

Indigenous Primary Source Teaching

— — — — —

Miah Clark | Fulbright U.S.

Cultural Humility

Deep Attendance

Guided Reminiscence

Stewardship of Spirit

WHO AM I?

WHO AM I?

WHO AM I?

*U.S. Fulbrighter
*Special Collections
Librarian
*TKAM Student
*Afakasi (doing her best)

"I am interested in incorporating Indigenous approaches to knowledge organization in libraries to ensure inclusive access to relevant information, promote cultural understanding, and support the research needs of those interested in Pasifika cultures and histories."



Miah Clark (M Clark)
(she/her/ia)



WHAT HAVE YOUR EXPERIENCES IN LIBRARIES BEEN LIKE?
WHAT IS YOUR OPINION OF THESE PLACES BASED OFF YOUR
EXPERIENCES? GOOD OR BAD?

THINGS ARE OLD

Things might not interest you, they might be so outdated you can't use them, they're just fully racist & offensive, sometimes it just smells weird

YOU DON'T FEEL WELCOME

Too quiet, people ask why you're there, too many rules/protocols/barriers when it comes to entering & using materials, hard to ask for help

TOO WHITE (i'm just being real)

Whether its the staff, the authors, the people who donated the items, you don't see yourself being properly represented

YOU COULD JUST LOOK ONLINE

You could find a newer secondary source, you could find a digitized version, don't have to talk to anyone

Reasons You Might Not Like the Library (Especially Special Collections)

Reasons Why I Want You to Give Special Collections a Chance

THINGS ARE OLD!

These items are often one of a kind, passed down and protected so that we can still use them, feel them, see them (so it's kind of rude not to).

COOL LIBRARIANS

We're working really hard to reverse the reasons you don't like us, because they're unfortunately still true in a lot of places. (We work for YOU!)

PART OF KEEPING CULTURE ALIVE

The same reasons we learn our languages, our practices, our protocols, are the same reasons these items are protected in libraries.

TO TELL US WHAT'S WRONG

If you think the work being done in these places is harmful, incorrect, etc., we want to know that! Your opinion and knowledge matters.

