the specific collection upstairs."*

We in the Libraries should consider honouring the resources by and about Indigenous peoples in some of the other library spaces on campus and make sure that Indigenous perspectives are included in any future facilities planning.

## Conclusion

Our research described here was grounded in the importance of relationships to Indigenous people and this was subsequently built into the content of the semi-structured interview. To honour the relationships that we have built in doing this work, we commit to acting on what we have learned and to

continue to involve the participants and other Indigenous researchers at the University of Manitoba as we work to improve the Libraries' support for Indigenous scholarship. We leave the final word to Moneca Sinclair who shared some of her experience with librarians:

*And so, I think about what kind of relationships you're building and if you are, you know, because people in their mind see a librarian is...she or he is the person I ask information for, I get it from them and I move on to the next, but there's no, like, 'How are you doing? ...What are you up to?' You know, like there's none of that going on. It's just like, 'Here's my topic and find me information and, then, it's like you're trained to just do that job, right? But then, you know, it's like where in that job are you taught about relationship building?*

## Appendix A – Semi-Structured Interview Guide

### **Pre-Interview Introduction**

- Interviewer thanks participant for their participation, recognizes the participant's expertise and knowledge contribution to the study, and acknowledges how this study contributes to a wider context of knowledge creation (including: the library and university in which the research is being conducted, other academic libraries, the wider academic community, and, society-at-large).
- Interviewer provides contextualizing information about the research project, including project background, the project methodology, and the structure of their engagement with the participant. Interviewer highlights that the participant has a choice about whether or not their responses, or a portion of their responses, remain confidential, and, that they will have the opportunity to review their transcript and how their words are invoked in the report towards this process.
- Consent form is reviewed and signed; audio recorder is turned on.
- Interviewer provides contextualizing information about themselves (e.g. their interest in the research topic, how they came to this work, their relationship to the participant)
- Interviewer invites participant to ask any questions about the interviewer, the research project, or anything else that would be helpful for participant, at this, or any point in the discussion

### **Participant Background**

- How did you come to your work? [in the broadest sense of the term, e.g. background information about where they come from, how they came to academia and their research, how they came to this university, etc.]
- Describe your current research focus and current research project(s).
- What research methods and/or theoretical approaches do you typically work with to conduct your research? [e.g. decolonial approaches, oral history, ethnography]
- How did you develop your methodological approach? [e.g. through specific classes, key readings, trial and error, in consultation or collaboration with certain groups]

### **Working with Primary Sources**

- Do you rely on primary source information to do your research? [“Primary” refers here to “primary sources,” or, an “artifact, a document, diary, manuscript, autobiography, a recording, or other source of information that was created at the time under study”]. If so,
- How do you locate this information? [e.g. “research tools”, with help from specific individuals]
- Do you have conversations with Indigenous community members around determining protocols for how this information is stored or shared? [e.g. plans for retention, destruction and sharing; metadata used to describe collections and their access]
- Can you share a success story about finding and working with a valuable primary source? What were some factors that helped to make this a success story?
- How do you incorporate this content into your final research output(s)?
- Do you consult with individuals/communities around how this content is analyzed and incorporated into your final output? [If so, can you talk about how this consultation influences your written report, article, chapter, etc.?)
- Have you encountered any challenges in the process of locating or working with primary sources? If so, describe.
- Are there any resources, services or other supports that would help you more effectively locate or work with primary sources?

### **Working with Secondary Sources**

- What kinds of secondary information do you rely on to do your research? [“secondary” refers here to “created later by someone who did not experience first-hand or participate in the events or conditions you're researching” e.g. scholarly articles or monographs]
- How do you locate this information? [e.g. research tools, with help from specific individuals]
- Do you have a story from your past related to your first experience learning about library online research tools? What was that experience like for you?
- Have you encountered any challenges in the process of locating or working with secondary sources? If so, describe.

- Are there any resources, services or other supports that would help you more effectively locate or work with secondary sources?

