

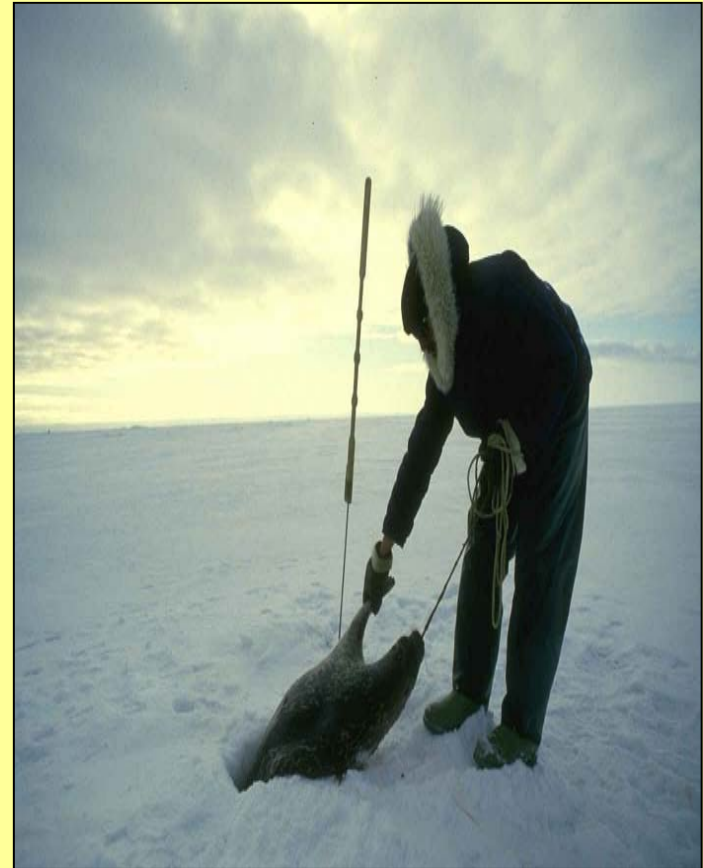
Guidelines for Respecting Cultural Knowledge

Patricia Cochran
Alaska Native Science Commission
Anchorage, Alaska
www.nativescience.org



Guidelines for Researchers

Researchers are ethically responsible for obtaining informed consent, accurately representing the cultural perspective and protecting the cultural integrity and rights of all participants in a research endeavor.



Guidelines for Researchers



Researchers may increase their cultural responsiveness through the following actions:

- **Effectively identify and utilize the expertise in participating communities to enhance the quality of data gathered.**
- **Insure controlled access for sensitive cultural information that has not been explicitly authorized for general distribution, as determined by members of the local community.**
- **Submit research plans as well as results for review by a locally knowledgeable group and abide by its recommendations to the maximum extent possible.**
- **Provide full disclosure of funding sources, sponsors, institutional affiliations and reviewers.**
- **Include explicit recognition of all research contributors in the final report.**

Guidelines for Project Reviewers



Reviewers should give informed consideration to the cultural perspectives of all groups represented in documents subjected to review.

Guidelines for Project Reviewers



Reviewers may increase their cultural responsiveness through the following actions:

- **Whenever possible and appropriate, reviews of cultural materials should be provided from multiple perspectives and interpretations.**
- **When critical decisions about a publication are to be made, a panel of reviewers should be established in such a way as to provide a cross-check from several cultural perspectives.**
- **Publications that misrepresent or omit cultural content should be identified as such, regardless of their remaining scholarly merit.**

Guidelines for the General Public

As the users and audience for cultural knowledge, the general public has a responsibility to exercise informed critical judgment about the cultural authenticity and appropriateness of the materials they utilize.



Guidelines for the General Public



Members of the general public may increase their cultural responsiveness through the following actions:

- **Refrain from purchasing or using publications that do not represent traditional cultures in accurate and appropriate ways.**
- **Encourage and support Native peoples' efforts to apply their own criteria to the review and approval of documents representing their cultural traditions.**
- **Contribute to and participate respectfully in local cultural events to gain a better understanding of the range of cultural traditions that strive to coexist in Alaska.**
- **Make room in all community events for multiple cultural traditions to be represented.**

Guidelines for Native Community Organizations

Native community organizations need to establish a process for review and authorization of activities involving the gathering, documentation and use of local cultural knowledge.



Guidelines for Native Community Organizations



Native community organizations may increase their cultural responsiveness through the following actions:

- **Native communities should provide a support mechanism to assist Elders in understanding the processes of giving informed consent and filing for copyright protections.**
- **Each community and region should establish a process for reviewing and approving research proposals that may impact their area.**
- **Each community should establish a process for determining what is considered public knowledge vs. private knowledge, as well as how and with whom such knowledge should be shared.**
- **Native communities should receive copies and maintain a repository of all documents that relate to the local area.**

Guidelines for Native Elders

As one of the primary sources of traditional cultural knowledge, Native Elders bear the responsibility to share and pass on that knowledge in ways that are compatible with traditional teachings and practices.



Guidelines for Native Elders



Native Elders may increase their cultural responsiveness through the following actions:

- **Make a point to utilize traditional ways of knowing, teaching, listening and learning in passing on cultural knowledge to others in the community.**
- **Seek out information on ways to protect intellectual property rights and retain copyright authority over all local knowledge that is being shared with others for documentation purposes.**
- **Carefully review contracts and release forms to determine who controls the distribution of any publications and associated royalties.**
- **Assist willing members of the community to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to assume the role of Elder for future generations.**