Stewardship of Spirit

Guided Reminiscence

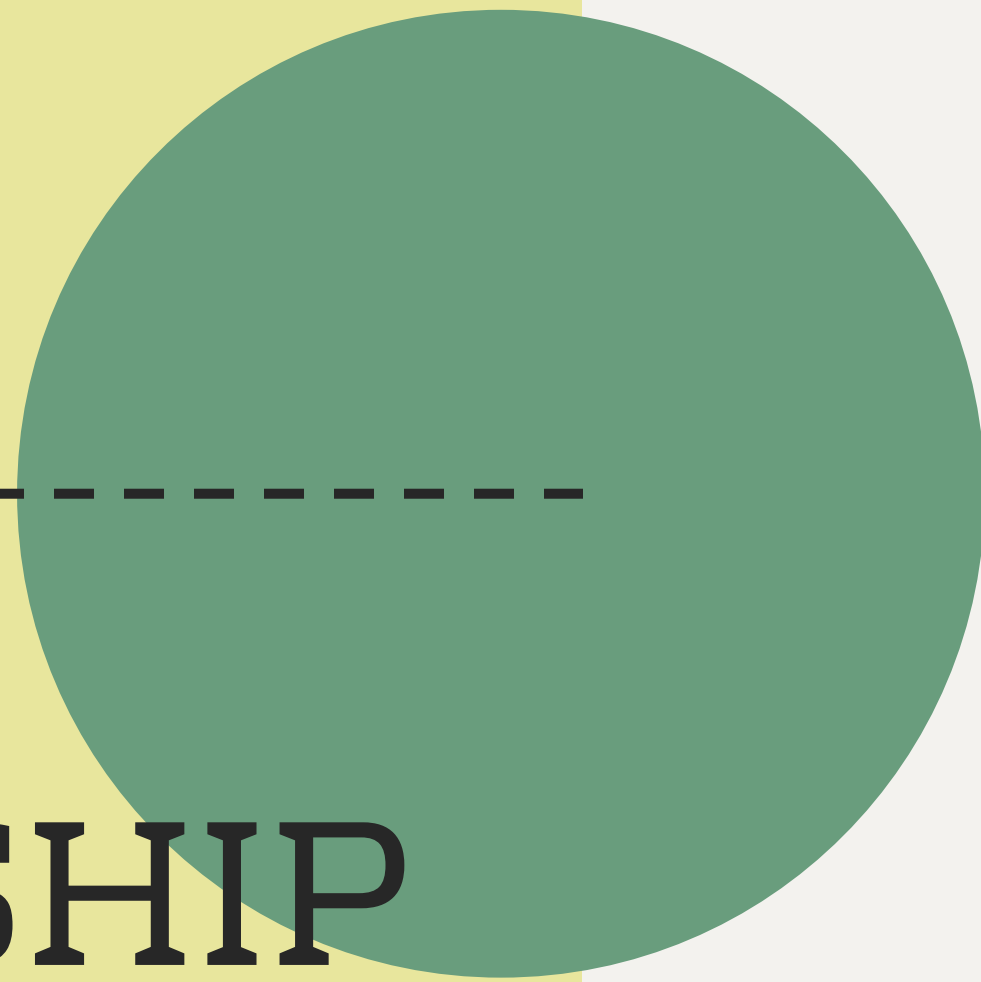
Deep Attendance

Cultural Humility

My Indigenous T.P.S. Principles

For Indigenizing/Decolonial Teaching with Primary
Sources (T.P.S.)

01



STEWARDSHIP of SPIRIT (of MANA)

“Taonga are not just wooden objects or aesthetic heirlooms, they speak and represent our origins, our beliefs, our very foundation on which we order our lives.”

(Newell, 2012, pg. 297)

*All of our objects/artefacts have a life force, an energy that is alive.

*By entering the space of the library, you are being offered the opportunity to take care of that life force.

*You are building a relationship with that artefact. Consider what it means to relate, to care for, to look after, even in the few moments you might spend with an item.

GUIDED REMINISCENCE

Material objects have the potential “to evoke or provoke memory, to foster narratives, to surface life histories, and to ground identity.” (Howarth & Knight, 2015, pg. 587)

*Especially when researching, before you jump into answering where an item comes from, what it was used for, who made it, etc., take a moment to think about how that item makes YOU feel. What memories does it evoke for YOU?

*Your memories, your emotions (positive or negative), are important tools for **meaning-making**. Your personal experience with that item is just as important to what an item *means* as "facts" about the item.

03

DEEP

ATTENDANCE

Their methodology of attending, informed by an ethics of care and connection, requires a “learning to be affected”, and “becoming sensitive, communicative, and alive within a more-than-human, co-constitutive world.” (Country et. al. pg. 276)

*It's never just an 'object'. The materials our libraries hold belonged to real people, with real lives, who experiences real emotion and real hardship.

*Allow yourself to feel the weight of these objects, to acknowledge the lived and living history they carry. Learn how to be affected.

***"Listen to the Book"**; understanding the limitations of your interactions with materials (physical, emotional, ethical, etc.)

CULTURAL HUMILITY

"The ability to maintain an interpersonal stance that is other oriented in relation to aspects of cultural identity that are most important to the other person, the ability to recognize the context in which interactions occur and a commitment to redress power imbalances and other structural issues to benefit all parties." (Anderson et. al., 2023, pg. 99)

*Understanding that objects, people, and ideas may all have different relationships in different cases. How you feel about an object or what you know about an object will differ from someone else, and that is okay!

*Your role is not to leave the library with a perfect understanding of every object. Your role is to try to more deeply understand how our different histories and experiences position us in relation to each other.

You do not have to have a deeper connection to these items to attend deeply to them; for some, upholding the spirit of items will primary begin with a change in how we think about these items as just material objects.

RELATING > RESEARCHING

Stewardship
of Spirit

*become a
temporary
caretaker of
an object's
life force, its
mana*

Guided
Reminiscence

*before
extracting
knowledge,
offer your
memory &
emotion*

Deep
Attendance

*"listen to the
book";
become
sensitive to
an object's
history &
physicality*

Cultural
Humility

*know that we
will all relate,
know, and
learn from
objects
differently*

TAKING THESE PRINCIPLES INTO YOUR FIELD TRIPS

*I'll also likely be there with you to remind you of these concepts! Yay!



QUESTIONS?
THOUGHTS?

Feedback!

Thx. Tai Lava.

Ngā mihi.

Mahalo nui. - M

Email

clarkmiah@myvuw.ac.nz

miahclark01@gmail.com

Call/Text

(0)27. 391. 6316