### **Working with Others**

- Do you do qualitative or quantitative research with Indigenous community members as part of your research process? If so,
  - Could you describe the nature of your most recent research project(s)? [e.g. is it ongoing? At what stage in your research process? In what capacity?]
  - How would you describe your approach to doing qualitative or quantitative research with Indigenous community members and what literature or training has informed that approach? [e.g. specific literature, training workshops]
  - What are some success stories you would like to share about doing qualitative or quantitative research with Indigenous community members?
- What is rewarding for you when you do qualitative or quantitative research with Indigenous peoples?
- Have you encountered any challenges during the process of doing qualitative or quantitative research with Indigenous peoples?
  - Some Indigenous Studies scholars talk about the importance of developing ongoing, long-term relationships with Indigenous peoples, including those who may potentially become research participants, sometimes over the course of a lifetime. Have you engaged in this form of long-term relationship building, and if so, how has it informed your work?
  - What has been most helpful for you in developing these relationships? [e.g. on-campus group on Indigenous community relations; soft skills training, i.e. learning patience; adopting a humble attitude; speaking with an Elder; etc.].
- Are there any resources or supports that would help you [or other scholars] more effectively develop these relationships?
- Do you regularly work with, consult or collaborate with any others as part of your research process? If so,
  - Describe who you have typically worked with and how. [E.g. students, other scholars or researchers, research support professionals such as librarians, archivists or museum workers, other individuals or communities beyond the academy]
  - Have you encountered any challenges in the process of working with others?
  - Are there any resources, services or other supports that would help you more effectively develop these relationships?

### **Working with Data**

- Does your research produce data? [e.g. interview transcripts, survey data, photographs] If so, what kinds of data are typically produced?
- Does your research involve working with data produced by others? [e.g. government data, datasets produced by other researchers] If so, describe what kinds of data you typically use and how you typically find that data. [e.g. research tools, techniques for discovery, specific individuals who help with locating the information]
- If the participant works with data they produce themselves and/or by others, also ask:
  - What are your plans for managing the data you work with beyond your current use (e.g. protocols for sharing, destruction schedule, plans for depositing in a repository or other external collection)
- Do you have conversations with Indigenous community members around determining data management protocols? [e.g. plans for retention, destruction and sharing; meta-data used to describe collections and their access]
- Do you engage in processes with any others around determining data management protocols? [e.g. librarians, data managers, other scholars]
- How do you incorporate the data you work with into your final research output(s)? [e.g. quotes, tables, models, data visualizations]
- Do you consult with individuals/communities around how this data is analyzed and incorporated into your research?
- Have you encountered any challenges in the process of finding or working with data?
- Are there any resources, services or other supports that would help you more effectively find or work with data?

### **Publishing Practices**

- Where do you typically share your research in terms of scholarly publications?
- What are the main considerations for where you decide to publish your work in scholarly venues? [This could also include conference papers, in addition to journals, book chapters, books, etc.]
- Do you have conversations with Indigenous community members around developing outputs for publishing in scholarly venues? [e.g. co-authorship models, consulting on where to



publish, seeking review and approval of content before seeking publication, starting up a new scholarly journal, etc.] If so, describe.

- Do you communicate with Indigenous community members / research participants around your activities publishing research in scholarly venues? [E.g. do you provide updates when your work is published, provide copies of your work] If so, describe.
- Are there any success stories about your research publications that you would like to share?
- Have you encountered any challenges in the process of publishing your research in scholarly venues?
- Are there any resources, services or other supports that would help you more effectively publish your research in scholarly venues?

### **Publishing practices (additional questions)**

- Have you ever made your research publications available through open access? [e.g. pre-print repository, institutional repository, open access journal or “gold” open access journal option)? If no, why not? If so,
- Where have you pursued open access publishing? What have been your motivations for pursuing open access? [e.g. required, for sharing, investment in open access principles].
- Do you have conversations with Indigenous community members to determine whether or how to make part or all of your research available via open access?
- Are there any resources, services or other supports that would help you regarding learning about or engaging with the concept of open access?
- Do you share your research beyond scholarly publications? [e.g. op-eds, books in the mainstream press, blogging]. If so,
- What are the main considerations for where you decide to share your work more widely?
- Do you have conversations with Indigenous community members to develop outputs for publishing in these venues? [e.g. co-authorship models, consulting on where to publish, seeking review and approval of content before seeking publication, etc.] If so, describe.
- Do you communicate with Indigenous community members about your publishing activity in these venues? [E.g. do you provide updates when your work is published, provide copies of your work] If so, describe.

- Have you encountered any challenges in the process of publishing your research in these venues? Are there any resources, services or other supports that would help you more effectively publish your research in these venues?

### **Scoping the Field and Wrapping up**

- How do you keep up with your colleagues and the field more widely? [e.g. conferences, social networking]
- What future challenges and opportunities do you see for conducting research in Indigenous Studies?
- Is there anything else you think is particularly important for us to know about in terms of your experiences as a researcher that has not yet been covered in this interview?
- Do you have any other questions or comments about the interview or the research project before we conclude the interview?

### **Conclusion**

- Thank the participant for sharing their knowledge and time.
- Acknowledge that the audio recorder is being turned off and turn off accordingly.
- Provide participant with the opportunity to ask questions and provide input beyond the formal interview.
- Share and discuss next steps in the research project including plans for the participant to review their transcript and the draft of the research report